ACADEMY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIA

Dialogue

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Contents

1 **President's Column**
Leon Mann

3 **Global Warming and 'the Scientific Consensus' 1939-2001**
Ian Castles

10 **Academy Workshops**

10 **The Future of Work and Employment Relations**
Ron Callus & Russell Lansbury

13 **The 1901 General Election**
Rodney Cavalier

18 **Morality. . .?**

18 **Moral Diversity in a Liberal Democratic Society**
Brian Crittenden

25 **Normative Scepticism**
Michael Smith

30 **Morality: a Labour Movement Perspective**
Verity Burgmann

36 **Anthropology and Ethics (Committees)**
Jeremy Beckett

42 **Academy News**

45 **Books**

48 **New Executive Director for the Academy**

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.

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President's column

Leon Mann

On the matter of dialogue

At the beginning of 1999 the name of the Academy's quarterly journal of news, comment and reports was changed from the rather prosaic *Newsletter* to the more distinctive *Dialogue.*

The name change captured the spirit of some of the Academy's most important objectives – to act as consultant and adviser, to comment on national needs and priorities in the social sciences, and to promote international scholarly cooperation.

Most importantly, the switch to '*Dialogue'* served as a reminder of one of the most fundamental values of the social sciences – its reliance on free and open discussion for the purpose of gaining knowledge and exploring perspectives. One of the strengths of the Academy lies in its role of bringing together scholars from all branches and disciplines of the Social Sciences. Productive dialogue fosters mutual understanding and respect between disciplines. Respect between disciplines should not be taken for granted; prejudice and suspicion between some social scientists of different disciplines exist, as they do between some engaged in the physical sciences. Dialogue provides the platform for new ideas and fresh thinking that can occur when scholars from a range of disciplines meet, challenge old assumptions and work together to find better solutions.

A splendid example of a dialogue which helped promote greater understanding of the links between disciplines in the social sciences was the Fellows' Colloquium on Sunday evening 5 November which launched the Academy's Annual General Meeting. The Colloquium, on the topic of 'Creating Unequal Futures', was convened by Ruth Fincher and Peter Saunders who reported on the collection of essays they have edited (to be published in 2001 by Allen & Unwin). The research reported in this book – funded as an Academy research project – illustrates the importance of taking a multidisciplinary perspective for an understanding of the problems of poverty, inequality and disadvantage. But the comments, questions and suggestions from Fellows who attended the Colloquium, representing all four Panels of the Academy, also demonstrated the benefit of approaching a topic from different disciplines and perspectives to achieve a deeper understanding of complex social issues.

The year 2001 provides a rich opportunity for the Academy to engage in dialogue.

One opportunity is the symposium 'Alternative Australias' to be held in Canberra on 12 November. The symposium will be jointly sponsored by this Academy and the Australian Academy of Humanities, bringing together Fellows of each for the first time at an Annual General Meeting, in order to celebrate and examine the centenary of Australian Federation. The two Academies will share sessions, speakers and panels, with the Humanities taking a retrospective look at Australian issues of the twentieth century and the Social Sciences taking a more prospective view of Australian issues for the twenty first century. The organising committee, with Professor Iain McCalman – Fellow of both Academies – as convenor, will be keen to encourage a high level of participation and dialogue across the two Academies.

Another opportunity for dialogue is the growing realisation by all political parties – sharpened by the reality of a federal election later this year – that education, research and innovation are back on the national agenda. Australia has much to do if it is to

come near, let alone catch up with, other advanced nations in policy and performance. In this changed climate, it is possible to detect in some quarters a growing understanding that a sustained collective effort involving the sciences and technological sciences and the social sciences and humanities is required for the country to make up for lost time, a recent history of meagre support for higher education and research and a legacy of wasted opportunities.

The present challenge for the four learned academies is to engage in a constructive dialogue. This dialogue should aim to define practical ideas and proposals that will help shape progress toward a society which is more innovative in science and technology, while equally innovative in addressing the breakdown of community and communities, the threat to the physical and social environment and the feelings of powerlessness and alienation of many affected by the rapid pace of change.

The Academy of the Social Sciences is well placed to participate in this dialogue by virtue of the knowledge and expertise of its members. But it is fair to say that the Academy has not always made its voice heard and is seen by many as having a low profile. For instance, from conversations with several Canberra taxi drivers ('Is the Academy of Social Sciences the group of elderly gents who have cocktail parties in the igloo or fried-egg building?'); those with University colleagues ('Now tell me again, what exactly does the Academy do?'); and from the Minister for Education ('With the exception of the Economists and Historians, the Academy doesn't seem to speak out on important issues').

It is clear that the Academy has work to do to make its voice heard and to make a difference in the formulation of new ideas and proposals for a 'more clever' and more responsive Australia.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the important contribution of Professor Fay Gale who served the Academy as its President from 1997-2000. Professor Gale provided distinguished leadership. She maintained links with Academies in many countries, strengthening the Academy's international role in promoting scholarly cooperation. She was the guiding figure in securing for the Academy its new home at 28 Balmain Crescent, a most welcome achievement. She presided over the Academy in a period in which a very active Research Projects Committee was established and the Workshop Committee went from strength to strength. She represented the Academy effectively through her contacts with Ministers, the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, the Australian Research Council and the National Academies Forum. We are all pleased that Fay's wisdom and experience will continue to be available to the Academy through her ongoing membership of the Academy's Executive.

I also take this opportunity to welcome Dr John Beaton as the new Executive Director of the Academy from April 2001. John comes to the Academy with a range of experience in research, teaching and administration, a strong interest in the changing nature of tertiary education and a commitment to help build a more active and effective Academy.

Vice President's note

Ian Castles

The probability that human activities are producing significant changes in the earth's climate is increasingly being seen as one of the world's major problems. Yet in 1939, within the lifetime of many of us, one of the world's leading scientists urged governments to take deliberate action to bring about global warming.

JD Bernal advocates a warming globe (1939) . . .

In *The Social Function of Science,* one of the most influential books of the century, the British physicist JD Bernal, FRS argued that in 'a fully organised world society' it should 'no longer be a question of adapting man to the world but the world to man'. In that context, Professor Bernal lauded 'the work of the Soviet Union in the conquest of the Arctic':

> . . . the present Arctic with its wastes of tundra, glacier and sea-ice is a legacy of the geological accident of the Ice Age. It will disappear in time, leaving the world a much pleasanter place, but there is no reason why man should not hasten the process. By an intelligent diversion of warm ocean-currents together with some means of colouring snow so that the sun could melt it, it might be possible to keep the Arctic ice-free for one summer, and that one year might tip the balance and permanently change the climate of the northern hemisphere.[1]

. . . and dismisses concerns that the Arctic ice cap may melt (1951).

In 1951, Bernal told a London audience about a massive hydro-electric and irrigation scheme in the Soviet Union ('two to three hundred times the size of the Tennessee Valley Authority scheme'), which would divert the northern rivers and make the deserts bloom:

> Its effect will be to convert every river into a series of lakes separated by dams with power stations; there will be no flowing Volga any more, but sea-going ships will go from lake to lake through automatically operated locks. . . [B]ig dams have been built on the Pechora and Vychegda, which used to flow into the Arctic; these are now being damned [*sic*] up so as to fall back into the tributaries of the Volga. It is possible that no water will ultimately go to the Arctic, where water is of little value; all the water will be turned back into the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea or the Aral Depression . . .[2] (p 10)

In response to a questioner who suggested 'that if the northern waters are deflected from the Arctic it will become saltier and will not freeze so easily, and . . . this will reduce the polar ice', Professor Bernal said that 'there would be some such effect', but that 'this is a very long-term matter, and he did not think we should live to see the effect'.[3]

Meanwhile, Bernal was confident that the plan to build the 800-mile long Turkmen canal, based on twenty years of research by 650 Soviet scientists, would turn the Kara-Kum desert into 'one of the wealthiest agricultural districts'.[4] He believed that 'it would be possible to carry out a good deal of blasting in the desert areas with atomic bombs',[5] and 'As the projects are long-term ones the radio-activity problem will be overcome'.[5] And the conversion of the major part of the Turkmen republic from desert into fertile land would help to stabilise the climate of the area:

> Only 60% of the flow of the Amu Darya is being taken for irrigation purposes, and the rest is going into the Aral Sea. The level of the Aral has been rising and this has brought about a change in climate. It is expected that the present level can be kept constant. One questioner says that a lot of water will be required if it is intended to irrigate an area equal to Egypt, but a lot of water is available. Actually the irrigation system of Egypt is very inefficient. Most of the Nile water flows uselessly into the Mediterranean . . .[6]

International science, politics and climate change

Untenable as these views have now become, they were put forward in all seriousness by a scholar whom CP Snow thought to be 'the most learned scientist of his time, perhaps the last of whom it will be said, with meaning, that he knew science'[7]. Many scientists regarded him as exceptionally knowledgeable: in the *Dictionary of National Biography 1971-1980,* John Kendrew wrote that Bernal

> had an extraordinarily wide knowledge of many branches of science, and of many fields outside science; if anyone in this century deserved the name polymath, it was he. Even as an undergraduate he was given the nickname Sage which stuck to him for the rest of his life. . . In 1939 he published *The Social Function of Science.* Today almost everything in the book seems obvious; in its time it had an immense influence.[8]

The benefits of hastening the melting of the Arctic ice cap were far from obvious in 1986, when this biographical essay appeared. Its author would have been well aware of this, because he was at this time President of the International Council of Science (ICSU). And in the previous year representatives of ICSU, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) met to plan the institutional arrangements that the world now knows as the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Aynsley Kellow, then of the Faculty of Environmental Science at Griffith University, told the story at the National Academies Forum (NAF) conference *The Challenge for Australia on Global Climate Change* in Canberra in 1997:

> Representatives of WMO, UNEP and ICSU met in Villach, Austria in October 1985. The conference statement recommended that UNEP, WMO and ICSU take action to initiate, if deemed necessary, consideration of a global convention. This statement influenced the WCED to initiate the formation of the IPCC, which was established on 6 December 1988 by the General Assembly as a joint venture of WMO and UNEP, but it had evolved between 1985 and 1987 largely as the creation of governments, which could significantly influence membership and nominations.[9]

Dr. Kellow went on to refer to claims that there were 'indications that a small number of governments with strong research interests in atmospheric modelling and space technology (USA, Canada, Sweden, Germany, UK, Australia) used intergovernmental organisations, especially WMO and UNEP, to keep a check on the research agenda emerging from the US dominated ICSU'.

***Climate Change 2001:* The IPCC Third Assessment Report**

On 17 January 2001, delegations of 99 member countries of the IPCC met in Shanghai to participate in the Eighth Session of the Panel's Working Group 1 (WG1).

After considering the contribution of WG1 to the IPCC's Third Assessment Report and undertaking a line-by-line consideration of the 'Summary for Policymakers', the governments unanimously approved this Summary and accepted the full report *Climate Change 2001: The Scientific Basis*.

This full report, which runs to over 1000 pages, had been over three years in production and was the work of 122 Co-ordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors, 516 Contributing Authors, 21 Review Editors and 337 Expert Reviewers. The reports of the other two IPCC Working Groups, which are comparable to the Report of WG1 in their length, period of gestation and the number of contributing authors and editors, were considered and accepted at IPCC meetings in Geneva (in mid-February) and Accra (in early March). The Summary for Policymakers of each of the three reports is available on the IPCC's website at www.ipcc.ch

All three of the full reports are to be formally accepted by a meeting of the full IPCC Plenary in Nairobi, Kenya from 4-6 April, and a 'Synthesis Report', addressing nine specific policy-relevant questions that require input from all three Working Group reports, will be adopted at a meeting in London from 24-29 September.

The WG1 Report: Critique of the 'Summary for Policymakers'

The assessment by WG1 of the state of the Arctic ice cap that Bernal wanted to melt appears in the 'Summary for Policymakers' of the Working Group's report, which was unanimously approved by governments on 20 January. It appears under the sub-heading 'Snow cover and ice extent have decreased', and reads as follows:

- Satellite data show that there are very likely [ie, 90-99% chance] to have been decreases of about 10% in the extent of snow cover since the late 1960s, and ground-based observations show that there is very likely [ie, 90-99% chance] to have been a reduction of about two weeks in the annual duration of lake and river ice cover in the mid- and high latitudes of the **Northern Hemisphere**, over the 20th century. . .
- **Northern Hemisphere** spring and summer sea-ice extent has decreased by about 10 to 15% since the 1950s. It is likely [ie, 66-90% chance] that there has been about a 40% decline in **Arctic** sea-ice thickness during late summer to early autumn in recent decades and a considerably slower decline in winter sea-ice thickness (emphases added).

Although the sub-heading states without qualification that 'Snow cover and ice extent **have** increased' (emphasis added), the references in the text are explicitly stated to relate only to the northern hemisphere and the Arctic.

In order to discover what has happened to the state of the Antarctic ice cap, the policymaker must turn to the final section under the general heading 'An increasing body of observations gives a collective picture of a warming world and other changes in the climate system'. In this section, the following statement is made under the sub-heading 'Some important aspects of climate **appear** [emphasis added] not to have changed':

- No significant trends of Antarctic sea-ice extent are apparent since 1978, the period of reliable satellite measurements.

The projections by WG1 of future changes in the global ice caps appear in a later section of the 'Summary for Policymakers'. Under the heading 'Global average temperature and sea level are projected to rise under all IPCC scenarios' and the sub-heading 'Snow and ice',

the summary of the WG1 report presents the prospective changes in the northern and southern hemispheres as follows:

- Northern Hemisphere snow cover and sea-ice extent are projected to decrease further . . .
- The Antarctic ice sheet is likely [ie, 66-90% chance] to gain mass because of greater precipitation, while the Greenland ice sheet is likely to lose mass because the increase in runoff will exceed the precipitation increase.
- Concerns have been expressed about the stability of the West Antarctic ice sheet because it is grounded below sea level. However, loss of grounded ice leading to substantial sea level rise from this source is now widely agreed to be very unlikely [ie, 1-10% chance] during the 21st century . . .

NGOs, the Media and Greenhouse Science

In his paper to the NAF conference in 1997, Aynsley Kellow provided some relevant background information relating to these 'concerns . . . about the stability of the West Antarctic ice sheet':

> The problem is even worse when NGOs produce their own 'scientific evidence'. For example, in February 1997 Greenpeace researchers reported to the mass media massive cracks in Antarctic sea ice. Their report simultaneously linked this to the climate change issue, stating that the cracks were evidence of global warming. Indeed, Greenpeace had dispatched its research team to the area precisely to look for ways to highlight global warming to the public, and was able to provide dramatic video footage to a hungry media. The event might or might not be related to climate change, but the point is that this was not peer-reviewed science but a media event supporting a political campaign. (In contrast, the rebuttal of the claim by glaciologists a few days later – pointing out that warming would affect rate of melting, whereas cracking was a natural phenomenon. . .– received a few mundane column centimetres in the print media).[10]

Dr Kellow also criticised the Policymakers' Summary of the IPCC Second Assessment Report (1995) for ignoring

> the fact that satellite data – the only truly global measurements – which have been available since 1979, show no warming at all, but a slight cooling of 0.05°C per decade (although this is compatible with a zero trend).

The satellite data from 1979 to 2000 are reported in the 'Summary for Policymakers' of the Third Assessment Report (2001) in the following terms:

> Since the start of the satellite record in 1979, both satellite and weather balloon measurements show that the global average temperature of the lowest 8 kilometres of the atmosphere has changed by +0.05±0.10°C per decade . . .

It is notable that, while Aynsley Kellow explicitly acknowledged that the observed 'slight cooling of 0.05°C per decade' up to 1995 was compatible with a zero trend, there is no comparable acknowledgement in the 2001 Summary that the observed increase of 0.05°C per decade since 1979 is also compatible with a zero trend. On the contrary, the Summary approved by governments last January reports the satellite and weather balloon measurements since 1979 under the sub-heading 'Temperatures have risen during the past four decades in the lowest 8 kilometres of the atmosphere'.

Under the headline 'Global warming rate rings alarm bells', *The Age* (Melbourne) of 23 January 2001 carried a report from its China correspondent on the release of the report of WG1. The 'Key findings of the global warming report' were presented in a box headed 'Climate change hots up'. The list included the WG1 findings about the decline in northern hemisphere snow cover and in Arctic sea-ice thickness, but omitted the finding that there had been no significant change in Antarctic sea-ice extent since reliable measurements began. It included the finding that the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide has increased by 31% since 1750, but omitted the finding that the atmospheric concentration of methane had increased by 151% over the same 250-year period. (According to Aynsley Kellow's paper, methane production is highly concentrated in developing countries, with rice paddies contributing 29%, ruminant animals 20%, fossil fuels 21%, biomass burning 15% and landfills 15% of the total methane emissions).[11] And it included the findings that the 1990s were the warmest decade and 1998 the warmest year in the instrumental record since 1861, but omitted the fact (see previous paragraph) that satellite data, which are the only truly global measurements of average temperatures, are compatible with a zero trend since records began in 1978.

UN Officials, National Governments and the 'Scientific Consensus'

The text of *The Age* report on the WG1 conclusions gave extensive coverage to warnings by United Nations officials that governments needed to act urgently on greenhouse gas emissions. 'The scientific findings being reported today should convince governments of the need to take constructive steps towards resuming the climate change talks that stalled last November in The Hague', said Michael Zammit Cutzjar, executive secretary of the UN Climate Change Convention. And UNEP executive director Klaus Topfer said that

> The scientific consensus presented in this comprehensive report about human-induced climate change should sound alarm bells in every national capital and in every local community. We must move ahead boldly with clean energy technologies, and we should start preparing ourselves now for the rising sea levels, changing rain patterns and other impacts of global warming.

In his NAF paper, Aynsley Kellow questioned the insistence of the IPCC on developing a 'scientific consensus', which he 'thought had not been too popular in scientific circles after Galileo'.[12] He challenged the notion that the science of IPCC was as reliable as peer-reviewed science, and argued that 'the greenhouse bandwagon is rolling along a path which is likely to lead to failure **even if the IPCC predictions prove accurate**'[13]. And he drew attention to suggestions

> that global warming might **cause** higher levels of atmospheric carbon, since there is 52 times more carbon dissolved in the oceans than present in the atmosphere, and less would remain dissolved at higher temperatures. This directionality even better accounts for evidence of association in the ice core data than the 'global warming as a result of industrial society' scenario, and some have claimed support for this from statistical analysis.[14]

Perhaps there is an answer to these suggestions somewhere in the 1000 page report from the IPCC's WG1. But there is no answer that policymakers will be able to understand in the 'Summary for Policymakers': all of the argument appears to the lay reader to **assume** that the direction of causality is from GHG concentrations to global warming rather than the other round.

Climate Change Science and the International Comparison Project

The world's governments provide substantial funds to support climate change science: Aynsley Kellow reports an estimate that the United States alone was spending $2.1 billion annually in the mid-1990s.[15] They spend large sums supporting IPCC meetings, such as the conferences that have already taken place this year in Shanghai, Geneva and Accra (not to mention the meetings soon to be held in Nairobi and London). And they devote scarce human as well as financial resources to the negotiation of intergovernmental agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol and 'the climate change talks that stalled last November in The Hague'.

Such expenditures would be justified if they were successful in devising more effective strategies to limit GHG emissions or assisting governments to communicate to their constituencies the importance of achieving effective strategies to this end. But it is not clear that either of these objectives is being achieved.

For example, in their contribution to a Special Issue of *The Energy Journal* in 1999 which incorporated a series of analyses of the economic and energy sector impacts of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change, economists William Nordhaus and Joseph Boyer concluded that the emissions strategy to which the Protocol seeks to give effect 'is highly cost-ineffective, with the global temperature reduction achieved at a cost almost 8 times the cost of a strategy which is cost-effective in terms of "where" and "when" efficiency'.[16]

The failure of governments and intergovernmental organisations to maintain support for the United Nations/World Bank International Comparison Program (ICP) provides a sobering contrast to the generous support afforded to the science and politics of climate change. Last year's meeting of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) 'noted the support of many countries and international agencies for a viable ICP programme', but in the light of the serious reservations . . . regarding the quality, timeliness, credibility and transparency of the ICP as identified in the Castles and Ryten reports, recommended that the start of the next round of the global ICP be postponed by at least one year so that the following steps could be taken: (i) Securing of adequate funding for the programme . . .'

The World Bank has now reported to the March 2001 meeting of the UNSC that 'Without renewed commitment from the international community, the ICP faces a near certain death in developing countries, where a reliable information base for International Development Goals and poverty alleviation policy is badly needed'.

The entire annual cost of the ICP amounts to about $US3 million: less than the United States alone spends on climate change science each day. A rational world would recognise the need for a viable program to facilitate international comparisons of prices and of the output of nations if only for its potential contribution to the design and implementation of effective policies to meet the challenge of global climate change. But, as the World Bank's statement to the 2001 meeting of the UNSC makes clear, the output of the ICP has many uses. Among the most important is that of supporting the information needs of programs to alleviate poverty in developing countries.

Thanks to the evidence provided by the ICP, we know that average incomes in Turkmenistan are now only about one tenth of those in Japan. Far from being 'one of the wealthiest agricultural districts', the Kara-Kum desert remains a poverty-stricken area. The Turkmen canal ('the most exciting of all' of the massive Soviet construction projects[17], according to JD Bernal in 1951) has been the cause of an environmental catastrophe since its completion in 1967. Water lost through irrigation and evaporation

from the canal has contributed to a 'disastrous decline in the Amu Darya's outflow' and this, together with 'soil and water salinization resulting from the desiccation and shrinking of the Aral Sea . . .threatens to ruin the Amu Darya delta as an agricultural producer . . .'[18].

It is not surprising that today's scientific consensus does not share Bernal's enthusiasm for 'adapting . . . the world to man'.

Ian Castles is Vice President of the Academy.

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1 Bernal. JD (1939), *The Social Function of Science*: 379-80.
2 Bernal, JD (1951), 'The Developments of Soviet Science' in *Anglo-Soviet Journal*, Autumn: 10.
3 *ibid*: 14.
4 *ibid*: 11.
5 *ibid*: 14.
6 *ibid*: 14.
7 Snow, CP (1964), 'JD Bernal, A Personal Portrait' in Goldsmith, Maurice and Alan Mackay, *The Science of Science: Society in the Technological Age,* 1964: 24.
8 Kendrew, John C (1986), 'Bernal, JD' in *Dictionary of National Biography 1971-1980*: 53-4.
9 Kellow, Aynsley (1997), 'The Politics of Climate Change: Problem Definition, Precaution, and the International Policy Process' in National Academies Forum, *The Challenge for Australia on Global Climate Change*: 86.
10 *ibid*: 82.
11 *ibid*: 84.
12 *ibid*: 85.
13 *ibid*: 80 (emphasis in original).
14 *ibid*: 83 (emphasis in original).
15 *ibid*: 82.
16 Nordhaus, William and Joseph Boyer (1999), 'Requiem for Kyoto: An Economic Analysis' in *The Energy Journal*, Special Issue: *The Costs of the Kyoto Protocol: A Multi-Model Evaluation:* 93-130.
17 Bernal (1951), *op cit*: 11.
18 Encyclopedia Brittanica online: 'Turkmenistan'.

Emeritus Professor Alfred Pollard, AO, formerly of Macquarie University, died on 4 December.
An obituary will appear in the *Annual Report.*

Academy Workshops

Reports

The future of work and employment relations

Ron Callus and Russell Lansbury

During recent decades, the nature of work and employment relations have undergone significant change. Australians who are in employment are working longer and harder, many have less secure jobs than the previous generation, and there has been a significant growth in part-time and casual jobs. The experience of a life-time career in the same job with one employer is shared by a declining number of people. The means by which wages and working conditions are determined have also changed. The long-established system of awards, negotiated by unions at an industry level and determined by industrial tribunals, has been gradually replaced by enterprise bargaining with or without unions. The decentralisation of industrial relations has coincided with the decline of union coverage of the workforce. Collective approaches to employment relations have given way increasingly to more individual arrangements.

The workshop held at the University of Sydney in late 2000 sought to examine likely future directions for both work and employment relations. It analysed the subject from an interdisciplinary perspective by drawing upon insights from historians, economists, lawyers, sociologists, psychologists and industrial relations specialists, as well as incorporating contributions by members of the industrial tribunals, trade unions, employers, government and community groups. Hence the workshop not only explored issues from an academic perspective but also from the viewpoint of practitioners and policy makers. It is hoped that the ideas generated by the workshop will influence public debate and the policies and practices which are adopted within the Australian workplace.

In his opening address to the workshop, Keith Hancock (University of Adelaide) contrasted today's world of work from that of the 'golden age' which, in Australia, prevailed from the end of World War II to the early 1970s. While this era was not without problems, it was nevertheless free of significant unemployment, real wages steadily increased and inequalities were diminishing. Workers who lacked bargaining power were protected by a combination of collective representation and arbitral regulation. By contrast, Hancock noted that the past twenty five years have witnessed growing productivity but this has benefited the well-paid more than the low-paid. A variety of forces have driven an increasing proportion of the male population from employment. Those who have jobs are less protected by collective representation and the regulatory system does less to assist the individual worker. Hancock argued that 'the time has come to rethink the institutional arrangements for the protection of weaker members of the labour force'. Given the declining power of the union movement, government needs to play a stronger role in providing a more appropriate regulatory system and ensuring that legal requirements are enforced.

A broad historical perspective on changes in the nature or work and employment relations was provided by Greg Patmore (University of Sydney) who argued that 'organisational amnesia' may lead to changes being embraced that are simply 'old wine in new bottles'. An historical approach, argued Patmore, helps to develop dynamic theoretical frameworks and to subject dominant paradigms to close scrutiny. He used a number of historical examples to demonstrate that issues or reforms which are hailed as 'new' and 'transformative' may be superficial and subject to challenge. Demands for industrial democracy and employee

participation, for example, which took place in the 1960s and 70s occurred at least twice before in this century. Historical analysis enables contemporary scholars to question whether the conditions that led to failure in the past are still present as well as showing how changes in work and employment issues are linked to broader social values and ideology.

The impact of the changing labour market on work and employment relations was examined by Mark Wooden (University of Sydney). His vision of the future was generally optimistic but he argued that policy makers will need to ensure that labour market regulations facilitate rather than inhibit employment growth. While Wooden felt that paid work will continue to play a central role in modern society, he predicted continuing changes which will undermine collectivism and traditional notions of community. Such changes in the labour market, however, merely reflect trends in the wider society towards a greater emphasis on individualism and a decreasing confidence in institutions. Wooden did concede that working hours had substantially increased for a minority of the labour force and may have adverse health costs and a negative impact on family life. Furthermore, new technologies will displace workers with fewer skills and may lead to further increases in inequality in the wages and working conditions between those with appropriate skills and those without. However, these trends are not inevitable and will depend on the relative demand and supply for unskilled labour.

Changes in the legal rules which underpin the Australian social contract governing the performance of work were analysed by Ron McCallum (University of Sydney). He argued that some of the recent changes in labour law reflected increasing community concerns about physical, mental and reproductive safety in the workplace. Labour law reforms have also been in response to the growth of individualism which has been displacing collectivism at work, as well as a growing recognition of the need to strengthen human rights in the workplace. The greatest challenge which McCallum perceived to labour law was the shifting boundary away from the employer/employee relationship and the need to protect independent contract workers who are performing employee-like functions.

The issues facing the trade union movement in Australia were outlined by Michael Crosby. While the proportion of the labour force who are union members has continued to decline over the past two decades, Crosby argued that the union movement was adapting to change and was in the process of modernisation. Drawing on the recent Australian Council of Trade Unions report entitled *Unions @ Work,* Crosby argued that, as a precondition of their survival, unions must be well managed organisations with effective controls, systems of accountability and functioning membership systems. A key element in the ACTU's modernisation strategy has been to place greater emphasis on organising and building stronger, more active workplace delegate systems.

The interrelationship between time spent in employment and in family-related activities, and the implications for work/family policies were examined by Bettina Cass. Throughout this century, argues Cass, Australian public policy was predicated on a male breadwinner model. But this is now being challenged by the increased prevalence of both dual earner and no earner families. These are the consequences of deep changes occurring in the Australian labour market as well as moves towards deregulation in an internationalising trade and financial environment. Cass argued that policy debate must focus not only on the creation of flexible and family-friendly workplace conditions but also on education, employment and training policies which will promote the ability of families to choose between market and non-market work.

The concept of the 'new economy' is used in a variety of ways to refer to the use of new information and communication technologies (ICT) as well as their broader implications for

economic and social structures. Gianni Zappala *et al* argued that there are significant implications for the disadvantaged and socially excluded. Not everyone is able to enjoy the benefits of ICT and growing use of new technologies, such as the internet, is likely to exacerbate traditional inequalities that arise from financial disadvantage, isolation and poor education. If these trends continue, the new economy will become the preserve of an exclusive minority in a polarised society where inequalities will increase.

Prevailing forms of organisation and management practices of industrial capitalism are in the early stages of radical transformation and this process will accelerate, according to Dexter Dunphy and Doug Stace. A new worldview is emerging which is based on seeing everything as an ecology, which stands in contrast to the mechanistic Newtonian view of the universe, and is derived from significant changes in the intellectual foundations of science and philosophy. These developments mean a redefinition of the social role of the corporation towards a greater emphasis on sustainability of the wider community and the biosphere as a whole. The nature of management in this new organisational world will focus not on command and control but on the coordination of diverse relationships through influence and negotiation. Nevertheless, a mix of old and new forms of organisation and management will persist well into this century.

The final paper by Callus and Lansbury summarised the major changes which have affected work and employment relations in recent years. The traditional employer-employee model, they argued, is increasingly irrelevant. A more inclusive social and economic policy model is required which is based on rights and obligations surrounding working life. Two issues, in particular, need to be addressed: portability of entitlements between employers and the sharing of risks associated with less secure forms of employment. Unless changes are made to the status of workers, regulation of working time and the pooling of risks and responsibilities in regard to employment, there is likely to be a further deterioration in the quality of jobs and relations at work.

Arrangements have been made with Federation Press to publish a book, based on the workshop, later this year.

Call for Workshop Proposals

The Academy of Social Sciences Workshop Program is seeking proposals for workshops to be held in 2002, for endorsement and funding.

To be successful, applications will need to focus on addressing significant current issues and problems in the social sciences. Participants should be drawn from a range of appropriate disciplines: anthropology, demography, geography, linguistics, sociology, cultural studies, accounting, economics, economic history, statistics, history, law, gender studies, philosophy, political science, education, psychology and social medicine.

The Academy Workshop Program Committee meets in March, July and October. Proposals for workshops *to be held in early 2002* should reach the Secretariat by **Friday 29 June 2001**.

The Academy *Workshop Guidelines* should be obtained before proceeding with a proposal, to ensure that the requirements of the Academy are understood.

Further information: Sue Rider, Workshop Program Secretariat, ASSA, telephone (02) 6249 1788 or email sue.rider@anu.edu.au

The 1901 General Election.

Rodney Cavalier

[**T**his report is from a non-funded workshop which was endorsed by the Academy through its Workshop Committee, and supported through the participation of Fellows including James Jupp, Geoffrey Bolton, Glenn Withers, Pat Weller and Stuart Macintyre. The workshop was organised by Dr Marian Simms, Reader in Political Science and Visiting Associate in the Graduate Program in Public Policy. Although the report had to be shortened for publication, the tone of the original has been retained in order to give those who have never participated in an Academy Workshop a sense of how these intensive exchanges can be both intellectually exciting and good fun.]

I welcomed participants, backed up with a supplementary introduction by James Jupp, setting out a time when Australia saw itself as an outpost of Empire and a distant expression of Britain, a time when belief in White Australia was a tenet of the mainstream – and when there were no political scientists and few social scientists to reflect on the passage of current events.

Joan Rydon has publications going back to the early 1950s, and is co-author of a monograph on the Gwydir by-election of 1940 which some believe is the beginning of serious political study in Australia; it is certainly the beginning of election studies. She has compiled the Biographical Register of the Commonwealth Parliament 1901-1972, an exhaustive outline of the known careers of every MP and Senator until that time. For political junkies it is fascinating.

The acknowledged expert on electoral systems, Joan examines the differing systems in operation in 1901. Like all of us, Joan is older than she used to be, so that although her mind is no less sharp, her expressive capacity is necessarily slower and her tolerance of error is not outstanding. Presenting a paper in her presence which touches on parties or electoral systems is like crossing No Man's Land under machine guns: expect a volley in the event of any assumption not well-grounded.

This weekend we have woken to news that the Florida Supreme Court has overruled the District Circuit Judge and ordered a hand recount wherever in Florida votes were not properly scanned by the computers. Suddenly, Bush is back in the race. Australians in 1901 had already developed a civic culture well advanced on that of the USA in the year 2000. It is also a fortnight when the ALP is bleeding to death in Queensland over the realisation that the lovable rorts justified as being 'a part of the culture' are now the subject of legal prosecution.

1901 was the only Federal Election to be conducted under the pre-existing laws of the six colonies. Hence, women and Aborigines did/did not get a vote according to colonial laws. People voted first-past-the-post with the exception of Tasmania (even then) but the methods of voting varied from colony to colony. Crosses against the candidate(s) preferred in some instances, lines through the names of candidates rejected in others. Humphrey McQueen asks what sort of pencils were employed to enable the mass deleting of 40 candidates on a ballot paper with 46 names. (Humphrey is presently writing a paper on the history of handwriting in Australia. Instruments for writing are a part of his fascinating study.)

Dr Rydon gives thanks that 1901 was the only occasion when differing rules applied. By 1904 the Commonwealth had enacted its own laws and brought women into the fold. Plural voting was eliminated by means of eliminating any sort of property

qualification. The Constitution itself specified the number of seats per State and the rules for altering the balance. Manipulation at the Commonwealth level was always more difficult than in the States. (It is one of the quieter achievements of the period since 1968 that the Lower Houses of several States are elected on essentially fair boundaries.)

Marian Simms, organiser of the workshop, details the franchise and the enrolment provisions. Proof of identity was often required in 1901, but the much smaller electorates meant that deception and impersonation was more difficult than now.

Glenn Withers, an economist, uses statistics from referenda – from Federation up to the conscription plebiscite of 1916 – related back to such data as gender breakdowns, census data on formal religious declarations, school and technical college enrolments. Withers makes some breathtaking claims; that key issues were women and votes, not Catholics v Empire. His cameos of the colonies are unapologetically caricatures: hence NSW is 'masculine, Catholic, urban and unionised'. The problem for his thesis is asserting major differences based on minor discrepancies: eg, NSW is 'Catholic' and Victoria is not because NSW has 24 per cent declared Catholics to Victoria's 20. James Jupp challenges these conclusions, with considerable laughter. A non-historian can expect problems in the presence of historians when he is depending on historical data.

Humphrey McQueen takes the chair for two sessions and proves fascinated by any information the slightest bit quirky. He is debonair in shorts and faint-orange tinted glasses which hug his eyes, a touch of Dame Edna, a dollop of Mark Waugh in slips. This evening the Masons are holding a dinner next door and begin to arrive in large numbers in tuxedos and ballgowns. For someone interested in how sectarianism displays itself, the promenade beside the pond is as much a source of intellectual enrichment as the words being heard in the workshop.

Dean Jaensch talks about the non-Labor parties. Joan Rydon takes monumental exception to the term 'non-Labor'. The two parties which were non-Labor - sorry Joan - were Free Trade and Protectionist, autonomous and competitive. Dean has returned to primary materials and employed a template of today's elections and campaigns to see if that helps in explaining 1901.

Whereas Dean is associated with non-Labor politics, Patrick Weller is very much a scholar in residence for the ALP. A long time ago, Weller took on the tasks of editing the Minutes of the Federal ALP Caucus and the ALP Federal Executive. However, he received the full cooperation of Malcolm Fraser in his analysis of the Fraser Prime Ministership, a study of a man and his office, not a biography. His present research concerns the first 100 years of the Federal Cabinet.

Weller believes that the Labor Party campaign was really six different campaigns. He made marvellous fun of a photo of the first ALP Caucus, a group of worthies, all men of course, only two clean-shaven. Among them are three future Prime Ministers, four party leaders. All of those Prime Ministers will defect, and about half of all the Members will make their departure from the party in 1916 over conscription, in a crisis from which the ALP has never recovered.

The ALP of 1901 is the country party. In NSW Billy Hughes wins the only seat Labor wins in Sydney. Except Newcastle, the other seats Labor won were truly rural, where the Australian Workers' Union has a mighty machine on the ground and delivers workers and votes. *Plus χa change*. The same is true of Victoria and Queensland.

In discussion I ask about preselections. In South Melbourne, Stuart Macintyre explains, Labor held its meeting, the members divided and an open count was taken of the votes for the candidates.

Malcolm Palmer is researching electorates – Tamworth, Newcastle, Indi, Fremantle, Capricornia – based on the major newspapers of those regions, in an attempt to unravel the biases of the respective newspaper editors. Newspapers of that period are more likely to be papers of record, a serious effort to record the text of what people said, rather than an interpretation by the reporter.

The social placement of the candidates is partly a matter of speculation, based on occupations that the candidates themselves offered as self-description, related back to the occupations of their fathers. The tables compiled by Geoffrey Hawker are rich in detail. Most of the new Federal Members and Senators had been Members of the colonial parliaments, as had been most of the major losing candidates. Nonetheless, there was a core of 15 per cent who were newcomers and some went on to distinguished careers. The stereotypes of Labor and Free Trade broadly conform to notions that one was a party of workers and the other consisted of merchants but Protection is a veritable dog's breakfast, if such a term can pass for political analysis.

Clive Beauchamp, a passionate Federation historian now semi-retired was delighted to share his passion with like minds. His expertise in 1901 electoral matters for much of NSW, especially the central west – Bathurst and surrounding settlements – brings together years of research. Clive outlines his discovery of the scandal of the Aboriginal names allotted to the 26 NSW divisions before the remonstrance of the NSW Parliament. This material excites the gathering. Humphrey McQueen, summing up, is astonished at how much we have learned in the course of the day.

Marian has organised two critics to intervene as required with observations on the papers, Verity Burgmann (sister of Meredith Burgmann, President of the Legislative Council of NSW) and Frank Bongiorno, whose contributions are much appreciated.

The Workshop dinner was arranged at the Asian Café. Getting an order under way looks like defeating the gathering. So I step in - behaving in the best traditions of the AWU - to order a banquet at a unit price of $26. No argument because no argument was permitted. This recalled the famous occasion in 1968 when the Victorian Central Executive decided that the ALP selection would go to the septuagarian Arthur Calwell for one final term rather than Jim Cairns. The pro-Calwell President opened the meeting with a statement that he was moving gratitude to the Executive for endorsing Mr Calwell. 'This matter is so important that I am putting the question without debate. I take it there is no opposition. Carried.' When a few people sought to protest at the procedure, the chairman noted the motion was already passed, any further attempt to discuss the matter would be disorderly, he did not intend to tolerate disorderly conduct, if it persisted he would close the meeting and report the offenders to the Executive. Silence. So the banquet order was placed.

The news on Sunday indicates that the US Presidential count takes another turn when a majority of the US Supreme Court grants a stay on all hand-counting by a 5-4 decision; a pretty scandalous decision by a majority who have hitherto resisted interference in State affairs. They will hear the substance of the appeal come Monday. A lot of counting was done in the time available.

This morning is devoted to the individual campaigns of the leaders in 1901, even if they did not enjoy leadership status. Stuart Macintyre outlines the work of Alfred Deakin, delivering for the Protection party in Victoria and beyond.

Clem Lloyd, Professor of Journalism at Wollongong, presents the campaign of George Reid. Clem is pursuing a side interest because he is otherwise working on a biography of Andrew Fisher, but wanted a break and thought that Reid was a challenge. All in all, there was much about Reid that made you certain he was a rogue, but he seemed to possess a huge capacity to enjoy life, a capacity which made his friends fiercely loyal.

The paper dealt with the three months Reid invested in his campaign on behalf of Free Trade through January-March 1901, that is, 13 weeks of seven-day weeks and most nights, travelling through more colonies than any other leader, by rail and by coach. The campaign of Gough Whitlam in 1969 Clem has always regarded as the most heroic physical effort he has ever witnessed but he suspects the effort of Reid in 1901, already well into his fifties, far from fit, puts that effort into the shade.

The Lloyd delivery was sparkling. It was not long before several of us were rolling in laughter. What set us off was Clem's explanation of the dimensions of Reid's difficulty: essentially Reid was the whole box and dice for the Free Trade campaign. No one else had much credibility, and this lack enabled *The Bulletin* to explore with ruthless parody the calibre of a future Reid Cabinet. The savagery was both by way of the anonymous writers in the news columns and the brilliant imagery of the cartoons of Livingstone Hopkins. Reid had equivocated on White Australia – Reid equivocated on all questions – and that was sufficient for *The Bulletin* to assert that Reid was preparing to open the floodgates to the north. Some of the cartoons are so rabid as to be beyond disgust to modern sensibilities. Invariably Hopkins depicted Reid wandering with a dog and a young black boy, a Kanaka straight out of Uncle Remus, with a huge vacant grin. *The Bulletin* asked could Australia expect a Cabinet with the likes of 'Kanaka Cowley'. 'If anyone can tell me who Kanaka Cowley might have been I would be eternally grateful,' Clem offered, Sure enough, one of the participants provided both Christian names of a major sugar grower from north Queensland.

Andrew Fisher made an appearance at the conference, courtesy of Bruce Scates. Alone of the presenters, Bruce decided to step into the character of his subject. Bruce drew on an ABC broadcast of fifty years ago, a play written about Federation by Kylie Tennant which included a collage of an election speech by Fisher. Occasionally departing from text, Bruce had a lot of fun. 'I am a proud Australian and I am proud to have come from Scotland. My family have remained in Scotland – and none of them may be found on the electoral roll for Queensland.' Bruce did not attempt the Scots burr but he conveyed a fine image of the man who represented Gympie, 'easily the biggest of those thin, tired men we saw in that photograph earlier'.

After these presentations, I reckoned that John Bannon had about the most hazardous task of the conference. In his years since the South Australian Parliament, John has concentrated on studying the Federation period and bringing out the largely unsung contribution of the South Australians, especially his hero, Charles Cameron Kingston. His presentation was very different to the two before but no less effective. He took us back to that pregnant year, 1899, when the struggle for Federation was won. Kingston was a local hero who had just won his third colonial election on the trot (unprecedented in SA) and the immense opportunities of the Federal arena were beckoning. Instead of stepping back from the detail of the struggle, Kingston decided to risk it all by insisting on the completion of his core agenda – the effecting of a universal franchise and the reform of the Legislative Council.

Kingston banked all on a referendum to force a popular will upon the Upper House and announced without notice that his Federal ambitions would go on hold until he

achieved reform. It is a course to which he pledged his honour. Political society is rocked.

The pledge is made on the floor of the House in answer to a question from a pioneer Labor Member. Kingston wins the support of Labor but divides his own side. The Opposition detect the unease about the commitment and the coming electoral test, Opposition moves the adjournment and wins. Kingston calls on the Governor and advises a dissolution which the Governor declines, believing an alternative government is available in the Assembly. That new Ministry lasts eight days, the leadership passes to an alternative leader of Kingston's party, that government holds. Kingston moves to the backbench.

Everyone expects that Kingston will regard himself as released from his pledge. Not so. Upon his return from the delegation to London in July 1900 he resigns from the Assembly to contest a by-election in the Council. Kingston is triumphant. Federation is about to happen. Kingston, Federation Father, is not intending to stand for a seat. In circumstances unimaginable in this fractious age, Kingston is the subject of a resolution of the Assembly expressing the view that he has fulfilled his pledge; he should now proceed to contest the Federal Election. Carried unanimously.

He stands and wins, topping the poll in what is an election at large, as the SA Parliament had not distributed its seats into divisions. Barton offers Kingston a portfolio. Kingston accepts. The South Australian Premier, Holder, also elected, now outranking Kingston, receives no offer and has to settle for Speaker. Kingston's brilliant career comes to an end because of ill health. John speculates on what might have happened when Chris Watson accepted the commission as Prime Minister, Labor's first experience in Federal Government. Would Kingston have been able to forge an entirely new force fusing liberals and Labor?

And so ends the workshop. Apart, that is, from an intense session exploring the dimensions and tasks of publication. It is apparent that this was a conference of uncommon amity and united purpose. There is no small measure of gratitude to the National Council for the Centenary of Federation for making the gathering possible.

Workshop Program for July 2001-June 2002

- *The Genocide Effect: new perspectives on modern cultures of destruction*, to be convened by Dr Simone Gigliotti and Dr Dirk Moses in Sydney on 4-5 July 2001.
- *Litigation: Past and Present*: to be convened by Professor Wilfrid Prest and Dr Sharyn Roach Anleu in Adelaide in September 2001

Under consideration for funding by the Workshop Committee:

- *Rethinking Australian Republicanism*
- *Custom: The fate of non-western law and indigenous governance in the 21st century*
- *The Psychology of Ethics in the field of Medicine: Issues, perspectives and application*

Copies of the Workshop Guidelines are available on the Academy's website, www.assa.edu.au or email Sue.Rider@anu.edu.au

Moral diversity in a liberal democratic society

Brian Crittenden

Respect for diversity in moral beliefs and practices, a central ingredient of the pluralism that liberal democratic societies are committed to uphold, requires a complex and sustained effort. A particularly demanding example is the practice of moral education in the common schools of such a society.[1] It is a key area of learning (for both personal and social life) that schools cannot avoid. In addition, moral values enter many other aspects of formal learning – and are reflected in the general institutional features of a school. Of course, respect for moral diversity affects, in varying degrees, all public practices in a liberal democracy. In order to explore further both the difficulties and the way in which public institutions might justifiably respond, I shall discuss some key features in the work of two influential theorists of recent times – Alasdair MacIntyre and John Rawls[2].

Diverse traditions of rationality and morality

MacIntyre argues that each of the different interpretations of justice (and other moral values) forms part of a distinct 'intellectual and social tradition'. An integral part of each tradition is the way in which it understands rationality, and thus what counts as justifying moral beliefs and practices. The common view of liberal theorists that moral differences can be arbitrated before an independent court of rationality is, in MacIntyre's view, radically mistaken. Claims to rational superiority themselves reflect particular historical traditions.

It seems that MacIntyre is taking a thoroughly relativist position that would exclude not only a common practice of education, but even the coexistence of diverse traditions in a pluralist political order. However, he does claim that the rational resolution of differences among competing traditions is not impossible. On internal grounds, traditions show themselves over time to be either vital or stagnant. The difference is in how effective they are in making revisions to deal with the deficiencies and inconsistencies that inevitably emerge in the evolution of any tradition. The basic objective seems to be the maintenance of continuity in a tradition by devising effective ways of dealing with 'epistemological crises' as they arise. He allows that some traditions fail radically to meet the challenge.

But is it possible to compare vital traditions according to the quality of their rationality? Despite what seems to be an inconsistency, MacIntyre offers three general conditions that any rational tradition must respect. (i) Inquiry always proceeds in an historical context of accepted beliefs, and the inadequacy of what one claims as knowledge always remains possible. (ii) A correspondence theory of truth is endorsed, in the sense that a tradition's concepts etc are tested by their adequacy in enabling us to 're-present' objects as encountered in experience. (iii) Truth claims are open to the widest possible range of questions and objections.

While the application of MacIntyre's various tests determines that the rationality of some traditions is seriously flawed, it leaves many active contenders and seems to provide no basis for comparing their claims about rationality and moral values. MacIntyre allows for conversion from one tradition to another. But, given that criteria of rational choice are largely tradition-bound, it seems that the choice of what is regarded as a rationally superior tradition will be made for reasons that this tradition regards as unsatisfactory.

Despite the difficulties in his interpretation of rational and moral traditions for a viable pluralist liberal democracy, MacIntyre offers an account of the critical reflection and commitment that he regards as appropriate for members of such a society. Everyone should become familiar with the tradition into whose beliefs and practices they have been initially inducted. They then need to enter imaginatively into the content of rival traditions. On these bases, they should commit themselves to the one that seems to give the most satisfactory account of rationality and moral values. Eclectics should be particularly sensitive to the inevitable inconsistencies of their position and look critically for the tradition in their society that best resolves these inconsistencies. Those who pursue the mirage of tradition-transcending criteria end in a condition of 'rootless cosmopolitanism', with their ideas of rationality and justice lacking any basis in a 'community of discourse'.

The central feature of MacIntyre's argument is that liberalism provides no satisfactory basis for the coexistence of diverse traditions in a pluralist society. Despite their tendency to think otherwise, liberal theorists belong to one of the many competing traditions in Western society with their distinctive views of rationality and moral good. The liberal emphasis on procedural principles of justice in the public domain reduces it to an instrument for satisfying everyone's interests as fully as possible; conflicting interpretations of the good are excluded from serious debate on the grounds that they are merely preferences. In summary, MacIntyre confidently places liberalism among the stagnant traditions.

On the example of education I mentioned at the beginning: to regard the meaning of rationality, and not only justice and other moral values, as largely bound within each tradition existing in a pluralist society seems to place an inescapable obstacle in the way of any kind of common practice of formal education within such a society. In moral education, any serious attempt at critical, rational reflection on conflicting beliefs can be challenged as giving a privileged position to what is simply one tradition of rationality in the society. The distinction between vital and stagnant traditions does little to alleviate this problem.

In referring to secular universities, MacIntyre claims that teachers adopt the pretense of regarding a range of subject matter in isolation from conflicting general contents and of attempting to assess differences within it as though there were common standards of rationality. They simply encourage 'fictitious objectivity'. If this is the case for secular universities, there obviously is no way of justifying common secular schooling of children and adolescents, where the agenda of contested beliefs and practices cannot be so contained as in a university. In MacIntyre's scheme, there need to be as many kinds of schools (and universities) in a pluralist society as there are diverse traditions of rationality and justice.

Although it may not be much help to the development of coherent educational programs, MacIntyre seems to exempt the natural sciences from his general tradition-bound scheme. The have acquired 'a relatively autonomous tradition of enquiry'. It is in the humanities and social sciences – and thus moral education – that the subject matter is intertwined with the diverse traditions of rationality and moral values.

Without attempting a detailed critique of MacIntyre's position, I note the following general points.

1. There is ambiguity in what he means by 'tradition'. Usually, it seems to refer to an inclusive way of life (eg Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, secular humanism). In

some contexts, it seems to be more narrowly focused on systematic theories of rationality (such as idealism, empiricism, critical realism) and morality (eg deontological or teleological interpretations). They are all traditions in the sense that they involve beliefs, practices, institutional forms and so on, that endure and evolve over time.

But ways of life include elements (customs, rituals etc) that make them significantly different from specifically defined traditions of intellectual inquiry. The two kinds of tradition often become entangled, but can be distinguished. MacIntyre himself, as we have seen, accords relative autonomy to the tradition of inquiry in the natural sciences; and, as the condition for any vital inclusive tradition, he requires respect for the basic features of the correspondence theory of truth (part of the special tradition of epistemological inquiry, to which he also seems to accord relative autonomy).

These and other conditions that he accepts apply across the inclusive traditions (or ways of life). They enable him to avoid any charge of crude relativism. But they also provide what he seems unwilling to accept: criteria of rationality and moral values that form a common intellectual tradition by which diverse inclusive traditions (or ways of life) can be compared and assessed.

2. While MacIntyre correctly stresses that liberal theory is itself part of an historical tradition, he fails to distinguish the complex diversity – ranging from emphasis on a narrow set of political values to comprehensive theories of the human good – contained within the broad tradition called 'liberalism'.

3. Although he rejects any liberal basis for the coexistence of different ways of life in a pluralist society, MacIntyre offers no clear account of what alternative protects both the existence of conflicting traditions **(**with their conscientious followers) and the coherence of the society.

Overlapping consensus

In his much discussed book *A Theory of Justice*[3] Rawls attempted to establish the basic moral principles that all rational human beings would agree should regulate their actions as members of a society. He appealed to the rather artificial 'experiment' of human beings deliberating in advance of entering a social order and in ignorance of what the particular characteristics and circumstances of their life would be (what he called 'the original position', being behind 'the veil of ignorance'). Given that all they know are the basic conditions that affect human life and what key goods any rational person would desire, he claimed that there are two fundamental procedural principles on which all rational persons would agree. The first is that 'each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar liberty for others'. The second states that 'social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all'.[4] Beyond assuming the limited range of primary goods regarded as desirable for any worthwhile life (among which Rawls gives a special place to the sense of self-respect), the key moral principles of a social order express procedural rights. They do not depend on the recognition of any substantial body of moral goods – much less any particular interpretation of what constitutes a morally good human life.

Although *A Theory of Justice* is not directly addressing the tension between unity and diversity in a pluralist liberal democracy, the conclusions Rawls reaches are evidently shaped by the conditions of such a society (particularly as they exist in the United States of America). He is confident that the public life of a society can be

conducted on the basis of largely procedural principles of justice and liberty without impinging on the pursuit of diverse, even conflicting, comprehensive views of moral goodness in the nonpublic spheres of life (from personal decisions to the activities of groups within the general social order).

In many lectures and articles since *A Theory of Justice,* Rawls has qualified his own 'original position'. Most of his later ideas have been drawn together in *Political Liberalism.*[5] What is made much clearer is that he is discussing justice as it applies to the political domain of a society comprising diverse overlapping traditions that share the basic values of 'liberal democracy'. It is also emphasised that the principles of justice proposed in the earlier book are not regarded as objective, universal moral truths but as principles on which all reasonable members of a liberal democracy would agree are appropriate for the conduct of public life. Presumably, Rawls would accept at least something of MacIntyre's tradition-bound approach: that a society with radically different traditions of social and political order would find other principles more defensible for the guidance of its public life.

Rawls has elaborated his earlier stipulated distinction between 'rational' and 'reasonable'. The former refers to the selection of efficient means to serve one's interests (giving due weight to long-term as well as short-term ends). Being reasonable – at least as it relates to social life – is the effort to find commonly acceptable grounds on which people, as free and equal agents, can live cooperatively. Reasonable decisions are about fair terms of cooperation; they are located between altruism and self-interest.

To be reasonable, a judgment is subject to conditions of objectivity – due discussion and reflection, regard for relevant evidence and reasons. Rawls refers to the facts of common sense and undisputed findings of science, but he seems to use the more general criterion of what, in the political order, is commonly recognised by free and equal citizens as reasonable. To express a reasoned view is quite different from voicing one's psychological state. In a pluralist democratic society, the objective is to determine principles on which the citizens can agree are reasonable for the conduct of their common political life. Such principles will inevitably reflect notions of right rather than good. How they might be justified as true, and not simply reasonable, is a matter for the diverse broad interpretations of the good for human life that coexist in the society.

In the more recent writings, Rawls makes clearer that his account of justice as fairness is strictly a political concept. He reiterates that the dominance of rights in this conception does not exclude all ideas of the good. In fact, the very thin account of the good on which he earlier relied has been somewhat expanded. Among the 'very great virtues' that make a constitutional democracy possible, he refers to civility, tolerance, cooperation (or willingness to meet others halfway), reasonableness and a sense of fairness. The achievement of a reasonable pluralism is itself an intrinsic good for citizens, both as individuals and as members of a group. Although the range of goods to be recognised in the public order is wider, Rawls still firmly rejects endorsement of any comprehensive view of the good, including those put forward by liberal theorists such as Kant and Mill.

A closely related feature of his theory is the sharp distinction he continues to draw between public and nonpublic reasons (and morality). All reasoning – whether at the level of individual life or various associations within a society or the political order – is subject to rules of inference, relevant evidence and the like. Public reasons are those directly related to the issues of political justice. They may be supplemented by reasons

that reflect a comprehensive theory of the good, but this is permissible only to the extent that the ideal of public reason in the pluralist society is strengthened.

While Rawls wishes to maintain a clear distinction between political justice (together with related public reasoning) and the various inclusive notions of the good that exist in a pluralist society, he acknowledges that, in relation to the latter, his account of political justice is not entirely neutral.

Obviously, justice as fairness is not procedurally neutral. On interpretations of substantive good, the aim is to be neutral, but in actual effects or influences there is no guarantee of complete neutrality. He refers to a point emphasised by Isaiah Berlin: 'some among the Great Goods cannot live together. That is a conceptual truth. We are doomed to choose, and every choice may entail an irreparable loss'.[6] Radical incompatibility can exist even among objective (and thus true) values. In Rawls' words, 'a just liberal society may have far more space than other social worlds but it can never be without loss. . . In the realm of values, as opposed to the world of fact, not all truths can fit into one social world'. Hence, although Rawls' account of political justice as fairness does not specifically include or exclude, in advance, a substantive conception of the good, its application does place limits on what substantive goods are acceptable in the conduct of public debate.

In *Political Liberalism,* Rawls also acknowledges that, apart from purely theoretical factors, the actual historical circumstances in the life of a society at a given time will affect the influence that the application of justice as fairness has upon diverse ways of life within the society. However, in several places he goes further and rules out certain comprehensive doctrines (eg, certain forms of religious fundamentalism, systems that violate basic rights and liberties) as not being permissible in a reasonable pluralism, or at least as not deserving an equal chance of flourishing. (However, they would not be restrained or suppressed unless they thwarted the equal liberty of all.) To be on an equal footing in a pluralist society, the diverse traditions (in MacIntyre's sense) must meet the conditions for the exercise of public reason in the application of political justice.

On the role of the common schools of a pluralist liberal democracy in moral education, I think it is obvious that Rawls' earlier account of the moral goods that sustain the procedural principles of justice as fairness is far too thin for any serious practice of moral education. It is doubtful whether it would even provide an adequate basis for the conduct of common schools as social institutions.

In the later book, the range of moral goods has been expanded. Thus, there is more scope for moral education in the common schools (an example of a key social practice). There can be a development of commitment to some moral ideals, related attitudes, dispositions and so on. Common schools would, of course, be limited in the justification of morality (both substantive and procedural) to what was necessary for the conduct of the political order in a plural liberal democracy.

Political liberalism, Rawls himself points out[7], requires that the process of formal education (in both public and private schools) should equip the young with a knowledge of their constitutional and civic rights. He stresses that they should learn to respect freedom of conscience and understand that 'apostasy' is not a crime. The point of the latter is to ensure that continued membership of a particular religious or other group beyond childhood does not reflect ignorance of basic rights or ungrounded fear of punishment. Education should also prepare the young to be fully cooperating members of society; equip them with the knowledge, skills and

attitudes to be self-supporting; encourage the political virtues by which fair terms of social cooperation are honoured; and ensure that the differences between political and comprehensive liberalism are well understood.

Despite the increasing range of moral goods in Rawls' later account of justice as fairness, he still maintains a sharp distinction between the public (or political) and the nonpublic domains of moral life. If, as I shall argue shortly, this distinction cannot be defended, it places serious limits on the adequacy of Rawls' kind of theory as the basis for moral education in common schools (and various other activities in the life of a democratic society). Ironically, the broader account of political justice that Rawls now defends may also raise difficulties for the neutrality in relation to comprehensive ways of life that is expected of common schools and other public institutions in a pluralist society. Thus, in some respects, the revised theory of justice as fairness does not go far enough, while, in other respects, it may go too far.

In his review of *Political Liberalism,* Hampshire argues that, while Rawls is now defending a narrower sense of liberalism than in *A Theory of Justice,* the dispositions he assumes still form the relatively broad range than come within 'civic humanism'.[8] Rawls explicitly denies that political liberalism extends to civic humanism (understood as holding that the highest good of human life is achieved through participation in the political life of a democratic society).[9] While he does not endorse civic humanism as **the** comprehensive way of life, I think it is fair to claim that political liberalism, if it is to provide an adequate basis for the conduct of public life in a democratic society must encourage civic humanism to a substantial degree.

In the spirit of MacIntyre's position, it could be objected that Rawls has developed an approach to public morality on the basis of a liberal version of morality (and one that includes substantial elements of civic humanism). It is true that what Rawls endorses as 'reasonableness' is in the liberal tradition. However, given the condition of diverse traditions of morality and rationality living together in a common political order, I do not see that there is any alternative to following the procedures and values identified by Rawls as reasonable in attempting to solve issues that affect the public life of the society.

What can be questioned is Rawls' optimism that fundamental differences among diverse conceptions of the good life can be neatly bracketed off from substantive questions about what should be done in the public domain[10] – or that there can usually be consensus on reasonable solutions to public issues even though they are supported in different ways by these various conceptions of the good life. One need only consider the radical differences over such practices as euthanasia, abortion, parental authority over children, the provision of safe injecting centres for heroin addicts, banning the publication of 'hard' pornography on the Internet, restrictions on the number of gambling machines in hotels and clubs in working-class areas. Although in *Political Liberalism*[11] Rawls allows reasons that reflect particular comprehensive doctrines to play some part in 'public reason', he still draws too sharp a division between the political domain and the rest of human life. In any case, he assumes that there is only one defensible political conception of justice for a democratic society[12].

In *Political Liberalism,* while Rawls holds to the priority of the right over the good in justice as fairness, he does give attention to the range of basic goods that it includes. He distinguishes two moral powers: a capacity for a sense of justice that

ensures fair terms of social cooperation, and a capacity for a conception of the good[13]. However, in justice as fairness, the right has priority over the good, and what is included in the latter must be restricted to the political domain[14]. It would certainly enable a pluralist society to run more smoothly if the public or political conduct of life could be narrowly defined and clearly marked oft from those areas in which the conflicting moral traditions within the society operate. However, as I have indicated, there are many important decisions affecting the public life of a society in which ideals of the good that do not meet this condition play a crucial role.

While respect for certain values and procedures are necessary for the common good of a pluralist society, this does not translate into a simple distinction between public and private morality. One of the most difficult tasks required of public authorities by a commitment to pluralism is that decisions overriding particular beliefs or practices of any of the diverse ways of life in the society should be thoroughly defensible. This applies especially in cases where the decision extends to practices that are clearly in the private sphere. As Stuart Hampshire has noted, 'the separation between the political domain of public consensus and the private domain of protected moral diversity, superficially so attractive, is precarious and unstable'.[15]

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1 I have discussed this topic in 'Moral education in a pluralist liberal democracy', in J Mark Halstead and Terence H McLaughlin (eds) (1999), *Education in Morality,* London: Routledge: Ch 3.

2 Macintyre, Alasdair (1988*), Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press. John Rawls (1973), *A Theory of Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; (1993), *Political Liberalism*, New York: Columbia University Press (Paperback edition was published in 1999. See Note 5). An article of mine related to central themes of these books is B Crittenden (1994), 'Conflicting Traditions and Education in a Democracy: Can Liberalism Provide Defensible Common Values?' *Curriculum Inquiry*, 24, 3, Fall: 293-326.

3 Details in Note 2.

4 Rawls, 1973: 60. A more detailed statement is given on 302-3. There is another statement in Rawls, 1993: 5-6. It should be noted that the condition justifying social and economic inequality - 'to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society' - is nowhere near fulfilment in any contemporary democratic society.

5 Details in Note 2. The content of the paperback edition of *Political Liberalism* is somewhat different from the hardback edition. A second introduction has been included (along with the first); Lectures VI ('The Idea of Public Reason'), VII (he Basic Structure as Subject'), VIII ('The Basic Liberties and Their Priority') and IX ('Reply to Habermas') have been added in the 1999 edition. Lectures VII and VIII are revised articles, written originally in 1978 and 1982 respectively. 'Reply to Habermas' refers to the article by Habermas on the hardback edition of *Political Liberalism* in the (1995) *Journal of Philosophy* XCII, 3 March: 109-31 ('Reconciliation through the Public Use of Reason: Remarks on John Rawls' *Political Liberalism*'). The reply was also published in the same number of the journal. The first three Lectures in both editions are substantially those given at Columbia University as the John Dewey Lectures in 1980.

6 The quotation is from Isaiah Berlin (1992), *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, New York: Vintage Books: 13.

[7] Rawls, 1993: 199.
[8] Stuart Hampshire (1993), 'Liberalism: The New Twist', *New York Review of Books*, 12 August: 44.
[9] See Rawls, 1993 and 1999 (both hardback and paperback editions): 206.
[10] Habermas, *art cit:* 129 is strongly critical of 'the rigid boundary between the political and the nonpublic identities of the citizens' in Rawls' theory. In his reply (final chapter of *Political Liberalism*, paperback edition), Rawls does not seem to address this criticism.
[11] Rawls, 1993: 247-54.
[12] *ibid*: 174-6.
[13] See for example, *ibid*: 103-4.
[14] For example, *ibid:* 203.
[15] Hampshire, *art cit*: 44.

Normative scepticism

Michael Smith

When I first took up my present position at the Research School of the Social Sciences (RSSS), I vividly remember attending the launch of a book about the empirical aspects of institutional design. The person presiding, who shall remain nameless, began in his inimitable fashion, and then got down to business. 'We all know which ends our institutions should be serving. The really important question, which I am pleased to say this book addresses, is how we should design our institutions so as to ensure that they succeed in serving them.'

I remember wondering, as I listened, what on earth he could have been thinking. Perhaps he thought that those for whom the book was written would all agree about the ends that institutions should serve, and that they simply wanted an answer to the 'How?' question. Or perhaps he thought that such disagreements as those reading the book have with each other about which ends our institutions should serve would make no practical difference when it came to questions of institutional design. But neither of these claims seemed especially convincing to me.

For one thing, theoretical disagreements about which ends our institutions should serve are ubiquitous. Ordinary citizens, and the politicians who represent them, get involved in such disagreements as soon as they begin discussing matters of political principle, for example. Should our institutions promote justice? Or should they instead promote equality? Or liberty? Or welfare? Or should they instead foster and express respect for the citizens who live under them? Or should they instead serve some combination of these goals? Or should they serve some other goal entirely? Questions like these come up very early on in any political argument. It therefore seemed to me that it was radically unclear who all these people were who were supposed to agree about the ends that our institutions should serve. In my experience not even belonging to same political party was likely to secure that kind of agreement.

For another, it also seemed to me to be just plain false that these more theoretical questions idle when it comes to questions of practice. Whether institutions are fundamentally justified by (say) the extent to which they encourage people to show proper respect for each other, and the extent to which they serve to express respect themselves, or whether instead they are justified by the extent to which they succeed at maximizing welfare, looks like a difference at the level of fundamental justification

that would mandate quite different institutional arrangements. After all, whereas the latter places only extrinsic value on people having a say about the ways in which they are to lead their lives, the former places intrinsic value on people having such a say. In certain contexts, those in which in order to maximize welfare we would have to forgo the expression of respect, this difference looks like it would make all of the difference.

Contrary to the suggestion made at the book launch, it seemed to me then, and it still seems to me now, that it is mistaken to attempt to prioritize the empirical over the theoretical, or the theoretical over the empirical, in the social sciences. Much empirical research takes certain normative claims for granted, and such research therefore desperately needs a parallel research effort into the theoretical basis of those normative claims, a research effort whose ultimate aim has to be either the vindication, the modification, or the rejection of those normative claims. Absent some such research effort, the empirical research is in danger of being completely misguided, driven by the wrong normative commitments. Equally, however, theoretical research which aims to establish the truth of certain normative claims rather than others desperately needs a parallel, more empirically oriented research effort, a research effort whose ultimate aim must be to tease out the practical implications of those normative claims. Absent some such empirical research effort the theoretical research is in danger of looking like just so much abstract system building.

There is therefore, if you like, at least as I see it, a natural division of academic labor within the social sciences. My own work on the more theoretical side of this divide has in recent times focussed on what seems to me to be an especially significant challenge to the truth of normative claims of all kinds. The challenge manifests itself in the increasing tendency both in academic circles, and in popular culture more generally, to suppose that normative claims are in some way globally mistaken, or bogus, or phony. The idea is that for any normative claims at all to be true something very special would have to be the case, something so special that we know, in advance, not only that that special thing isn't the case, but that it couldn't be the case. It therefore follows, or so the challenge continues, that no normative claims are true, and hence that we are all driven inevitably in the direction of nihilism. There is just a jungle out there, a war of all against all, and the idea that there is a privileged way that things should be, as distinct from the way they are, is one which we must give up. We must give it up because the very idea that there is a way that things should be, as opposed to the way they are, is, quite literally, unsustainable.

This nihilistic idea is often summed up in the often quoted slogan 'God is dead, so everything is permitted'. But that is unfortunate, as this slogan incorporates at least two mistakes. What the slogan is supposed to say (I take it) is that it follows from the fact that God doesn't exist that no moral claims are true. But, strictly speaking, that isn't what the slogan says. What it says is that if God doesn't exist then everything is **permitted**. But the claim that you are permitted to do something is a moral claim: something you are permitted to do is something that you have a right or an entitlement to do. But if no moral claims are true then the claim that everything is permitted isn't true either, as there are no permissions, and there are no rights or entitlements either. That is the first reason the slogan seems to me to be mistaken. The second is that it simply isn't clear to me how God's existence is supposed to make any difference, one way or another, to whether any moral claims at all are true. To be sure, if God exists then there exists an all-good, all-knowing, all-powerful being whose existence ensures that the world in which we live is the best of all possible worlds. But if God doesn't exist then the most that follows is that that all-good being doesn't exist, and that there is

therefore no such guarantee that the world in which we live is the best of all possible worlds. Yet it is surely quite consistent with this that there exist all sorts of less than all-good beings, beings like us, for example, and that what we inhabit is a world which falls short of being the best of all possible worlds. But if some less then all-good beings exist, and if they inhabit a world that isn't the best of all possible worlds, then some moral claims are true: namely, the claims that some existent beings are less than all-good and that the world which they inhabit falls short of being the best of all possible worlds.

Now you are no doubt thinking that I am just splitting hairs at this point. I'm sure that you got the basic idea from the slogan right from the outset. The basic idea is that the existence of moral claims requires the existence of something very special indeed, namely **goodness** itself, or **justifications**, but the very existence of goodness or of justifications is something in which we can no longer believe. We can, of course, believe that there are various people with different aims and aspirations, aims and aspirations that conflict and create tensions. We can also believe that each of us has a preference about the way in which these conflicts are to be resolved, and that some of us get what we prefer and others don't. But the idea that there is, in addition, a fact about which of these aims and aspirations are good and which are bad, or which of these different ways of resolving conflicts is justified and which unjustified, is meant to be just so much hogwash. It is thus supposed to be as hard for us to believe in goodness itself, or modes of interaction that are justified, as distinct from our several, and conflicting, aims and aspirations, and the several and conflicting ways of resolving our conflicts that each of us would prefer, as it is to believe in magic, or, in these atheistic times, in God.

Needless to say, if this much more pessimistic critique of normative discourse is correct then the speech made by the person who presided over the book launch I described at the outset can be given a much more sinister gloss. Not only do none of us know which ends our institutions should be serving – for there are, as it turns out, no such justificatory facts to be known in the first place – assertions like the ones made on that occasion, and those that each of us who goes in for normative talk makes all of the time, can only be understood as either the naïve and mistaken expression of unfounded normative commitment, or as just so much rhetoric, a dressing up of the naked exercise of our individual power in the clothes of justification, a dressing up that looks designed to cloak such exercises of power in the kind of garb that stops others from realizing that they can prevent its exercise. Normative talk is smoke and mirrors. Books about how to make our institutions serve particular ends are simply 'how to' manuals for those with particular interests rather than others.

Though I do not believe this more pessimistic critique, I must confess that I take it extremely seriously. Think of the difference between conscientious politicians who give arguments in favor of their views, in the attempt to persuade others, and those who manipulate others for their own ends; or the difference between law-abiding citizens and those who please themselves without constraint; or the difference between parents who care for their children and those don't think twice about abandoning them. As we ordinarily think of these differences it isn't merely the case that those in the second group have unusual motivations, motivations not possessed by those in the first group. The difference is a normative one. Those in first group have better motivations than those in the second, and those in the second group are therefore obliged to make some effort to control themselves. But none of this is true if we accept the pessimistic critique. What seems to me to be especially vexing, however – and

thus the reason that I take the pessimistic critique so seriously – is that it turns out to be extremely difficult to say what precisely this normative difference consists in. Let me illustrate this by briefly surveying some of the standard views philosophers have held about the nature of normative claims. To anticipate, my conclusion will be a sceptical one – none of the views on offer, or anyway none of the standard views I go on to describe – succeed in telling us what is wrong with the pessimistic critique. But though my conclusion is sceptical it is also one which will, I hope, strike most readers as utterly outrageous, so outrageous that they can see immediately why someone should spend their time trying to show what is wrong with it.

One very standard view about the nature of normativity is that held by some utilitarians. They tell us that a normative claim is nothing special. It is simply a claim about how happiness is to be maximized and pain is to be minimized. Now don't misunderstand this view. The view is not the same as that held by some other utlitarians, which is that the state of affairs in which happiness is maximized and suffering is minimized is itself good. This view, unlike the one just described, admits that goodness is a distinct feature, one which is possessed by the state of affairs in which happiness is maximized and suffering is minimized. The idea that is presently under consideration is not this, but is rather that what it **means** to say that a state of affairs is good is simply that it is one in which happiness is maximized and suffering is minimized. There is no further feature, no additional feature of goodness, that is possessed by such a state of affairs. But the main problems with this suggestion are, I hope, already plain to view.

For one thing, though, if this view were correct it would follow that the disagreements that people ordinarily have about which courses of action are justified, and which aren't, obviously couldn't be expressed in the language in which we might initially have thought that they could be expressed – that is, in the language of goodness and justification – this wouldn't entail that those disagreements disappear. All that it entails is that people would be forced to express their disagreements in other language. Perhaps they would be forced to express it by saying that they disagree about which states of affairs are 'choiceworthy', or which they find themselves 'committed to realizing', or which ones they 'identify with', or which of them 'make a special claim on their desires', or . . . and so we might go on. But as soon as we see that this is so we can see that it is fundamentally misguided to do what the utilitarians described do, which is to tie the meaning of the words 'good' and 'justification' to one among the variety of competing conceptions of what the ultimate justifiers might be. It is misguided because it simply makes it difficult to express such disagreements as we have about which conception is correct.

The other main problem with the suggestion is related. The problem is that it is unclear how someone's willingness to make a normative claim, so conceived, is meant to be brought together with an account of what it is for that agent to be responsible. What we desperately need from an account of what it is to make a normative claim is some understanding of why, once accepted, a normative claim is something to which rational agents hold themselves: that is, why rational agents are committed to realizing the ends they believe to be justified, why they identify with those ends, why those ends make a special claim on their desires, and so on. But it looks like certain individuals could quite rationally believe that an act maximizes happiness and minimizes suffering and yet remain utterly indifferent to that fact. For example, those who think that the ultimate justifier is respect could surely admit that an act maximizes happiness and minimizes suffering and yet, quite rationally, not hold themselves to the maximization of happiness and the minimization of suffering: that is, not be committed to realizing

this end, not identify with it, not feel that it makes a special claim on their desires, and so on.

A second standard idea tries to take the second of these problems to heart. The idea is the one that is held by some social contract theorists, those we might call the 'bargaining' theorists. Their idea that a normative claim is a claim about what each of us would have self-interested reason to do if we entered into an agreement with other self-interested individuals about the principles of conduct to which we should all bind ourselves in order to facilitate social cooperation for mutual benefit. If this is what a normative claim is then it is supposed to be clear why we hold ourselves to acting in accordance with the normative claims we accept. For to do otherwise would be to act contrary to our self-interest. However there are two main problems with this suggestion as well.

The first is a replay of the objection to the first suggestion. This too looks another attempt to tie the meaning of the words 'good' and 'justification' to a certain, partisan, conception of what it would be good to do, or what we would be justified in doing. Yet it is surely far from obvious that the only acts that we are justified in performing are those that we each have self-interested reason to perform because of the benefits that we would receive by thereby eliciting the cooperation of others. Think, for example, of someone who has been severely handicapped since birth, so handicapped that the benefits that we could receive through helping them would be far fewer than the burdens that we would thereby incur. Is it really plausible to suppose, as those who accept this suggestion really must, that it is literally incoherent to suppose that there is a justification for any one of us to help such a handicapped person? It seems to me that that is manifestly implausible. Not only is this not incoherent, it seems to me to be true that we have a justification for helping them. It is just that the justification doesn't consist in the benefits that we could thereby gain.

The second, and deeper, objection is that this view helps itself to the idea of a normative claim. It simply assumes, after all, that the claim that a course of action is in my self-interest is normative: that is, it assumes that, to the extent that I am rational, I would hold myself to the performance of an act that it is in my self-interest to perform: assumes, in other words, that it is good for me to get what is in my self-interest, or that I am justified in so acting. But in the present context that is an example of just the kind of claim whose truth cannot be taken for granted. We want to understand what it is for claims like this to be true, if they are true. What exactly does it mean to say that it is good for me to get what is in my self-interest, or that so acting is justified? That is left unexplained.

A third very standard idea thus tries to avoid the problems with the first two suggestions by being as content-free as possible. This is the suggestion made by the logical positivists. Their idea was that normative claims are not factual claims at all, but are rather simply expressions of our non-cognitive attitudes. When an agent makes a normative claim all she is doing is expressing her own preferences about how things are to be, preferences which others may not share and which, in no deep sense, do others have any reason to share either.

But the main problem with this suggestion is that it makes no room at all for the difference between the way the world is conceived to be by those who think that normative claims are kosher – that is, by the non-cognitivists themselves – and the way that it is conceived to be by the nihilists. Both agree that when we make normative claims we simply express our own, potentially idiosyncratic, preferences. Both agree that there is no fact of the matter about which of us is right, which of us is wrong. Both agree

that there is no fact of the matter about the standards to which we should hold ourselves. Both agree that there are only the various different and conflicting things that each of us would prefer, and our tendency to express these different and conflicting preferences in normative language. The only difference between the world-views of the non-cognitivist and the nihilist is that the non-cognitivist can't see why the nihilist thinks normative claims ever purported to do more than simply give expression to our preferences. But to the extent that we can understand the nihilistic world view at all – that is, to the extent that we can appreciate the difference between expressing a preference and its being appropriate for us to have that preference, or for the object of that preference to be good – it seems to me that we must side with the nihilists on this issue. The non-cognitivist's surrogates for normative claims – the mere expression of our preferences – simply robs those claims of their normative import.

So what is left? Unsurprisingly, one possibility at this point would be to stamp your foot and insist that there **is** a very special property of goodness or justification that we are capable of latching onto, a property which is such that, when we believe it to be possessed by an outcome or an action, rationally constrains us to be motivated accordingly. This is, in essence, the view held by the intuitionists and the dogmatic rationalists. Indeed, they thought not only that they had to posit the existence of a special, transcendent, property of goodness or justification, but that they also had to posit the existence of a special, transcendent, faculty of moral intuition via which we detect the presence of this special property. But of course, once you've been led to posit properties and faculties that so totally elude our understanding, it should come as no surprise to hear that nihilism is just around the corner.

The upshot, as I see things, is thus that the (regretable) tendency that we find in both academic circles and in popular culture to think that normative talk is all smoke and mirrors appears to be well-founded. There is indeed good reason to think that when we engage in normative talk we thereby simply express our preferences, but that we do so in a particular form, a form that allows us to pull the wool over the eyes of those whose preferences run contrary to our own. There is indeed good reason to think that the book whose launch I described at the outset is just a 'how to' manual for those with particular interests rather than others. If this conclusion strikes you as utterly appalling and outrageous – which, as I hope I have made plain, is the way it strikes me – then I hope you will see why at least some of us spend time trying to refute it. And how is to be refuted? In other words, what is the more plausible conception of the nature normative claims that I haven't so far described? That, I am afraid, must be a story for another occasion.

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Morality: a Labour Movement Perspective

Verity Burgmann

In *Marxism and Class Theory*, Frank Parkin suggested that the 'disruptive potential' of an occupational grouping can form the basis for an 'alternative standard of distributive justice': the development of radically different ideas about appropriate wage levels from those normally held about the relationship between status and

income. According to Parkin, workers who knew they had the power to inflict serious injury upon their employers by the withdrawal of labour were inclined to take the view that, precisely because they had this power to disrupt, they therefore deserved to be paid considerably more than they were. Responding to the wages militancy of the 1960s and 1970s, he concluded that, among industrially powerful groups, there exists 'a subterranean theory of distributive justice which provides tacit moral justification for organized labour's attempts at usurpation'.[1]

The assumption in Parkin's formulation – that it is labour which attempts usurpation – is revealing. His position, as the subtitle of *Marxism and Class Theory* suggests, is indeed 'A Bourgeois Critique'. For Parkin denies the much more substantial moral foundation upon which labour movement activity rests. It is not the disruptive potential of workers that provides 'moral justification' for their 'attempts at usurpation' but rather an understanding of the relations between employers and workers that would dispute that workers can be the usurpers. Labour movement theorists and activists have long contested the morality of the relationship between those who sell their labour-power and those who buy that labour-power on the grounds that it is a relationship that sanctions continuous 'usurpation' on the part of employers.

Central to labour movement critiques of the labour-capital relationship have been the 'labour theory of value' and the 'theory of surplus value' formulated by Karl Marx and popularised throughout the labour movement during the past 130 years. These Marxian concepts have enjoyed wide support within the labour movement, extending far beyond those within this movement who would call themselves Marxists, for labour movement propagandists of all sorts and persuasions saw in these theories a sound moral basis from which to challenge the ethics of the labour-capital relationship.

According to the theory of surplus value, the employing class under capitalism necessarily exploits the working class by extracting 'surplus value'. Each capitalist invariably pays each individual worker less in wages than the value to the capitalist of the labour performed by that worker; if this were not the case, the capitalist would not employ the worker. The balance, appropriated by the capitalist in the form of profit, is the surplus value of the labour power of the worker for which the worker is not remunerated. Therefore, no matter how good the wages paid might be, they never represent the full value of the labour performed; thus there is always an element of stealing or usurpation on the part of employers.

The exploitation embodied in the extraction of surplus value has typically been justified within capitalist paradigms by the insistence that capitalists deserve a return on their investment. However, the labour movement critique of exploitation maintained its cogency by also drawing moral succour from the labour theory of value. Marx argued that labour was the source of all value: although capital appeared to make a contribution to production as in machinery (constant capital) and wages (variable capital), both these forms of capital are generated by labour of the past. All machinery and other means of production have been made by human labour that, according to the theory of surplus value, was not fully remunerated; and the variable capital of the capitalist is also money generated by the surplus value produced by human labour. Marx referred to the means of production, the constant capital which the capitalist brings to the productive process, as 'dead labour'; the capital employers possess and for which they expect a profitable return is in effect

the labour of past generations of workers. Capital is simply previous surplus value, produced by the exploited labour of previous workers.

In the formative period of the modern labour movement, from the late nineteenth century until the Second World War, it was these revelations from Marxist thought that workers did not in reality take wages from their employers but that the employers were systematically robbing workers that formed the central component of labour movement critiques of capitalism; this continuing 'usurpation' on the part of capitalists constituted a moral problem not only for workers but for society. Even on the most moderate wing of the labour movement, Labo(u)r Party manifestoes disputed, by their declared aims and objectives, the morality of the prevailing relationship between employers and employees: 'to secure for the workers by hand and by brain the full fruits of their labour' (British Labour Party) or to 'the obtaining for all workers the full reward of their industry' (Australian Labor Party).

While there undoubtedly exists a broad spectrum of opinion within the labour movement about the extent to which those who labour have a right to contest the labour-capital relation, the theory of surplus value and the labour theory of value have together informed the moral universe within which the labour movement has operated. From such a moral standpoint labour movement thinkers and agitators asserted the rights of workers to a greater share, if not the full equivalent, of the product of their labour and confronted the arguments of employers who argued that they deserved a substantial personal return on their capital, or 'dead labour' as Marx so conveniently described it.

The most radical spirits within the labour movement found such a moral standpoint useful in rudely confronting the homilies that were regularly meted out to workers: for instance, that they owed their employers a good day's work and that they should exercise 'thrift' and restraint in how they spent their meagre wages. *The Right to be Lazy*, written by Marx's son-in-law, Paul Lafargue, asserted the injustice of the employer-employee relationship, due to the expropriation of surplus value from workers by capitalists, and urged a practical means by which to reduce the amount of surplus value expropriated: working as slowly and as little as possible. His was clearly a moral statement contesting the obligation of workers to render good service in exchange for their wages; he argued that the proletariat must trample under foot the prejudices of capitalist ethics, that it was necessary to curb its extravagant passion for work. 'It must accustom itself to working but three hours a day, reserving the rest of the day and night for leisure and feasting.'[2]

Though only the most radical shared Lafargue's extreme position, in Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century labour movement propagandists, both within and without the Labor Parties, repeatedly emphasised the significance of the immorality of capitalist social relations. In 1887 a Newcastle coal-miner, Bob Winspear, commenced publication of what became Australia's first regularly produced socialist newspaper, the *Radical*. Its opening editorial explained the reasons for its appearance:

> The wrong in existing conditions is so glaring, the evils are so deep rooted, that efforts of a vigorous nature will have to be made if labor is ever to obtain what is its admitted right, the reward of human toil distributed among the toilers.[3]

The Australian Socialist League's *Statement of Principles* in 1894 noted that the capitalist system was 'based upon class supremacy and class robbery' and resolved:

> As the present system is thus based upon class antagonism and injustice, and as the capitalist class will only permit the wage-earning class to produce wealth in the form of commodities for sale, and pay to them as wages but one-third of the wealth so produced; and take for themselves the other two-thirds as profits, surplus value or unpaid labour; the aforesaid mode of production for *profit* should be superseded by the national or collective production of wealth for *use*.

Anderson Dawson, as a Labor Member of the Legislative Assembly in Queensland, who became the first Labor Premier in the world in 1899, lectured at the Trades Hall in Brisbane in 1894. He outlined Marx's theory of surplus value and produced statistics to show how much wealthier workers would be if surplus value were not expropriated. EL Batchelor, a leader of the South Australian Labor Party, referred in 1895 to 'the ultimate object for which the Labor Party exists, viz, that every man shall himself reap the full reward of his own labor'.[4]

Tom Tunnecliffe, a boot-maker who won the prize for deductive logic at the Melbourne Workingmen's College in 1892 and later became Leader of the Victorian Labor Party, published an article on 'Value: Surplus Value. Simplified and Explained' in the labour newspaper, *Tocsin*, in 1904. Here he explained how a worker's labour-power, having been purchased for a day by an employer for the equivalent of the product of three hours of labour, was in fact used by this employer for six, nine or even twelve hours. The amount produced after the first three hours, Tunnecliffe emphasised, was surplus for the employer. The 'Labour movement . . . aims always and ever to secure the return of this surplus value to the workers, from whom it is being, and has been, wrongfully withheld'.[5] Also in 1904 the Social Democratic Party of Victoria published *Capitalism Exposed*, which enumerated the amount of surplus value expropriated from Australasian workers: between 300 and 400 pounds per head per annum. Capitalism, this pamphlet insisted, was immoral because capitalism was based on robbery.[6]

The extraction of surplus value was not only immoral *per se* but productive of other forms of immorality, of 'scrofulous kings, and lying priests and greasy millionaires and powdered prostitutes', as the utopian socialist William Lane noted with his usual hyperbole.[7] Peter Bowling of the Colliery Employees Federation explained in the *Newcastle Morning Herald* in 1905 that the appropriation of surplus value was the 'prolific source of society's evils'. There would be no peace 'until right and justice triumphs over wrong and injustice'. For Bob Winspear the capitalist system not only robbed workers of the full value of their labour but warped human existence in every conceivable way. Fond of ecclesiastical pastiche, his 'Ten Commandments of Capitalism' commenced with 'I, the Capitalist, am the Lord thy God' and continued:

> 5.Honor thy father and thy mother, and toil like them for Me, that thy days may be long in My land, which the Lord thy God lendeth thee in return for rent, interest, profit, etc.
>
> 6.Thou shalt not kill, until I command thee to do so, then shalt thou kill mine enemies though they be thy brothers and sister, or thy father and mother.

> 7.Thou shalt not commit adultery: all adultery shall be committed by Me; even thy food and drink shall be adulterated by Me.
>
> 8.Thou shalt not steal – from Me; but thou shalt not complain when I steal from thee.[8]

From 1907, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), a movement that combined Marxist theory with anarchist and syndicalist strategies for organising workers into One Big Union, offered the most vehement critique of capitalist exploitation. Where the more moderate trade unionists of the time were dedicated to the attainment of 'a fair day's pay for a fair day's work', the IWW agreed with Lafargue that workers should provide the capitalists with 'a poor day's work for a poor day's pay'. There was a sound moral basis to industrial sabotage in the form of the go-slow: 'if the boss expects you to be thrifty, or pays you only wages enough to be thrifty, be thrifty with your work, work slower . . . Practice thrift with your work, but be a spendthrift with your wages and demand the best.'[9]

The IWW argued that the work day was divided into two, very unequal, parts: necessary labour, the short time needed to produce the equivalent in commodities to the wage earned; and surplus labour, in which the labourer was working, in effect, 'free' for the capitalist, thereby providing profit.[10] AE Brown's *The Case for a Six-Hour Day*, produced by the Sydney IWW, argued that, with a shorter working day, the proportion between what workers produced and what they received would increase; and with this reduction in surplus value, the power, influence and domination of the master class would be lessened.

> When it is remembered that out of Surplus Value – the unpaid wages of labor – are maintained standing armies, navies and police, and vast hordes of non-producers and middlemen of various kinds; and that it is the source of the wasteful and riotous living of the rich; it will be seen how important it is to lessen the amount of Surplus Value produced, and thereby the amount of its appropriation by the capitalist class.[11]

Popular notions sanctioning hard work and upholding the dignity of labour were capitalist constructs. An IWW publication, *How Capital has Hypnotised Society*, likened the working class of the world to a person under the spell of a hypnotist, under the control of another person, whose standards of right and wrong were 'determined by the demands of the industrially and politically ruling class'. The author inquired: why does the working class consent to become hoboes, paupers, outcasts, mere rubbish and waste in a world whose whole output they themselves have created? Why is it that, even when they are organised into unions or a political party, they do not dare to touch the product of their own toil which has been stolen from them? 'To take what they have produced, to enjoy the fruits of their labor, is as natural for the working class as any function of the body is natural. It is the only ethics Labor has: TO THE LABORER HIS PRODUCT.'[12]

Bourgeois values, the IWW argued, reinforced the power of the capitalists over the workers, increased the rate of exploitation and inculcated notions in the working class accepting of the capitalist order. In an open letter to WG Spence, in his '600 pounds a year job as a mental prostitute of the master class', the IWW newspaper *Direct Action* declared: 'You blathered about the immorality of the I.W.W. in breaking agreements; to hell with your morality, it belongs to the filthy, blood-sucking leeches who have lived on us. Too long we, the workers, have been bound by their rotten moral ethics.' The IWW had no use for 'the morals of the masters';

the great work before the IWW was 'to give to the working class a philosophy for the basis of an ethical code that will be working class in character'.[13] The IWW not only rejected the ethics of the exploiters but urged the adoption of the alternative moral code espoused by the syndicalist philosopher Georges Sorel: 'the ethics of the producers'.[14]

How Capital has Hypnotised Society argued 'it is just as imperative that the working class create its own civilization, its own morals, ethics, religion and industrial and economic order, as it was that the capitalist class should'. In order to make bourgeois values, such as self-reliance, serviceable, workers should take such advice not as individuals but as a collectivity. *Direct Action* explained its adaptation of Nietzschean philosophy: Nietzsche had shown the way for the favoured few; it was necessary to do likewise for the many, to teach the masses 'the will to power'. The weakness of labour organisations lay in the psychology of the units, therefore Nietzsche was badly needed to clarify the workers' vision, to transvalue all capitalist values, thus rejuvenating the ranks of labour with a new hope and a definite goal.[15]

The capacity to contest the morality of dominant groups is important in the mobilisation of movements that represent the interests of subordinate groups. Just as the IWW found Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals* helpful in turning Marxist insights into an energising philosophy that enabled it to occupy moral high ground, feminist theorists also utilised Nietzschean arguments to contest patriarchy. This was most evident in Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology* (1978) where Daly was clearly engaging in a Nietzschean 'transvaluation of values', redefining what is good and what is bad, counter to prevailing notions. Daly proposes the adoption of an alternative moral code, premised upon a superior female morality and an inferior male morality. In the superior female morality, that which the patriarchs would call bad is in fact good and that which they would call good is bad. Good for women is precisely what patriarchy identifies as bad, and vice versa. Women therefore should realise it is good for them to refuse to please men; they should be the 'wild' females that patriarchy hated, women stripped of the false identity of femininity constructed for her by patriarchy.[16]

Patriarchal notions about how men and women should behave are functional to male dominance in the same way that bourgeois notions about how workers should behave are to capitalism. Employers have long argued in various ways that it is wrong for workers to be 'greedy' for higher wages or less than thoroughly hard-working. At its most extreme this employer viewpoint even challenges the right of workers to combine to secure a better return for their labour. Recent changes to Australian industrial relations legislation have attempted to curtail freedom of combination, evincing an attitude towards workers' rights that approaches the Combination Acts against which the early nineteenth century British labour movement defined itself. Feminists regard male sexual violence as symptomatic of patriarchal morality; for the contemporary labour movement the guard dogs and balaclavas of Patrick's security guards are similarly emblematic of capitalist morality. Peter Reith's Workplace Relations legislation and the union-busting machinations on the waterfront in 1998 prompted a renewed assertion by the labour movement, supported by large sections of the community, of its moral right to withstand organised capital's 'attempts at usurpation'. The labour movement in this current period is more subdued than that which prompted Parkin's hypothesis; it is confined more to defence than to defiance, to resisting increased exploitation rather than reconquering surplus value in the manner of its forebears. However, its

world vision is based nonetheless on a morality that remains distinct from those who employ labour.

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2 Lafargue, Paul (1887), *The Right to be Lazy*, IWW: Sydney [c.1917]: 21-22.
3 *Radical*, 12 March 1887: 1.
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7 Lane, William (1892), *The Workingman's Paradise, An Australian Labour Novel*, Brisbane: Dunlop: 115.
8 These 'Commandments' appeared in the *International Socialist* regularly between 1910 and 1916.
9 *Direct Action*, 15 July 1915: 2.
10 *Direct Action*, 2 October 1915: 2; 15 May 1914: 2.
11 Brown, AE [c. 1917],*The Case for a Six Hour Day*, Sydney: IWW.
12 IWW (1913-1914), *How Capital has Hypnotised Society*, Sydney: 21-22, 24.
13 *Direct Action*, 4 March 1916: 2; 6 January 1917: 1.
14 Sorel, Georges (1970), *Reflections on Violence,* Collier Books: London [first published 1908]: ch 7.
15 IWW, *How Capital has Hypnotised Society*, *op cit*: 4, 20, 29; *Direct Action*, 24 June 1916: 4.
16 For a discussion of Nietzchean thought in feminism, see Rosemarie Tong (1989), *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction*, Unwin Hyman: London: 104-109.

Anthropology and Ethics (Committees)

Jeremy Beckett

Readers of *Dialogue* may have read recently about *Darkness in El Dorado*, a book that alleges grave misconduct by United States researchers among the Yanomami, a remote tribe in the jungle of Venezuela[1]. The gravest charges relate to the work of a geneticist, now deceased, who it is alleged caused the deaths of numerous Indians during a measles epidemic some years ago. These charges seem to have been discredited[2], but the accusing finger has turned to some of the other players in the exposé, including a maker of ethnographic films – also deceased – and a well known anthropologist, who is very much alive. Under the title 'Guilty Not as Charged', senior anthropologist, Marshall Sahlins, has accused the latter of behaviour in the field which, if not exposing the Yanomami to disease, seems outrageous, and certainly not the way anthropologists are supposed to relate to their subjects.[3] These and other accusations have not, of course, gone unanswered.

The Yanomami affair was made the topic of a special session at the American Anthropological Association meetings last November, but well before that, and still

now, the net is buzzing with comment. The controversy was reported in the Australian press when it first broke, and there has been a review of the debate in the HES[4] and just lately a reprint of Sahlins' swingeing attack. Although no Australian is involved, anthropologists here have also been following the debate because ethics are very much on their minds. Those who were around in the late 1960s will be reminded of the bitter controversy, in Australia and – even more – in the United States, about the use of anthropological and other social science field research as a cover for counter-insurgency intelligence gathering in Indo-China and Latin America. In the 1970s anthropology in Australia, as in the UK, had also to dispel its reputation as a handmaiden of colonialism (though in fact, colonial authorities' attitudes ranged from derision to suspicion.)

One legacy of these debates has been the codes of ethics drawn up by both the American Anthropological Association and the Australian Anthropological Society, which *inter alia* stress the researchers' primary responsibility to the people they study. There are periodic attempts to refine and update these codes, but as the AAA observes, anthropologists work in such a variety of 'fields' – studies of remote groups such as the Yanomami are now rare – that it is hard to cover all the ethical dilemmas that might arise. Censuring, let alone disciplining, members is difficult: in the few cases it was attempted, the process was protracted and finally inconclusive. Like most other social scientists, anthropologists have trusted that their colleagues would observe the 'spirit of the code' and be deterred by the disapproval of their colleagues. There has also been recognition that anthropology's capacity for harming its subjects is usually minimal. Another senior anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, has recently reviewed the Yanomami affair, concluding that, 'Given all that has happened to the Yanomami over the past half century, encountering anthropologists, and critics of anthropologists, as difficult as that may have been at times to deal with, surely ranks as historical small change, a very small blip on a very large curve.'[5]

Now, however, anthropological research, in common with all social science research coming out of Australian Universities, is subject to vetting by university Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs). Federal research funds are conditional on researchers satisfying their university committee. Anthropologists and, I am informed, other social scientists often find that the HRECs requirements and restrictions make it difficult and sometimes impossible for them to conduct their research as they have been trained to do, and as their colleagues overseas expect them to do. HRECs may not include social scientists, let alone anthropologists, and while some are open to persuasion, others insist on guidelines which come out of different kinds of disciplines and refuse to vary them. Some committee members are not researchers at all, but representative of 'the community', a concept little interrogated in the legislation which defines the structures of these committees. The difficulties are particularly severe when the research is to be conducted in non-western setting.

If established academics have difficulties with their HRECs, untried graduate students have a great deal more, and at least one anthropology department has set up its own ethics committee to advise prospective students and prepare them to negotiate their HRECs.

The initiative for the policing of research came from the medical profession, which in 1999 introduced an extended code of conduct. Government and several of the

academies ratified this code.[6] The problem for anthropologists and some other social scientists, however, is that although the NHMRC does not itself vet their research, its code has provided a model for the university HRECs, although it is often inappropriate for the social sciences.

As I understand it, the medical research code is preoccupied with questions of physical risk to the individuals involved in the research, and after the manner of methodological individualism, attempts to weigh this against the possible benefits to humanity at large, or to a particular community. The question of consent is important. It is well known that in the past, vulnerable individuals such as prisoners, the mentally disadvantaged, and racial minorities have been unwitting guinea pigs, and suffered as a result; the code is in part an attempt to avoid such abuses.

It is questionable whether social science research requires the same degree or kind of precaution as medical research. As the Australian National University department of Archaeology and Anthropology 'Ethics Framing Statement' observes, 'Some research applications come closer to the "medical model" . . . Others differ substantially in method from the medical model, and *notions of potential benefit, harm, confidentiality and consent, and other matters, either have lesser direct relevance, or need to be rather differently construed*.' (my emphasis) In fact, most cultural anthropological research is of the latter kind.

Anthropological field work, called ethnography, is distinctive in requiring investigators to live for extended periods at close quarters with 'their people'. This is unlikely to physically endanger subjects, except perhaps in the case of war zones or insurgencies which all but the most experienced of researchers should and usually do avoid. It has some potential to be socially disruptive, and fragile communities such as the Yanomami may be vulnerable to an aggressive or manipulative researcher, but generally the people are in a position to withhold cooperation or, more kindly, lay down the conditions under which the intruder will be allowed to stay. They are also able to indicate the topics that are off-limits in terms of local conventions, what subjects have to be approached with delicacy, and where the lines of privacy are drawn. Without local knowledge, all an HREC can do is talk in generalities. By contrast, since the researcher is dependent on the people's cooperation over an extended period, he or she had better take notice or the project will not go well. Occasionally someone is asked to leave. Claude Lévi-Strauss is supposed to have sent off a research student with the wise admonition: 'Remember they did not invite you!'

It is appropriate that a sponsoring body such as a university should be concerned with the welfare of the people to be studied under its auspices, but beyond extracting general undertakings, how can these matters be policed without hobbling the researcher in red tape? For example, committees often demand that they be shown questionnaires and research schedules in advance. This may be appropriate to some of the social sciences, but anthropology prefers first hand observation of people in action to elicited accounts, and unstructured interviews to formal questionnaires. When it does draw up questionnaires, it does so in the field on the basis of local knowledge; not beforehand. Other social sciences have to change questionnaires, or introduce new ones as the project proceeds.

Another source of difficulty for anthropologists is the demand that before an interview is conducted, the subject has to be informed as to its purpose, and sign a consent form, with advice about how to lodge a complaint with the sponsoring body.

This may be fair enough in the case of questionnaires or formal interviews of bureaucrats and officials, though since such persons are usually able to look after themselves, one might consider the precaution superfluous. At the other end of the social spectrum, members of outcast and illegal subcultures such as drug users and runaways, may be afraid and unwilling to identify themselves. The procedure presents other kinds of difficulties outside a liberal democratic society. Among illiterate or semi-literate rural people, forms may be associated with land racketeers, money lenders and oppressive officialdom; one signs them at one's peril. In any case, is a Chinese peasant – for example – really going to put through a complaint through to some university in faraway Australia if unhappy with the researcher's conduct?

The NHMRC code has made provision for Aboriginal communities to collectively consent through a local body, such as a council. This seems to work with some indigenous communities in Australia, though others are deeply factionalised. There may be equivalent bodies in other parts of the world, such as village heads or councils which might serve a similar gate-keeping role. However, the 'field' – perhaps a squatting area or an urban neighbourhood – may not have any such representative body, or one that it is faraway in a provincial capital.

More generally, the formulary surveillance the HRECs impose runs contrary to the open-ended, nuanced style of anthropological field research. Anthropologists typically remain in 'the field' for a year or more, and often return at intervals, some for the rest of their careers. If the community is not English speaking, they learn the language, and try to obtain a rounded understanding of people's lives, to provide a context for the particular topic they are researching. Participant observation is the term often applied to ethnography, involving perhaps living with a local family, helping out in some task and generally doing a good deal of hanging around at markets, ceremonies, parties, meetings or informal groups. It involves great deal of informal talk, which might last for hours or a few remarks exchanged while passing in the street. As one anthropologist has remarked, field research is more about conversations than interviews.

Anthropologists don't just appear in the field and start working. They have to gain entrée by one means or another, or people just won't talk to them, and this includes explaining why they have come, and what they are trying to do. Getting – say – illiterate peasants, or the inhabitants of a squatting area, to grasp what research means, is unlikely to be achieved on the first occasion, and winning people's trust often takes months, even where there is some local broker to get the process started. Clearly, in this kind of situation, obtaining written consent at the beginning of each conversations would be intolerably disruptive, not just for the research process, but for the people's life in which the researcher is for the moment a participant. Imagine a convivial gathering during a festival, with jokes and banter around the table, until someone starts explaining the event, or recalling some earlier occasion. Does the researcher demand a halt while searching around for a consent form? The prospect is absurd. Again, what about when people speak off the record? The researcher will have to treat such material with discretion, but hearing it may open up all sorts of understandings. The presentation of a consent form would probably cause the speaker to clam up.

Drawing on the medical model, HRECs often ask the researcher to assess the balance between risk and benefit to the subjects. As I suggested earlier, the

physical risk is usually minimal, other kinds of risk and benefit have to be assessed in terms of groups rather than individuals. Unless the researcher is working for a community, perhaps on a project they have requested, or on some aid project, there may be little expectation of direct benefit either. Much anthropological research is curiosity driven. However, it turned out that some of my research had practical use for the people, decades later, and others have found the same. In the mean time, anthropologists may bring in small amounts of money to pay their main informants or assistants, and try to make up for the disturbance they cause by making themselves useful in small ways, like writing letters; in this global age many end up providing hospitality for their informants back home.

In anthropology, as in other social science research, problems are more likely to arise after the research has been done, at the point where the results are published. Anthropologists used to be able to assume that their subjects would never read what they had written; now they have to expect that it will be read, even if their subjects speak another language and live far away. Many now make a point of sending back what they have written for comment. Apart from general injunctions to respect local sensibilities and confidences, it is difficult to put down guide lines for writing up. Anthropologists who know the people they are writing about are still often surprised by what does and does not give offence; it is unlikely that a university committee will be able to anticipate it. It is in most instances impossible to please everyone, not at least without producing an account which is bland and evades issues important to the people themselves. The term 'community' suggests a degree of harmony that may not exist; in fact places where anthropologists work may be marked by exploitation, oppression, corruption; writing about such conditions without betraying the trust of informants and friends, but also allowing voices to be heard, are ethical dilemmas at the stage of writing up. As presently constituted, and HREC is unlikely to be of much help.

Returning the Yanomami affair, but leaving aside the questions of whether the particular accusations are true, there would I am sure be general agreement among anthropologists that the kind of behaviour alleged would, to say the least be reprehensible, and a serious embarrassment to the profession. The question is, could a committee of oversight have anticipated it? I rather doubt whether the guidelines of your standard HREC would be effective. A committee of anthropologists with the requisite local knowledge might do better, but only if they knew the researcher's personality, and how it might respond to stressful field situations.

It is probably utopian to suggest that the appropriate discipline – or the departments and research institutes which sponsor a research project – should do the monitoring. But it seems that HRECs are here to stay; it also seems that they will continue to include and even be dominated by non-social scientists. What the social scientists are entitled to expect, however, is that the committee members take the trouble to understand the nature of their disciplines they are overseeing, take advice from the professionals, and apply their guidelines with due flexibility. Some HRECs seem to work like that; others I am told do not. I have written as an anthropologist. I am hoping that colleagues from the other social sciences will contribute their own experiences to the debate. Maybe we can get members of HRECs to read them and respond.

Jeremy Beckett is Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney.

[1] Tierney, Patrick (2000), *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon*, New York: Norton.
[2] See for example, Update from University of Michigan, University of Michigan Report (Parts 1, 2, 3) The Ongoing Investigation of the Neel-Chagnon Allegations. 20 October 2000, circulated on the net.
[3] Sahlins, Marshall (2000), 'Jungle Fever: Guilty Not as Charged', *The Washington Post: Book World*, 16 December. Reprinted in *The Sydney Morning Herald: Spectrum*, 17 February 2001.
[4] Millar, DW (2001), 'Caught in the Net', *The Australian*, 17 January.
[5] Geertz, Clifford (2001), 'Life Among the Anthros', *New York Review of Books*, XLVIII, 2, 8 February.
[6] In fact some universities have had the equivalent of HRECs for many years; others are only now coming to terms with them.

2001 Calendar

28	March	Meeting of Workshop Committee
11	April	Meeting of Executive Committee
1	July	Deadline for *Dialogue* 2/2001
	July	Meeting of International Relations Cttee
	July	Meeting of Workshop Committee
4-5	July	Academy Workshop: *The Genocide Effect: new perspectives on modern cultures of destruction. Sydney*
	July	Meeting of Workshop Committee
	July	Meeting of International Relations Committee
	July	Meeting of Membership Committee
	July	Meeting of Executive Committee
31	July	Closing date Australia-China Program
31	July	Closing date Australia-Vietnam Program
15	August	Closing date Australia-Netherlands Program
	September	Academy Workshop: *Litigation: past and present.* Adelaide.
	October	Meeting of Workshop Committee
1	November	Deadline for *Dialogue* 3/2001
11	November	Meeting of Executive Committee
12	November	Annual Symposium
13	November	Annual General Meeting

Academy News

The Economics Group, Research School of Social Sciences, in conjunction with the Graduate Program in Public Policy is sponsoring a Public Lecture Series on *Welfare and the Labour Market: A New Frontier For Reform?* Lectures in Honour of the late Professor Fred Gruen. Professor Fred Gruen was a Fellow of the Academy and President from 1975-1978, Head of the Economics Program, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University from 1972-1986, and inaugural Director of the Centre for Economic Policy Research, 1980-1986. Professor Gruen made a significant contribution to Australian economic and public policy debate. His endowment to the Australian National University has led to the establishment of the FH Gruen Distinguished Fellowships for researchers in the fields of economic and welfare policy.

The Lectures are being held in the GPPP Lecture Theatre, Sir Roland Wilson Building, McCoy Circuit, Australian National University on Wednesdays 5pm - 6.30pm (1 hour lecture plus 30 mins discussion). Three Lectures have so far been presented, and the program of remaining Lectures is as follows:

28 March: *The Direct and Indirect Effects of Unemployment on Poverty and Inequality (*Peter Saunders)

4 April: *The Social Safety Net and the Industrial Safety Net: Reflections of one of the 'Five Economists' (*Peter Dawkins)

2 May: *Why an Earned Income Tax Credit Program is a Mistake for Australia* (Patricia Apps)

9 May: *Fertility, Dependency and Social Security (*Ray Rees)

16 May: *Does the Availability of High-Wage Jobs for Low-Skilled Men Affect Welfare Expenditures and Family Structure? (*Dan Black)

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Research Projects

Creating Unequal Futures? Rethinking poverty, inequality and disadvantage in Australia, edited by Ruth Fincher and Peter Saunders has been published by Allen & Unwin bringing to fruition this research project funded by ARC Special Projects. The Academy will publish a review in its next issue.

The Social Costs of Water Degradation The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, assisted financially by the Business Council of Australia, hosted a workshop on 14 March to consider the key issues relating to the Social Costs of Water Degradation. Representatives of the Learned Academies attended and a Research Proposal will be developed for future possible funding as a major Research Project for 2001/2002.

The Sustainability of Australian Rural Communities On 11-13 February the Academy held the first project workshop for ARC Special Projects 2001, The Sustainability of Australian Rural Communities. Discussion at the workshop was focused on four main themes: (a)Interpreting sustainability in the context of rural communities; (b) Selecting case studies; (c) Methodology; (d) Project outcomes.

The workshop was facilitated by the project's Research Director, Professor Chris Cocklin, who is Director of the Monash Regional Australia Project and included a research and advisory team from Edith Cowan University, Charles Sturt University, Central Queensland University, the University of New England, RMIT University and Flinders University.

A primary objective of the workshop proceedings was to arrive at a shared 0interpretation of sustainability in the context of Australian rural communities. This interpretation is to serve as a guide for the case studies that will be carried out by each of the six research teams. Case study analysis is to be undertaken with a view to presenting findings at a second workshop in December.

International Program

Amarjit Kaur, School of Economics, University of New England, visited the Netherlands in November 2000 to continue research on two projects: 'Wage labour and social change in Southeast Asia since 1840' and Women workers in industrialising Asia'. Dr Kaur is an Affiliated Fellow in the *Changing Labour Relations in Asia (CLARA) Research Program* housed at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, and attended a conference on Global Labour History at that Institute. She presented a paper on 'Globalisation, the new international division of labour and labour relations in Southeast Asia'. In her report to the Academy, she wrote:

The IISG is one of the world's largest documentary and research centres in the field of social history in general and labour studies in particular. Specialist staff compile material of relevance to research on labour; establish networks which provide data on forthcoming congresses and workshops; and support ongoing research through debates and exchanges of information. One such network is The Asian Labour Studies Network (ALSNET). There are regular conferences and seminars on Labour studies and the Institute publishes the prestigious journal, *Review of Social History.* I am a corresponding editor of this journal.

The IISG is invaluable for research on Labour, especially the CLARA research program. Academics in other institutions in the Netherlands were also most helpful, especially Prof Heather Sutherland (Free University) and academics at the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) at Leiden.

I approached the Deputy Director of IIAS about collaborative ties between IIAS and the University of New England. These ties are being followed up and one of my UNE colleagues will be going to Leiden soon.

During my visit, I researched/wrote on interrelated projects on labour systems, labour processes and labour institutions in Southeast Asia and Asia in general.

1. *Wage labour and social change in Southeast Asia since 1840*

Most people believe that 'globalisation' is a recent phenomenon, as economists debate on the integration of Asian economies, the spread of industrialisation and the new international division of labour. However, it is worth remembering how an earlier period of integration, starting from about 1840, saw the peripheral economies of Southeast Asia linked to the economies of Europe and the United States. This 'imperial-led' globalisation, trade and capital flows from Europe, and migration, principally from China and India, resulted in primary commodity specialisation and the

international division of labour. More importantly, it led to equally dramatic labour transformations and the preponderance of wage labour in Southeast Asia. Since the 1960s, globalisation has accelerated and moved into a different gear. Southeast Asian states have been transformed into newly industrialising economies and form an integral part of the 'market-led' globalisation and the new international division of labour

This study compares changing labour relations and labour systems in the region since the mid-nineteenth century. The focus is on how transnational economic processes and institutions, open trade and capital flows, have shaped and continue to shape labour systems. This comparison can help us understand some of the roots of economic growth in Southeast Asia and its relevance to recent debates about the role of labour in the 'Asian miracle'.

The study is a contribution to the Economic History of Southeast Asia (ECHOSEA) Project. The Project aims to produce a series of country and thematic volumes dedicated to an understanding of Southeast Asia's economic history.

I worked on the second draft of my book on this subject in the Netherlands. The feedback from the seminar was most helpful since most of the attendees were labour specialists at the IISG.

2. *Women workers in industrialising Asia*

Since the late 1970s, much of the literature on labour relations in Asia has focused on the spread of export-oriented industrialisation and global capitalist penetration in the region. Most studies have concentrated on how young women were drawn into factory employment and contributed to the 'economic success' of the region in the 1980s and early 1990s. Other work has highlighted the low wages, lack of benefits and disempowerment of workers employed in transnational capitalist ventures. This study focuses on the labour regimes associated with export-oriented production. It analyses the manufacturing systems that are based on a low technology, labour-intensive niche, and are manifested in short term employment contracts or sub-contracted household production networks. It also looks at the relationship between education, fertility levels and women's participation in the paid workforce.

I was able to access materials on subcontracting held by the CLARA program.

I will be collaborating on another CLARA project on Migrant Workers in Asia. A workshop has been scheduled in May 2001 in Lund, Sweden.

Publications arising from research include: *Women's Work: Gender and Labour Relations in Malaysia*. CLARA Working papers on Asian Labour. Special volume on Women Workers in Asia, *Asian Studies Review*, 2000 (co-edited with Ratna Saptari) This journal volume is the first referred publication of the CLARA project. 'Labour dynamics in plantations and mining: an historical perspective' in Rebecca Elmhirst and Ratna Saptari (eds) *Changing Labour Relations in Southeast Asia* (London: Curzon, 2001). *Wage Labour in Southeast Asia: Globalisation, the International Division of Labour and Southeast Asian Labour Transformations since 1840* (Palgrave, 2001). *Women Workers in Industrializing Asia* (ed) Palgrave, forthcoming. Article on the Malaysia Society of Australia for the IIAS Newsletter.

I wish to thank the Academies and Dr Ratna Saptari and staff at the IISG for their support.

OVERSEAS PROGRAMS

In order to encourage scholarly contact with overseas countries, the Academy of the Social Sciences and the Academy of the Humanities operate several overseas programs, some jointly. These are open to Australian scholars, working in any of the fields of the Humanities and/or the Social Sciences.

Existing programs are as follows:

VIETNAM: The joint Australian Academies of Social Sciences and Humanities have an agreement with the Vietnam National Centre for the Social Sciences & Humanities of collaboration to promote the development of scholarly relations between Australian and Vietnamese scholars. *Closing date: 31 July*.

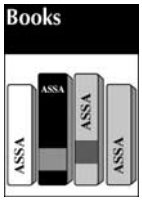
CHINA: The Academy of Social Sciences in Australia supports an exchange program with the People's Republic of China in cooperation with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. *Closing date: 31 July (f*or travel to China in the following year*).*

THE NETHERLANDS: The Joint Australian Academies share an agreement of scientific and cultural collaboration with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, to promote scholarly relations between Australian and Dutch scholars. *Closing date: 15 August (for travel to the Netherlands in the following year).*

SWEDEN: The Australian Academy of the Humanities and the Swedish Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities have an exchange agreement which provides for one established Australian scholar per year, to visit *for a month*. Closing date*: 30 June (for* visits in the following year*).*

For further information on any of the above schemes please contact: The Executive Director, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, GPO Box 1956, CANBERRA 2601.Tel 02 6249 1788; Fax 02 6247 4335; Email: ASSA.Secretariat @anu.edu.au.

Books



Health and Medical Research: Contribution of the Social and Behavioural Sciences. Edited by Paul R Martin, Margot Prior and Jeanette Milgrom. Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and the Australian Psychological Society, Canberra: 2001.

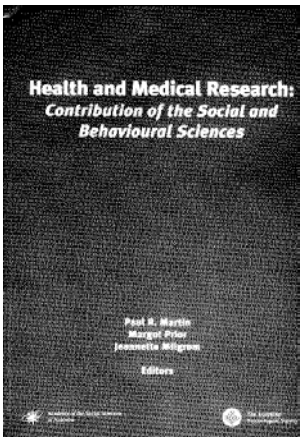
Christina Lee

Psychologists' relatively low success rates with research grants is one of those things like the weather. Everyone talks about it, but nobody ever does anything about it. Until 1999, when the Academy of the Social Sciences and the Australian Psychological Society jointly sponsored a workshop to explore the issue.

A review of applications to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) has shown that the success rate of psychology grant applications is only about 15%, considerably lower than the overall success rate of 25%. As academic life becomes increasingly competitive and increasingly driven by financial concerns, unsubstantiated rumours about backstabbing reviewers or ill-informed discipline panels have given way to careful analysis.

The first section of the book elegantly demolishes any argument that psychological research is not relevant to health outcomes or that psychologists' research is in any way second-rate. Eight distinguished and successful research academics discuss psychological theory, and outline programs of research which demonstrate the social importance of psychological research. The projects address a range of self-evidently important health and social topics, including suicide, depression, cigarette smoking, HIV prevention, and cancer prevention.

In Part Two of the book, three senior members of the NH&MRC discuss the role of psychology and the behavioural sciences in general in priority-driven health research. The role of behavioural theories in understanding individual choices and modifying risk factors for diseases such as HIV is discussed. It is unfortunate that these three presentations are represented in the book by abstracts only, but they are followed by a very informative chapter on the NH&MRC and in particular on the changes to the research funding system which are already being put in place. The increased emphasis on multidisciplinary research and a social view of health both supports the argument for an increased role for psychologists in NH&MRC-funded programs of research and encourages the involvement of psychologists in multidisciplinary teams.



The final section lists recommendations for action, addressed respectively to the Australian Psychological Society, the NH&MRC, and the Academy of the Social Sciences. These recommendations include strategies to raise awareness within the broad scientific community of the potential of psychological research, encouragement of partnership and cooperation among psychologists, and encouragement of psychologists to consider the relationship between psychological theory and policy-relevant outcomes.

This is an interesting book, and it is to be hoped that it is only the first stage in the process of making practical and sustainable changes in the activities of research psychologists and in their relationships with the NH&MRC. It is notable that many of Australia's most successful health psychology researchers work outside university Departments of Psychology and in multidisciplinary research teams. Comments in this book support the notion that traditional Departments of Psychology do not have an interest in health issues, in multidisciplinary research, or in topics which have relevance to policy or to health outcomes. It is hoped that this book will encourage Heads of Departments of Psychology and others involved in curriculum development to think outside the traditional subdisciplines and to provide psychology training which will prepare students to work in socially relevant areas and to collaborate as equal partners with professionals from other disciplines.

Exasperating Calculators: The Rage over Economic Rationalism and the Campaign against Australian Economists. By William Coleman and Alf Hagger. Paddington NSW, Macleay Press: 2001.

David Henderson

This interesting, well written and perceptive book deserves a wide circulation in Australia and even beyond. As the subtitle makes clear, its focus is on Australian

events and disputes: aside from some scathing remarks about the Third Way in Chapter 11, the views of foreigners are not given much attention. But the issues that the book deals with are not just local. They include (1) the distinctive viewpoint and message of economics as a discipline, (2) the hostility to economics that is to be found in many places, and (3) the causes and consequences of the increasingly general trend towards more market-oriented economic systems that has characterised the past 20 years or so.

All these can be reviewed under the heading of disputes over 'Economic Rationalism', and admittedly this gives the whole subject a more topical flavour in Australasia. But there is a cost to using the term, since it makes the discussion both more parochial and less clear. Only in Australia and New Zealand is this label widely used, and its usefulness is open to doubt.

I believe that those Australian economists who have cheerfully allowed themselves to be described as economic rationalists have made a mistake. It suggests that they have not read Hayek, or else forgotten his attack on 'constructivist rationalism', as 'a conception which assumes that all social institutions are, and ought to be, the product of deliberate design'. More important, the term conjures up a vision of narrow, desiccated, dogmatic persons who make arrogant claims to being more 'rational' than other people. Those who are hostile to economics and the market economy have exploited – indeed, they created – this opening.

What is in question here is not 'rationalism' in any useful or accepted sense of the term. As I see it, there are four distinct but related ways of thinking which need to be brought in, all of which bear on what economists believe and what are the uses and limits of free markets. One is the doctrine of economic liberalism, which Coleman and Hagger surprisingly leave out. The others, overlapping but not coincident, are neo-classical economics, mainstream economics, and – more elusive, this – the characteristic ideas and beliefs which set economists apart from others.

Hence I have some doubts about the framework that the authors have chosen. To say this, however, is not to detract from the merits of the book for what it chiefly is – a well-argued and well-documented critique of the main attacks on economics, economists and economic liberalism that have been made in Australia in the course of the past decade. At the end, and on the evidence with good reason, they offer the single word, 'worthless', as a summary evaluation of the extensive list of 'anti-rationalist' works reviewed. (However, they make no reference to Geoff Harcourt's Horne Address of 1992, which offers arguments that have to be taken more seriously). I think that Coleman and Hagger are right to view this whole episode as disturbing.

Besides exposing the anti-rationalists, the authors offer some thoughtful analysis and criticisms of the ways in which economists as a profession have responded – or failed to respond – to the attacks. They rightly say that hostility to economics has a long history, that it can take disturbing forms, and that economists have not typically shown great resource in countering it. They make a bold attempt, though in my view with limited success, to sketch out a set of ideas and beliefs that they think characterises mainstream economics and could form the basis for an effective response.

They end by urging the profession to stand up for itself and answer back. This however is in a spirit more of hope than expectation. Here as earlier, this is a sombre book. Working through it, though a worthwhile exercise made easier by the authors' agreeable prose, is unlikely to raise the reader's spirits.

New Executive Director for the Academy

Dr John M Beaton will become the new Executive Director of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia on 2 April 2001. John comes to the Academy from his position as Associate Professor of Anthropology the University of California, Davis. During the past three years of his appointment in the University of California system John has been Director of the UC Australia Study Center in Melbourne, managing academic exchange and other cooperative relationships that joined the UC system to partnerships in twelve Australian universities.

His primary research interests are in Australian prehistory, continental colonisation and prehistoric population studies. Dr Beaton's writings include works on Aboriginal fire management of vegetation resources (especially cycads), past population studies, tropical archaeology in Australia, rock art, initial continental colonisation, foraging studies, and prehistoric economic intensification. He is a long standing Member of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and strong proponent of the social sciences in Australia.

Dr Beaton looks forward to blending his academic perspective and administrative skills in order to assist the Fellowship in increasing the Academy's effectiveness in the breadth of its activities. He anticipates constructing new ventures at the Academy and expects to communicate regularly and intensively with the Officers, Committees and Fellows in order to realise current goals and chart an ambitious future.

No stranger to Canberra, John, known simply as 'JB' to his friends and colleagues, received his PhD in 1978 at the Australian National University in the Research School of Pacific Studies. While at the ANU he met and married his spouse Susan (also an ANU graduate, 1983) where among their other activities they were, respectively, the Presidents of the ANU Men's Cricket Club and Women's Hockey Club. An active sportswoman/psychologist who grew up on a grazing property near Cowra, NSW, Susan remains a competitive tennis player while John's passion for cricket is now exercised mostly from the shady portions of the outer. They have two children (Laura age 13, Daniel age 10). The family looks forward to relocating to Canberra in March and becoming an enthusiastic and constructive part of the Academy of Social Sciences community.

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Committees: Standing Committee of the Executive; Finance Committee; Membership Committee; International Relations Committee; Workshop Committee; Public Affairs Committee, Research Projects Committee and Panel Committees.

Branch Convenors: Professor Michael Hogg (Qld); Professor Peter Groenewegen (NSW); Professor David Andrich (WA) Professor Brian Galligan (Vic); and Professor JJ Smolicz (SA)

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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

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