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Ethnicity, class and gender in Australia 1945-1996

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1996 A Content Analysis of Australian Non-English Language Newspapers: Greek, Maltese, Persian, Polish (with R. Pe-Pua) AGPS Canberra
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Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia 1945-1996

Foreword: Authorship and Structure

1. Authorship
The selection of writing submitted in this thesis contains much work credited to more than one author, very largely because I have done a great deal of cooperative work and also have always made a practice of giving a degree of ownership to research assistants by listing them as authors, even though the actual writing was done entirely by myself.

In terms of authorship material presented therefore falls into three main categories, as follows.

(i). Single author publications
1986 Migrant Workers and Industrial Democracy Report commissioned by Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, AGPS
1985(a)Labour Market Programs and English Language Learning Position Paper commissioned by Committee of Review on Labour Market Programs, AGPS,
'Italian Migration to Australia and Argentina', in Castles, S. et al. (eds.) Australia's Italians, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992(a).
'Chain Migration and the Immigration Multiplier' in Burnley, I.H. (ed) Immigration: Problems, Impacts and Futures Geographical Society of NSW Inc. Sydney May 1992(b) pp106-120
'The Uses of Culture' Journal of Intercultural Studies Vol 18 No.2 1997 pp 93-107

(ii). Multiple credited author publications: all writing done by myself *
The Ethnic Affairs Program: Strategies for Evaluation (with C. Alcorso & C. Mitchell) Report commissioned by Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, September, 1988(a),
Working Aged Parents Study (with C.A. Mitchell & L. Stillson) A study commissioned by the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, March, 1988(b),
1992 Immigration and Industry Restructuring in the Illawarra A (with M.Dibden and C. Mitchell) study commissioned by the Bureau of Immigration and Multicultural Research AGPS, Canberra
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1983 English Language Learning in the Illawarra (with J. Palser) A study commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, AGPS,

* Exceptions to this are 1988(a) and 1992 above, short sections of which (less than 10%) were written by Caroline Alcorso and Maureen Dibden respectively

(iii) Genuinely Co-authored work
In the case of these selections I have included only those chapters/sections which were completely written by myself.**


1986 Employment, Unemployment and Language (with M. Issaris and J. Vennard) Report commissioned by the Adult Migrant Education Program, March, (Chs. 6 & 7)

A Content Analysis of Australian Non-English Language Newspapers: Greek, Maltese, Persian, Polish (with R. Pe-Pua) AGPS Canberra 1996

A Content Analysis of Australian Non-English Language Newspapers: Croatian, Italian, Macedonian, Serbian, Turkish (with R. Pe-Pua) AGPS Canberra 1995

A Content Analysis of Australian Non-English Language Newspapers: Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese (with R. Pe-Pua) AGPS Canberra 1994

Drug and Alcohol Services in a Multiethnic Society Report (with C. Alcorso et al) commissioned by the Directorate of the Drug Offensive 1992(c) Chs 6 and 13

** Exceptions to this rule are the three titles coauthored with Roghelia Pe-Pua from which the graphical work presented was largely the work of Dr. Pe-Pua. The interpretive text, however, was my responsibility alone, as was the original design of the project as a whole. The sample of graphical work is presented only to give readers a better understanding of what the project as a whole was concerned with.

2. Structure

This Overview provides an introduction and linking interpretation to the body of the work which is divided into Four Volumes, namely:

**Volume One:** The Construction of Ethnicity and the Management of Diversity;

**Part One contains:**


1988(b), Working Aged Parents Study (with C.A. Mitchell & L. Stillson) A study commissioned by the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.

1992, Mistaken Identity: Multiculturalism and the Failure of Australian Nationalism, (with S.
Part Two contains

A study commissioned by the Office of Multicultural Affairs AGPS,
Canberra

Collins, J (ed) *Confronting Racism* University of Technology, Sydney

Volume Two: The Labour Market contains:

1995, 'Migrant Employment and Unemployment' (with J. Collins) in Human Rights and Equal
Opportunity Commission *State of the Nation Report 1995* AGPS

C. Mitchell) A study commissioned by the Bureau of Immigration and Multicultural Research
AGPS, Canberra

1993, 'Older Migrant Workers and Unemployment' in Human Rights and Equal
Opportunity Commission *State of the Nation Report 1993* AGPS Canberra


Volume Three: English Language Learning contains

the Adult Migrant Education Program, March, (Chs. 6 & 7)

1986, *Migrant Workers and Industrial Democracy* Report commissioned by Department of Employment and
Industrial Relations, AGPS

1985, *Labour Market Programs and English Language Learning* Position Paper commissioned by Committee
of Review on Labour Market Programs, AGPS,

1983, *English Language Learning in the Illawarra* (with J. Palser) A study commissioned by the Department
of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, AGPS

Volume Four: Community and Culture.

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1997, 'The Uses of Culture' *Journal of Intercultural Studies* Vol 18 No.2 pp 93-107

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1992(a) 'Italian Migration to Australia and Argentina', in Castles, S. et al. (eds.) *Australia's
Italians*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney


1992(c), *Drug and Alcohol Services in a Multiethnic Society* (with C. Alcorso et al)
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1985 'Migrantness and Ideology', in de Lepervanche, M. & Bottomley, G. (eds),
Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia, Allen & Unwin,
1980, Migrants and Occupational Health SWRC Report No. 3, UNSW, Kensington,

The bibliography for the Overview and for each item in the body of the work each item is appended at the end of that item.
Overview of a Thesis: Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia 1945-1996

1. Introduction
The four volumes of this thesis present a selection from the work I have published over the last twenty years and are based on selections from twenty-three separate books, articles, chapters and monographs.

These publications cover a very large number of concerns, ranging from occupational health to concepts of national identity, from English language learning to the structure and dynamics of families and from industrial restructuring to social program evaluation; but the apparent heterogeneity of the subject matter should not obscure an underlying unity of theme, theoretical framework and method.

In a thematic sense, all of the writing presented in what follows is unified by a common concern, namely the complex, multidimensional, mutually reactive and temporally reflexive ganglion of social processes which have been partly driven by mass immigration over the last fifty years. Without presuming to claim that together they tell the whole story, each of these selections tells a different part of the story of Australia’s economic, social and cultural transformation during this half century. In particular, they concentrate on those aspects of the transformation which can be most closely linked to mass migration while acknowledging that there are other determining sources of transformation such as the globalisation of production, trade, finance and communications; and also acknowledging that the structure and dynamics of the migration process are themselves at least partially contingent upon these other change agents.

In a broad and simple formulation, all of the selected writing deals with aspects of the adaptation (and resistance to adaptation) of successive cohorts of migrants to Australia and of the adaptation (and resistance to adaptation) of successive cohorts of the Australian-born population.

Another way of putting this is that these stories are linked by a metanarrative whose theme might be summarised approximately as 'the emergence of multicultural Australia and its contradictions'. Ultimately everything that follows in this thesis is
concerned with the emergence in Australia of a national identity, institutions and socio-political practices based on multiethnicity and cultural pluralism: and also with the resistance to this process and the limitations and distortions imposed upon its development.

There is also a common set of theoretical concerns which shapes the structure of these various publications. These will be discussed in detail later in this introduction but may be summed up as revolving around the processes by which ethnicity and ‘race’ are socially constructed and reproduced and how these processes intersect with two others, namely the construction and reproduction of gender and social class. As will be seen from the more detailed discussion, this is a genuine theoretical stance rather than a simple elaboration of ‘common sense’ in that it directly contests competing theoretical perspectives in two ways. Firstly, in proposing that ethnic and ‘race’ relations are continuously renegotiated through dynamic social processes there is an implicit rejection of notions of the ‘primordiality’ of these categories and also of static formulations of ethnic culture. Secondly, the insistence that ethnic and ‘racial’ categories cannot be studied in isolation from social class and gender runs counter to various bodies of work which attempt, in different ways, to do just that.

Overarching these general propositions concerning the interdependent and reflexive nature of cultural renegotiation, however, is a limiting condition which relates to the social space within which these negotiations have taken place. This is the argument that, to a very high degree, the development of the Australian economy over the last fifty years has been exogenous to the other social processes with which the body of this thesis is largely concerned. In other words the development of the economy has set the boundaries, the social parameters, within which the forms of class, gender and ethnic relations have been negotiated.

The economic history of Australia over the last fifty years falls into two broad phases, namely:

• an initial period of rapid, and relatively labour-intensive industrialisation based on a heavily protected domestic market underpinned by foreign exchange flows deriving largely from low value-added commodity exports and capital imports; and
• the later period in which protection and market regulation were substantially dismantled and in which the relative and absolute importance of the service sector increased rapidly both in relation to the domestic economy and the foreign trade sector.

The first of these phases had stuttered to a halt by the mid-1970s, with the second starting to emerge definitively after the recession of the early 1980s and becoming progressively more dominant in the following fifteen years. The forces dictating these radical changes in the Australian economy have been largely exogenous to the social processes with which this thesis is concerned since they arise from changes in the economies and trading relationships of nations which writers such as Katzenstein (1985) and Castles (1988) designate as ‘rule makers’ who are sufficiently powerful to export their endogenously-generated economic problems to the more vulnerable ‘rule taker’ economies such as Australia. (see also Brenner 1998 passim).

It is proposed that these exogenously imposed changes in the pattern and organisation of production in Australia have been crucially important in shaping the parameters of ethnic, gender and class discourse but, in making this assertion, there is no implication of some crude Althusserian stance in which the forces of production determine social relations ‘in the last resort’. Neither is there any implication that any socioeconomic variable can be regarded as free of endogenous entanglement in any but the most disaggregated analytical context. On the other hand it will be a continuous theme in this thesis that the changing social forms and relations of ethnicity, class and gender are generally better analysed as contingent on changes in the organisation of production than is the case if the direction of contingency is reversed. This, of course, is not equivalent to saying that the reverse direction of contingency is theoretically implausible (or historically absent).

Finally, this work has an underlying methodological unity which arises from its theoretical concerns. As the theoretical basis is that ethnicity, ‘race’, gender and class are socially constructed, it follows that these processes must be observed directly, in specific socio-political and historical contexts. In other words, the continuous renegotiation of ethnic, ‘race’, class and gender relations does not take place in the
abstract. It takes place in a variety of social sites whose composition and importance vary over time, including the myriad social interactions which are often collectively labelled 'community relations'; in artistic production generally (and the communications media in particular); in the formal political system, the labour market, the social welfare system, the education system, the legal system and the health system. The outcomes of these processes are also heterodox, ranging from formal government policies at various levels to particular cultural practices and changing forms of social interaction and even to changes in what Gramsci called the 'common sense' categories through which people conceptualise and interpret their social being (such as 'New Australian' or 'Asian' or 'Anglo-Celtic' or even 'ordinary Australian').

For these reasons there is very little attempt in the work that follows to advance or refine the sociological theory of ethnicity. Rather, the emphasis is to lay bare the often unspoken concepts of 'race', ethnicity and culture through which social groups have been constituted in relation to specific social sites and processes and within specific relations of power, dominance and subordination; and in this project there are four main strands, corresponding to the four volumes of this thesis.

First, I address the changing role of the state as the self-conscious manager of the process of ethnic diversification which was the inevitable result of the mass immigration policy. The perceived need for mass immigration, I propose, was itself an element of an elite consensus which large sections of the established population have never fully accepted; and, this being so, the role of the state at the ideological level has always been pivotal. Immigration and related settlement issues have never been uncontested areas of consensus in the postwar period and in many ways the state has always attempted to regulate the extent and the conceptual content of the discourse around these issues. Volume One centres around the questions of why and how the state has engaged in this discourse and of why and how the nature of that engagement has changed over time. It demonstrates the crucial role of the state in the construction of ethnicity.
Secondly, as I have already indicated, the imperatives of the Australian economy—often determined by pressures originating outside Australia—have always had a strong impact on both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of immigration. This is taken up in Volume Two which contains analysis of the changing labour market position of migrants over time, and of the various ways in which it has been presented and explained.

In general, the hegemonic mode of explanation of any admitted disadvantage suffered by migrants in the labour market has been based on the supposed cultural deficiencies (in an Australian context) of migrant groups expressed in terms of their alleged lack of 'human capital'. However, there has also been a body of critical work which stresses certain structural features of the labour market as producing this disadvantage, and the selections in Volume Two have formed part of this latter corpus of writing.

Volume Two is supplemented by Volume Three which examines the precise nature of the most significant source of migrant disadvantage—lack of English language competence—and attempts to relate it to class and gender issues as well as examining responses to the language question on the part of the state. Here again, the process of English language learning is analysed as one which has group socio-economic parameters rather than one which is to be explained exclusively in terms of personal or group 'ability' in relation to second language acquisition.

Finally, in Volume Four, a body of work is presented which examines aspects of some of the informal discourses through which ethnicity is defined and some of the social consequences and correlates of this process are mapped. Underlying all four volumes, but particularly Volume Four is a theoretical position summarised by Foucault as follows:

> power and knowledge directly imply one another:....there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.  

(Foucault, 1977: 27)
In the first part of this volume the construction of ideas about cultural aspects of immigrants' health and health service needs is examined as an aspect of the construction of ethnicity. The second part is concerned with one of the most important sites of self-definition, the so-called ethnic press; and with some of the factors which either assist or inhibit particular immigrant groups from playing a constitutive role in the general process of cultural change in their country of adoption.

In the rest of this chapter I attempt to expand on the themes adumbrated above and to relate them to the specific books, articles, chapters and monographs included in the body of the thesis.

2. Volume One: The Construction of Ethnicity and the Management of Diversity

Volume One of this thesis is concerned with aspects of the role of the state in attempting to manage both the postwar immigration program and the social changes which, directly or indirectly, flowed from it. The Volume is made up of selections from the following publications.


The work contained in this volume addresses the managerial role of the state in three ways.

First, it is concerned with the role of the state in the production of ideology, mainly in the cause of legitimisation of the immigration program itself, but also in the generation and reproduction of ideological structures relating to community development and
the interaction between 'communities'. Secondly, the work in this volume focuses on the reasons why successive governments in the postwar period came increasingly to define migrants as a distinctive object of social policy and on the development of the conceptual framework within which migrant-oriented social policy was to function, (at least, until the 1996 election): and, thirdly, some examples are presented of the ways in which the new fields of social policy which emerged in the 1970s and 1980s—settlement and community development services in particular—came to be regarded as areas in which technical processes of public administration (such as impact evaluation) could function.

Having categorised the concerns of Volume One in this way, however, a qualification must be made. While some of these selections deal with the ideology which was produced in a very recognisable and overt way - (as exemplified by Arthur Calwell’s invention and crafting of the 'New Australian', for example) - all of the writings relate in one way or another to the creation and management of social knowledge. In other words they are concerned with specific and detailed ways, in which ‘ethnicity’ (inter alia) has been constructed, reconstructed and reproduced in the postwar period. They deal with discourses of power and they centre around the role of the state in these discourses.

This material, taken together with material in other volumes, (most notably, although not only, the selection on English language learning and teaching in Volume Three) is also illustrative in another way.

All of it was written under the auspices of the University of Wollongong’s Centre for Multicultural Studies (CMS). Over a period of twenty years commencing in 1980 this Centre was an exemplary case of a process which had started immediately after the Second World War but which gathered force enormously in the years after the Galbally Report in 1978 and reached its apogee in the last years of the ALP governments of 1983-96. This was the incorporation into the project of managing ethnic diversity of a wide range of academics, community activists and professionals through a system of formal bureaucratic structures (such as the Australian Institute for Multicultural Affairs, [AIMA] the Office of Multicultural Affairs [OMA] and the
Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research [BIMPR], through the dispensation of research funding, community development grants and patronage to non-government bodies through such media as the Ethnic Affairs Program and also through regular consultancies to individuals and organisations outside the bureaucracy. (see, eg Castles et al 1992 Ch 4).

In this process a wide spectrum of ideological stances were involved, ranging from such purely bureaucratic organisations as AIMA, (whose main function was to provide empirical justification and support for the Galbally Program) to relatively independent and critical organisations and individuals which were, nevertheless, often crucially dependent on funding from the very governments whose policies they sought to subject to a variety of critiques.

The CMS was one of the most prominent in this latter group and some of the contradictions (and opportunities) implicit in this structural and theoretical location can be seen the selections presented. Some of them (e.g. 1992, 1994) offer fundamental critiques of the various attempts by postwar governments to manage ethnic diversity whilst others, (most notably 1988 [a] and [b] ) locate themselves largely within this managerial project. Their explicit purpose is to provide information and procedures through the techniques of evaluation research upon which public policy can be based. Their location within the managerial project is demonstrated not only by the absence of any critique of policy but by the underlying methodological assumption that ethnic diversity is a terrain of public policy which can be managed according to ‘objective’ evaluation criteria in a value-neutral manner which implicitly denies the essentially political nature of ethnic relations.

This statement can be modified to some extent by consideration of the 1993 study of the Community Relations Strategy, however. Although set in the ‘evaluation research’ mode, this study does, in fact, contain a sustained normative critique of government policy in the area of community relations and it is significant in this respect that it was commissioned by OMA whereas the two 1988 studies were commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.
Whereas the DIEA (including its Research Branch) had an almost entirely executive/administrative role, OMA was given a policy development role and this partly explains the differences between the reports as outlined above. It also, however, illustrates two important points. First, although there were certainly very dominant and durable ideological foundations to every government’s management of ethnic diversity in the postwar period, there was always a degree of pluralism within the government apparatus, and probably never more so than in the first half of the 1990s. Secondly, and partly for this reason, the material in Volume One is not presented as evidence of a conspiracy. In fact a great deal of ‘policy’ in the ethnic affairs area has been an ex post rationalisation of bureaucratic muddling-through and inertia along the line of least economic, social and cultural resistance. The Community Relations study, amongst other things, provides a case-history of these processes in operation.

These caveats aside, however, the selection presented in Volume One provides the basis for statements about some remarkable continuities underlying the now-conventional assimilationism-integrationism-multiculturalism periodisation of postwar public policy in relation to immigration and settlement.

The first of these is that ethnicity and culture in any of these periods have dominantly been represented for the purposes of public policy as social categories which are not articulated in any discernible way to other social categories or processes. Ethnicity is presented, in a sense, as something which happens entirely at a ‘cultural’ level: it is neither constrained nor intersected by social class nor gender and neither do relations of dominance and subordination exist between ethnic or cultural groups. To the extent that immigrants, or indigenous people, are disadvantaged the causes, in this formulation, can be found solely in lack of English language proficiency and/or cultural dissonance. The task of government, in relation to this ‘ethnicity model’ is to discover the ‘needs’ of migrants and to ‘develop and implement strategies to meet these needs’.

These strategies have comprised various levels of provision of English language instruction, cultural education and mediation of various sorts and, from the mid-eighties to the mid-nineties, the provision of ‘culturally appropriate’ services and
measures to facilitate equitable access to, and treatment by, ‘mainstream’ service providers. As the selection in Volume One (particularly 1992, 1993 and 1994) demonstrates, this ethnicity model has frequently been contested but only to limited effect. Only on the outer fringes of the policy-making elite did models of structural disadvantage make any headway for any sustained period of time: and usually such models were related to indigenous people rather than to immigrants in any case.

The ideological construct concomitant with this is the one already adumbrated above: that, to the extent that the state intervenes in ‘ethnic affairs’, it does so utilising value-neutral tools of public administration and as an impartial adjudicator pursuing higher public policy goals in the interest of all, rather than as a participant in a political process.

In relation to immigrants it was not until the early seventies that any perception of disadvantage spread outside a core of activists to the politicians and public servants who controlled the formulation of social policy. This, in itself is an element in an uncontested story; but what is not often realised is that the doctrine of assimilationism which effectively held sway until the late 1960s shares with the ‘ethnicity model’ the assumption that there are no structural conditions which prevent cultural and linguistic adaptation (or, in the case of the ethnicity model, egalitarian cultural and linguistic diversity).

Essentially, the major proposition of assimilationism was that Australia had a distinctive and homogenous culture to which certain European ‘cultures’ were capable of assimilation whereas no non-European ‘culture’ possessed such a capacity. As Chifley Cabinet Minister A.G.Beazely put it, the basis of assimilationist policy was that Australia should

seek migrants of our own kind who could be readily assimilated and who believe in the standards of living we have struggled to achieve.

(Castles et al 1992; 49)

Assimilation, then, is simply a matter of choosing people who are sufficiently similar, culturally, to be classified as ‘of our own kind’. Cultural propinquity is a necessary condition of assimilation but it is also, in a sense, a sufficient one since if these people are, indeed, ‘of our own kind’ why should there be cultural barriers to their
assimilation apart from temporary difficulties with language? At the level of social policy this question was answered by an absence. Until the late 1960s there were no migrant-specific services apart from those concerned with teaching English.

Whatever the case with regard to assimilationism the 'ethnicity model' outlined above was quickly ensconced as the dominant policy paradigm once the perception of migrant disadvantage did, in fact, acquire currency. As outlined in the selection from Mistaken Identity, (Castles et al 1992: 57-71) the Whitlam government briefly (and inarticulately) began to engage with the idea that substantial groups of migrants were structurally disadvantaged in Australia, the main legislative embodiment of this being the Australian Assistance Plan. However, the return of a Coalition government in 1975 saw a complete jettison of this approach and the firm installation of culturist ethnicity models in the raft of measures recommended in the Galbally Report of 1978, implemented in the following few years and favourably evaluated in the 1982 review of the Galbally program by the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs.

The keynote passage in the Galbally Report is as follows:

We are convinced that migrants have the right to maintain their cultural and racial identity and that it is clearly in the best interests of our nation that they should be encouraged and assisted to do so if they wish. Provided that ethnic identity is not stressed at the expense of society at large but is interwoven into the fabric of our nationhood by the process of multicultural interaction, then the community as a whole will benefit substantially and its democratic nature will be reinforced. The knowledge that people are identified with their cultural background and ethnic group enables them to take their place in the new society with confidence if their ethnicity has been accepted by the community. (Galbally Report, 1978: 104-5)

This was to be achieved, mainly, by extending the system of grants-in-aid to ethnic organisations, by establishing Migrant Resource Centres and by increasing expenditure on adult English language teaching. Overall, the emphasis was on cultural and linguistic dissonance as the sources (if any) of disadvantage to immigrants. Structural factors were ignored or dismissed. For example:

While we believe that the main causes of unemployment among migrants are the same as those among Australian-born workers, inadequate English certainly
makes things more difficult for migrants in many cases. (Galbally Report, 1978: 91)

Several writers (eg Jakubowicz, Morrissey & Palser 1984, Castles, Cope, Kalantzis & Morrissey 1988) have argued that, in its initial form at least, multiculturalism was seen by the Fraser government as an integral component of the neo-conservative project. According to this analysis the form of multiculturalism exemplified by the Galbally report represented a strategy for winning the support (or, at least, the tolerance) of what were then known as 'ethnic organisations' and 'community leaders' while simultaneously abandoning the Whitlam government's efforts to remedy what some members of that government saw as the structural socio-economic marginalisation of immigrant (and other) groups.

Conservative multiculturalism, as exemplified by Galbally, provided an ideological location of the sources of relative disadvantage exclusively in linguistic and cultural factors. It provided a status hierarchy for 'community leaders' through the legitimation of 'ethnics' as a political and social constituency, and through the rhetorical affirmation of the equal validity of all 'cultures' and the equality of all 'races'. The essentially conservative nature of what seemed at the time an exception to the Fraser government's butchering of the welfare system is revealed by the fact that migrants more than paid for the Galbally initiatives through the withdrawal of tax concessions on remittances to dependent relatives overseas. In the first three years of the Galbally program, whose initiatives cost $50 million, this measure netted the government $72 million in additional revenue (Jakubowicz, Morrissey & Palser 1984: 77).

The ALP was always more ambivalent in relation to multiculturalism. Its own history (as well as electoral considerations) propelled it towards a rhetoric consistent with a much more radical view of social policy responses, that of multiculturalism as an element of citizenship. However, the party leadership's capitulation to the dogmas of economic 'rationalism' (deregulation, reliance on 'market forces' reduction of government spending, eschewal of social engineering) resulted in a tension which was sometimes temporarily resolved by policy reversals, but more often managed by a more or less complete disarticulation of rhetoric and practice. The result of this was that multiculturalism became a contested terrain in which a variety of different models of multiculturalism underlay rhetoric and (to a much lesser extent) practice. These might be schematised as follows.
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<th>Way of hearing</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Typical arguments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism as</td>
<td>The ‘mainstream’/‘majority’ permits (/assists) minorities to differ within defined cultural limits set by the ‘mainstream’/‘majority’</td>
<td>The majority of Australians have cultural values and practices which were developed before the arrival of ‘ethnics’. These should be respected and acknowledged as uniquely Australian, whatever the degree of cultural diversity permitted to minorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permission from the mainstream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism as an</td>
<td>Postmodern societies are intrinsically plural: there is no such thing as the ‘mainstream’</td>
<td>Proliferation of lifestyles and minority allegiances means that we are ‘all minorities now’. To assert the existence of a ‘mainstream’ is an attempt to maintain cultural hegemony by a group which is now only one minority among many.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>element of postmodernism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism as</td>
<td>Australia is populated by people from many different countries and is therefore multicultural</td>
<td>Existence of ‘ethnic’ restaurants, newspapers etc. Occurrence of ‘ethnic’ festivals/events. Other visible manifestations of ‘ethnicity’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description/multiethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism as</td>
<td>People should be encouraged to ‘maintain’ their culture and assisted in doing so</td>
<td>Importance of the ethnic group as a site of sociality and mutual assistance. Importance of cultural continuity relative to intergenerational family relationships. Role of cultural acceptance in individual self-esteem, and therefore mental health. Role of ethnic group as medium of service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prescription (static cultural</td>
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<tr>
<td>mode)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism as</td>
<td>‘Ethnics’ should be empowered to participate fully in the continuing development of Australian identity and their contribution should be acknowledged and valued</td>
<td>Contribution of ‘ethnics’ to Australian dietary habits, high culture, business and industry in the past: potential for future development, particularly in relation to cultural service industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prescription (dynamic cultural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/economic mode)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism as social</td>
<td>Migrants (or some migrant groups) are subject to group disadvantage in the labour market, access to services etc. and it should be a conscious policy objective to eradicate this disadvantage</td>
<td>Labour force statistics: ‘needs analysis’ studies, experience of people in caring professions etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism as an</td>
<td>Similar to postmodernist approach but prescriptive as well as descriptive. In a plural society, full cultural and social participation of all minorities is a prerequisite of the full exercise of citizenship by members of these minorities</td>
<td>Social and educational policy should aim at the equal participation of all minorities in a society which recognises diversity. Civil society is held together by common values which are the cultural property of no single group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>element of citizenship</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
From the official inception of multiculturalism in the form of the Galbally report until the beginning of the Hawke-Keating period, the first and fourth of the modes described above were dominant since these formulations fitted comfortably with the neo-conservative reaction instigated by Fraser in 1975. After 1983, however, the picture became more complex for a number of reasons. One was the contradiction in the ALP’s ideology between economic rationalism and cultural radicalism alluded to above; but equally important was the rapid expansion in the number and variety of what Jean Martin called the ‘definers’ of ethnicity (and what right-wing populists have called the ‘multicultural industry’) in the later 1970s and in the 1980s. In the rhetoric of the governments of the 1980s and early 1990s, and in many important policy documents also, all of these models of multiculturalism can be observed from time to time; even though, in practice, the conservative ethnicity model remained dominant in relation to immigration and settlement and, to a lesser extent, in relation to indigenous people.

Jamrozik, Boland and Urquhart (1995, 182–9), for example, produce a convincing account of the way in which two major, and almost contemporary, government reviews were based on totally different ends of the spectrum proposed above.

The Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services (ROMAMPAS or Jupp Committee, 1986) essentially took an interventionist, social democratic line in which cultural equality was explicitly linked with equality of socio-economic opportunity (if not outcome). Cultural diversity was presented in a favourable light, as something to be utilised fully for its social and economic benefits.

By contrast, the Committee to Advise on Australian Immigration Policy (CAAIP or Fitzgerald Committee 1988), which reported only two years after Jupp, following a very similar process of consultation, painted a picture of ‘mainstream’ misunderstanding and distrust of multiculturalism and stressed the need to gear immigration policy to the type of immigrants who would be economically useful to the ‘mainstream’.

The language of ROMAMPAS was that of the integral part of migration and migrants in Australian life, of their contribution and rights. The language of CAAIP was about the necessity for migrants to earn the grudging acceptance of the ‘mainstream’, largely by proving their economic value (to the ‘mainstream’).

Jamrozik et al. (1995: 187) juxtapose the following quotations.
The Committee is not persuaded there is a level of tension between people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds which poses a major threat to social cohesion and which should cause the abandonment of multiculturalism as an appropriate response to the diversity of Australian society (ROMAMPAS 1986: 81–2)

Multiculturalism, which is associated in the public mind with immigration, is seen by many as social engineering which actually invites injustice, inequality and divisiveness (CAAIP 1988: 5)

The Committee can find little to rejoice at in the suspicion towards immigrants and immigration which is reflected in community suspicion of multiculturalism. But that is also a fact. (CAAIP 1988: 10)

These policy contradictions continued throughout the Labor government’s period of office. They are recounted in detail in pages 13-24 of the evaluation of the Community Relations Strategy which is reproduced in full in Volume One and are further commented upon in a more critical fashion in Morrissey (1994) which is also reproduced in Volume One. These selections also provide a detailed analysis of the way in which some of the central policy contradictions of the Hawke and Keating governments were played out in a specific policy area.

Essentially this narrative and commentary proposes that the widening of the range of definers alluded to above and detailed in Morrissey and Mitchell (1993: 14-19) permitted a situation in which the culturalist, ‘ethnicity model’ mode of social policy formulation was seriously challenged in the late eighties and early nineties: but that the cleavage of the ALP government to the tenets of economic rationalism and the continuing dominance of culturist models in the Public Service ensured that an important (and expensive) policy initiative, the Community Relations Strategy, reflected neither the structural analysis contained in three important and influential government reports nor the more important recommendations arising from those reports.

These reports were the National Inquiry into Racist Violence (NIRV) (1991), the National Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) (1991) and the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Mainly Urban (1992). In all three cases the analysis of racism against, and the political and social marginalisation of, indigenous people were cast in terms of structural and institutional aspects of Australian society, epitomised in the following quotation from the NIRV.
Strategies to address the problem of racist violence against Aboriginal people must be linked with policies aimed at improving the status and the standard of living of Aborigines in Australian society. Structural changes are necessary to eliminate institutional racism and to provide appropriate services for the victims of racist violence. Complementary strategies such as community relations and the role of the media are examined in Chapter 12 [of the NIRV report]. These approaches need to be underpinned, however, by fundamental legislative reforms. (HREOC 1991: 260, 269)

The recommendations of all three reports were strongly influenced by the perceived need for (essentially) social engineering to counter the structural causes of racism and marginalisation. As an example, the recommendations of the Mainly Urban report relating to increasing participation in local government by indigenous people were interpreted as follows:

We quote these recommendations to provide support both for our stress on the question of political participation at the local level for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and also for our argument that the peak Local Government organisations (particularly ALGA) should be an important element in a strategy of empowerment at this level. We would also point out that several elements of the recommendations contained in Mainly Urban (in particular the call for establishment of network supports) fall squarely in the area of one community relations approach as we have defined it in this report. (Morrissey and Mitchell 1993:20).

The bulk of the evaluation report from which the preceding quotation is taken consisted of an exhaustive and detailed analysis of the objectives and impacts of over eighty community relations projects funded by the Commonwealth under the Community Relations Strategy, a $6 million subprogram of the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. This program was developed in a policy context heavily influenced by the NIRV and by the reports of the RCIADC: yet the evaluation found that the community relations projects as they actually happened were virtually unaffected by the structural analysis of these two enquiries. Thus:

By far the most frequently-specified objective was that of providing information or enhancing intergroup communication. This was specified as an objective of 63 per cent of all projects and accounted for almost a quarter of all objectives specified throughout the Strategy. The pervasiveness of the cultural information model was greater than this, however, since it informed (as a method) most of the other objectives put forward. Thus over 40 per cent of the projects aimed at some form of increase in awareness of community relations issues on the part of various government and non-government institutions: over a half proceeded
through cultural information/awareness objectives. Over 60 per cent of the projects aimed at setting up some sort of structure devoted to community relations activities had this as an objective also, and in over half of the projects which were concerned with access and equity, cultural information/awareness was a principle objective. (ibid:60)

The evaluation went on to comment as follows:

In our analysis of the distribution of Strategy objectives and activities, we stressed that there was an extremely heavy bias in the Strategy towards projects aimed at attitudinal change through provision of cultural information and enhancement of intergroup contacts. In fact, we argued that the predominance of these objectives and activities amounted to a dominant model for the Strategy, although one that was never made explicit. Taken together with the access and equity emphasis of a number of other projects, in fact, this amounted to virtually a complete description of Program objectives. Both of these, of course, are, or can be, forms of activity which have community relations outcomes but they certainly do not provide a complete coverage of legitimate community relations objectives or activities.

The reason for this is that a model which implicitly (by omission and commission) locates the causes of community disharmony in cultural dissonance inevitably ignores questions of imbalance of social power. Even where, as in the access and equity model, there is an ex ante assumption of group marginalisation and lack of participation in full social life there is almost invariably the accompanying assumption that this marginalisation can be alleviated by changing attitudes in the 'mainstream' or by increasing the flow of information to the excluded group. Only very rarely is the possibility investigated that the marginalisation of a particular group may, in fact, be of direct benefit, material or otherwise, to some other group. In other words the underlying assumption is that there is a homogeneity of interest among groups and that lack of participation is primarily caused by lack of communication.

We might place this assumption in the context of the Human Rights Australia's 1988 Toomelah Report (see Appendix 3) from which the following is an extract.

The Toomelah community of five hundred Aboriginal People endures appalling living conditions which amount to a denial to them of the most basic rights taken for granted by most other groups in society and by other Australian communities of similar size. Their houses are substandard and overcrowded, actually contributing to the range of diseases. The community has for decades lived without an adequate and certain water supply, a properly functioning sewerage system and a safe means of sewage disposal. The lack of a sewerage system is partly due to the damming of the Macintyre River without offering and making available the dammed water to the Toomelah community, as it is offered and made available to other nearby towns and private properties. The community is frequently completely isolated from all services and contact with the outside world due to closure of the inadequate access roads by rains. Community members display higher than average rates of a range of debilitating diseases for which they cannot get adequate treatment. They suffer from a lack of
adequate education and chronic unemployment. Their traditions have been largely destroyed and their own self-esteem is low. Their treatment by government at all levels has been insensitive and uncaring. Their human rights have been ignored. This situation has persisted for decades despite the fact that authoritative attention has often been drawn to it. ...[The failure of the Shire Council to accept responsibility for Toomelah has resulted in Commonwealth and State funding for local government services being denied to the people of Toomelah, although received by the Shire Council for them and on the basis that they are residents of the Shire. (Human Rights Australia, 1988: 61 Our emphasis)]

The clear conclusions that can be drawn from this account are that the situation at Toomelah was not due to lack of awareness on the part of the relevant authorities, and still less was it the result of cultural dissonance. Somebody benefited materially from this situation, namely the non-Aboriginal inhabitants of the Shire in question who received a higher expenditure on services per capita than would have been the case in the absence of discriminatory treatment. In short, the situation at Toomelah existed because of the total exclusion of Aboriginals from political power and its monopolisation by non-Aboriginals. It must also be said that no observer could honestly have said, in 1988, that the major community relations need of the inhabitants of Toomelah was better understanding of their culture on the part of the non-Aboriginal population.

The clear argument here relates to an often unspoken but highly consistent bureaucratic practice of avoiding engagement with issues of structural disadvantage and institutional racism through an almost exclusive policy focus on cultural dissonance and the disarticulation of this concept of cultural dissonance from any consideration of relations of power and inequality between different social groups. This practice was particularly pronounced relative to aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations but was also to be observed relative to other interethnic interactions.

As suggested at the beginning of this section, however, this was not so much a conscious policy decision as a journey down the path of least resistance and, to some extent, an unconscious response to pressures arising from micropolitical process.

It is much easier to conceptualise cultural dissonance as a matter located only in the realm of ideas and understanding than it is to relate such dissonance to issues of structural inequality. Viewed in this way, also, it is easier to 'deal with' in the sense that it is easier to conceptualise and execute community relations projects within this mode of social analysis as opposed to one which sees intercommunal conflict (or
cooperation or lack of contact of any sort) as being, in the last resort, rooted in material relations between groups of people.

The political pressures were also crucial, however, and the 1993 paper proposed two main sources of such pressure, namely the economic ‘rationalist’ parameters of sociocultural policy which produced a contradiction between the dominant mode of economic laissez-faire and the subordinate mode of socio-political activism in the ALP’s policies in the community relations area: and the never-ending political task of ‘selling’ a government’s record to the electorate. The former always ensures that...(community relations intervention by government)......is to some extent suspect as an activity in itself, and, in any case, permanently starved of funding. This has three consequences, namely:

- that funding is always short term even though the bulk of investigative work insists that only consistent long-term efforts can eliminate the social problems being addressed;
- that reordering queues (aka access and equity) takes total precedence over shortening queues (aka redistributive social policy); and
- that ‘pilot’ projects abound but that the pilots rarely acquire aircraft and that narrow ‘targets’ rather than broad structures are aimed for.

The latter was a source of permanent pressure:

- to spread the relatively small allocation of funds as far as it would go, both in terms of organisations and geography, in order to maximise the number of ‘stakeholders’ in the Strategy;
- to emphasise projects which had an in-built publicity element (ie. those that were oriented to the media); and
- to emphasise projects which resulted in a physical product which could be launched, publicised and used as proof of achievement.

These political parameters were clearly of importance in themselves but it is doubtful how much effect the cultural policies of postwar governments had upon the mass of migrants, or, indeed upon indigenous people, at least until the Howard government and One Nation proceeded to rewrite the whole script. Whatever may be the case in this respect it is undeniable that the labour market has been and remains a welfare distribution system of a vastly different order of magnitude from any direct intervention by governments. It is on the labour market that Volume Two focuses.

3. Volume Two: The Labour Market

Volume Two is made up of selections from work published between 1985 and 1995, listed as follows:

It is natural that work published over a period of ten years should exhibit changes in emphasis and approach, particularly as these were years which saw drastic changes in the labour market position of migrant workers. At the start of the period it was still possible for some commentators to argue that there was no discernible ethnic dimension to disadvantage in the labour market. The debate was summed up as follows:

The literature in question tends to fall into two extremes, represented on the one hand by Stricker and Sheehan (1981, Ch.8) who argue for a position of acute and worsening labour market disadvantage for migrants relative to the Australian-born and, on the other hand, a group of analysts who argue that labour force experience, relative to unemployment has shown little variation across ethnic lines (Miller, 1982; Bonnell and Dixon 1982 and 1983).

Seven years later the debate had moved on decisively.

First, there is broad agreement that unemployment rates are, in general, higher among overseas-born workers than among the Australian-born; that workers of NESB have a higher unemployment rate than the Australian-born group and also a higher rate than ESB migrants; and that among the NESB group there are considerable variations among a number of discriminating variables, for example country of origin, gender, length of residence and refugee/non-refugee status.

(See Miller, 1982; Inglis and Stromback, 1984; Chapman and Miller, 1985; Castles et al. 1986,1988; Wooden and Robertson, 1989.)

In addition there is no disagreement in the available literature that the level of English language proficiency is an important, if not decisive, influence affecting the type of work available to migrants as well as their chances of finding work of any sort at all.

It is on the question of the meaning of these areas of factual agreement that controversy emerges, and also on the question of appropriate methodologies for interpretation.

(Morrissey et al 1992: 8)

In other words, it was no longer a question of whether migrant disadvantage in the labour market existed but of why it did: and the broad point of disagreement could be summed up as

between those who see the labour market as being segmented to some degree along ethnic lines and those who see the market as being unified, with the individual's location being determined by her/his level of 'human capital' (for
example, the level of a sum of acquired qualities which are valuable in the
market place, most notably skill and education levels). Generally, those who
argue the former case have used descriptive, qualitative approaches while those
who take the latter view have more often (but not always) adopted a highly
formalised econometric or sociometric methodology.

(Ibid)

The reason why this sharp shift in the focus of the debate took place is summed up in
the 1995 study listed above.

In February 1995, workers born outside Australia constituted 25.6% of the total
labour force. Overall, this group of workers exhibited an unfavourable labour
market position compared to the Australia-born, with their overall
unemployment rate 25.8% higher and their overall participation rate just over
9% lower. Overseas-born workers from non-English-speaking (NES) countries
had an unemployment rate over 50% higher than that for the Australia-born in
February 1995.

Moreover, long-term unemployment formed a much more substantial fraction
of the overseas-born workforce, particularly if one focuses on workers born in
NES countries. By 1993, over 45% of the unemployed workers from this group
were classified as long-term unemployed (out of work 52 weeks or more) and
27.2% were classified as very long-term unemployed (104 weeks or more). The
equivalent figures for the Australia-born were 34.5% and 17.6% respectively. It
should also be noted in this context that overseas-born workers from English-
speaking (ES) countries had, overall, long-term and very long-term
unemployment rates which were slightly lower in each case than those for the
Australia-born.

This situation has developed partly as a result of secular changes in the
Australian labour market, which we will detail below, but workers born in non-
English-speaking countries have also been differently and more severely affected
compared to those of English-speaking background by the two severe recessions
of the last two decades, which had their troughs in 1983 and 1991 respectively (see
Ackland and Williams 1992).

It is demonstrated in Figures One to Four that the labour market disadvantage
affecting workers born in NES countries along the dimension of unemployment
(as opposed to the dimensions of income, occupational mobility etc.) is
something which first became evident in the early 1980s; worsened in the
recession which bottomed in 1993; did not ease much (in relative terms) in the
subsequent recovery; and intensified still further in the recession of the early
1990s.

In 1978, unemployment rates for workers born in Australia, ES countries and
NES countries showed no substantial difference, yet by 1983 the workers born in
these countries had an unemployment rate 35% higher than the Australia-born.
This gap closed somewhat in the recovery phase, falling to just over 20% in 1986.
Thereafter the gap started to increase, with accelerating speed after the recovery
peak of 1989. By 1990 it stood at 40% and by mid-1993, it had risen to 60%. The recovery saw the gap narrow to just over 50% by 1995. (Morrissey 1995: 58-59)

Thus the sheer magnitude of the divergence in labour market experience between NESB and ESB workers which opened up in the recessions of the early 1980s and early 1990s was what caused the shift in debate: but, in spite of this shift of focus, there is, nevertheless, a clear theoretical and empirical stance running through the work listed in Volume Two. Its main elements may be listed as follows:

- that there is clear evidence that substantial sections of the immigrant workforce have been clustered in a distinct labour segment;
- that throughout the period the labour market position of NESB workers was one of clear disadvantage compared to those of ESB;
- that this disadvantage deepened over time (and deepened particularly rapidly in periods of recession) because of secular changes in the Australian economy;
- that the most important of these changes were the restructuring of the technology and product mix of the manufacturing sector and the expansion of the service sector;
- that there were significant differences in the labour market experience of different ethnic groups and even more significant differences in the experience of men and women within ethnic groups;
- that the segmentation of the labour market was a structural feature intimately linked to the nature of the immigration program in the period 1947-1981;
- that this segmentation tended to reproduce itself; and, finally
- that explanations which rested solely on supposed differences in human capital are inadequate to explain either the origins or the reproduction of labour market segmentation.

The empirical evidence for segmentation was based on a series of studies not included in Volume Two because of difficulties in disentangling individual contributions to multi-authored works (eg Castles, Morrissey & Pinkstone 1988; Castles, Lewis, Morrissey and Black 1986) but the evidence is presented in summary form in Morrissey 1985 13-20, Morrissey et al 1992 10-17 and Morrissey 1995 passim. The last point, that of theoretical
and methodological opposition to econometric human capital approaches is summed up in the following passage.

Wooden et al. (1990: 232) for example, provide a detailed summary of the findings of seven major studies over the last six years which have utilised multivariate econometric techniques to address this question. (AIMA, 1985; Brooks and Volker, 1985; Inglis and Stromback, 1986; Miller, 1986a, 1986b; Beggs and Chapman, 1988; Wooden and Robertson, 1989.)

The summary provided by Wooden et al. is interesting both for what it contains and for what it omits. First, it makes reference to differences in findings between these studies but does not comment on the theoretical implications of these differences. For example, all studies found that lack of English language proficiency was a source of labour market disadvantage but Wooden and Robertson (1989) found, in contrast to a number of other studies, that even migrants of NESB who spoke English well were disadvantaged compared to first-language English-speakers. They do not, however, refer to the quite obvious point that if this conclusion is valid, then one important element of 'human capital' in an Australian context (English language proficiency) is undervalued in this country when it is possessed by one group (NESB migrants) compared to another (ESB migrants). In a similar vein, Beggs and Chapman (1988) found that the employment effects of education were not the same for NESB immigrants as for the Australian-born since similar levels of education were associated with lower employment prospects for the former group than for the latter. Again, Wooden and Robertson found that:

[At] all levels of education the Australian-born are found to have lower probabilities of unemployment than the overseas born. However ... [sic]...there is evidence to support the hypothesis that post-school educational qualifications do not have as large an effect on employability as do the same level of qualifications obtained in Australia, but only for migrants from a NESB. (Wooden et al. 1990: 241).

These phenomena are dismissed under the rubric of barriers to the 'international transferability of human capital' but what might actually constitute these barriers has not been an object of investigation.

A second point not often addressed is the applicability of multivariate analysis in a situation where the so-called control variables are almost invariably highly colinear. As an example of this, we might refer to Miller (1986b), whose method is to take employment status (unemployed/employed) as the dependant variable and to use four others (level of education, English language ability, length of residence and marital status) as control variables. The problem here, of course, is twofold. A minor difficulty is that there may be problems in specifying the direction of causation. Thus, lack of English proficiency will certainly contribute to the probability of unemployment but there is also plenty of empirical evidence that lack of employment contributes to lack of English language proficiency by isolating people in non-English language-speaking situations (Byrne and Lee,
A more serious difficulty is that most of the control variables are probably intercorrelated to varying degrees. Empirical studies suggest, for example, that better-educated people develop English language skills faster and to an ultimately higher level than the less well-educated, even though their English language proficiency levels might have been roughly the same at the time of arrival.

As a further example let us refer to the question of refugee/non-refugee status. Miller (1986a), for example, takes as a dependent variable the percentage of the first year of Australian labour market activity spent unemployed. His control variables are:

- years of schooling;
- birthplace;
- aggregate unemployment rate;
- year of entry to the labour market;
- refugee status; and
- premigration knowledge of employment opportunities.

The obvious reflection on this list is that refugees have a high probability of truncated or interrupted education; that they come from a limited number of countries; and that the majority has been in Australia fifteen years or less. In other words at least three (and possibly four) of these control variables are intercorrelated. This raises difficulties at a conceptual level. Is the 'refugee experience' something qualitatively different and more disabling than a 'normal' migration or is the label refugee just a subsummation of a group of other disadvantaging factors such as lack of education? It also presents severe technical problems which it is not the role of this study to examine (see Koutsoyiannis, 1977).

(Morrissey et al 1992:9)

The overall emphasis of Volume Two is that there is a series of mutually reinforcing processes which have reproduced the labour market disadvantage of substantial sections of NESB workers and the individual studies show different aspects of these processes, a theme to which other volumes of this thesis also return. (Thus the work on occupational health included in Volume Four shows how the industrial and occupational distribution of migrant workers rendered them much more vulnerable to occupationally-related injury and disease than the workforce as a whole while the prejudicial application of crude ‘ethnicity model diagnoses’ by medical practitioners permitted a form of victim-blaming in which ‘ethnicity’ came to be portrayed as almost pathogenic in itself).
The studies of labour market programs and industrial democracy undertaken in 1984-85 (and included in Volume Three of this thesis) showed how NESB migrants were effectively excluded from such programs and also from employee participation/industrial democracy schemes. The study of older migrant workers undertaken in 1993 provided reason to criticise strongly the 'conventional wisdom' that labour market disadvantage, seen as an ethnic group phenomenon, was a declining function of the median length of residence in Australia, finding that the evidence for this was to a substantial degree a statistical mirage produced by demographic effects. Once these demographic effects were corrected for, the relative disadvantage of older workers was shown, age group for age group, to be actually greater than that of younger workers.

This picture of the reproduction of disadvantage was confirmed in the 1995 study in which it was shown that in relatively declining sectors the percentage loss of jobs by overseas-born workers had been much higher than that of the Australian-born over the previous decade; and that in expanding sectors the percentage increase in employment for the overseas-born had been much lower than that of the Australian-born. The paradigmatic case, and one which poses a distinct challenge to human capital approaches, was the relatively declining manufacturing sector where a sharp decrease in employment of the overseas-born was matched by a slight increase in the employment of the Australian-born (1995:76). Similarly the period of recovery from the 1991 recession (1991-1995) saw the number of Australian-born people employed as labourers and related workers increasing by 6.9% while the number of overseas-born workers in this occupational group fell by 1.6%.

The study of industry restructuring in the Illawarra spotlights the combined effects of these processes in a specific geographical area and time frame and is one of the very few regional studies of migrant employment. It demonstrates, among other things, how the spatial distribution of migrant workers can be a potent marginalising force when economic restructuring is regionally concentrated.
The study was conducted during 1990 and the early part of 1991. Its objective was to provide two perspectives often missing from the literature on migrants' labour market experience, which were:

- an examination of the effects on migrant workers of changes in the production process at a key site of migrant employment; and

- an examination of the effects on migrant workers of changes in the economy of a region which, due to its economic make-up, has a migrant population that differs from the national norm, both in its density and in its ethnic composition.

The main focus of the study was the period 1981-89 which saw three major influences at work in the region. The first was the economic cycle which bottomed out in 1984, and from which the highest point of recovery was (regionally) in 1989-90. The second was the secular influence of labour-replacing technological change in the region's two major industries - steel and coal. The third was a considerable expansion of the service sectors, in particular jobs associated with retailing and tourism.

In terms of this general picture the Illawarra's pattern of change in the 1980s reflected that of the nation as a whole. It is in terms of the magnitude of these changes that the region's experience was distinctive.

First, the effects of the economic cycle of the 1980s were much more pronounced in the region than in the nation as a whole, as is frequently the case in heavy manufacturing areas. Secondly, the contraction of manufacturing employment in the region was much greater than in the nation as a whole, and thirdly, service sector employment grew relatively slowly. In Chapters Four and Five of the study is presented a detailed analysis of these general trends based on material collected from personal interviews, general literature on the topic and statistical material provided by such agencies as the Illawarra Regional Information Service, Wollongong City Council, BHP, the NSW Joint Coal Board and a variety of government agencies.
For the non-English-speaking background (NESB) workers, who were the focus of the study, it is quite clear that the major effect of structural change in the 1980s were devastating rates of long-term unemployment. This did not happen because NESB migrants were victimised in the process of change, however. Rather it was because of the industrial location of the migrant workforce. Indeed, and paradoxically, structural change concentrated migrant employment into manufacturing even further (while reducing overall employment levels). As an example, between 1980 and 1990 Yugoslav-born workers actually lost a rather lower proportion of the jobs they held at the start of the period than did the Australian-born. The proportion of Yugoslav-born workers employed at the plant was actually higher in 1990 than in 1980. On the other hand, the absolute number of jobs lost, while roughly equal, represented less than 6 per cent of the regional Australian-born male labour force, but it was over 40 per cent of the region’s Yugoslav-born male labour force.

The study found no evidence that migrant workers displaced from manufacturing industry had been re-employed in the service sector to any significant degree. Also, the employment multiplier effect of service sector expansion was both relatively small and confined to the service sector itself; and, even if migrant workers had been re-employed in the service sector it would have meant for many, a shift from full-time relatively well-paid to part-time, lower-paid employment.

Surveys carried out in relation to the study revealed an ageing, overwhelmingly male group of workers. In general they had low levels of education and skill and such skills as they possessed had been, for the most part, learned informally on the job. As such these skills were generally uncredentialled and almost invariably job-specific with the further result that they were rarely transportable outside the industry and generally vulnerable to being rendered obsolete by technical change within it. In addition, the sample as a whole had very little experience of employment outside the steel industry, very limited experience (in terms of job variety) within it and the large majority had not been offered opportunities to retrain.
Overall the sample had little experience of the worker participation and career path structures which are predicted to characterise the 'new workplace culture'. As a point of great importance, too, the workers who remained at BHP showed little significant difference across any of these various characteristics from those who were displaced in the 1980s. In other words, although BHP now requires a workforce which is multi-skilled, flexible, orientated to a career path and able to participate in decision-making, what it must work with is one which was moulded by the old workplace culture which not only required none of these qualities in workers, but in many respects actively suppressed them.

The sample characteristics described above applied more strongly to NESB workers than to the sample as a whole. In other words, they had lower rates of skill, education and training than English-speaking-background (ESB) workers. They also had much lower levels of English language skills as a result (in part) of working for many years in an environment which neither made much demand for such skills nor provided much opportunity to acquire them.

Not surprisingly, the labour market experience of redundant migrant steelworkers had been fairly bleak. At the time the study was conducted only a third of those interviewed had found employment since leaving BHP, virtually none of them in the expanding employment sectors.

Throughout Volume Two the importance of English language proficiency as a key variable determining migrants' labour market experience is stressed; and it is also established that the importance of main language proficiency increased rapidly with the emergence of the service sector as the fastest-growing area of employment. Volume Three complements the labour market analysis of Volume Two by examining in detail the factors promoting or inhibiting English language acquisition.

4. Volume Three: English Language Learning

The publications reproduced in Volume Three supplement and intersect those in Volumes One and Two. They are:
Whereas Volume One is largely concerned with the ideological role of the state and Volume Two with structural factors affecting the socioeconomic position of migrant workers, Volume Three is concerned with the role of the state in relation to the major widely-accepted cause of immigrant disadvantage - lack of main language competence - and the effect on immigrants of the state's attempts to manage some aspects of structural change through English language education and labour market programs. It is also concerned with the reciprocal relationship between main language acquisition and labour market experience.

The basic conclusions of this body of work were:

• that English language learning should be seen as a special case within the general process of skills acquisition relative to the labour market;
• that ethnicity, gender and social class (in Australia and the country of origin) were important correlates of success in English language acquisition; but
• that correlation did not equate with causality in the sense that observable ethnic differences in English language competence (or in ease of acquiring it) were not caused by ethnicity (or gender or social class) but resulted from a complex of processes relating to migration, settlement and the socio-economic structure of Australia in which ethnicity, gender and social class interacted in complex and changing ways.

Enclosing these propositions, however, were two more general ones. These were that the migration process had 'assigned' particular sections of migrants to semi-discrete labour market segments between the 1940s and the 1970s: and that socio-economic processes in Australia functioned in such a way as to lock the majority of workers into the segments to which they had initially been assigned. The generally poor English language competence of even long-established migrant groups was seen as both a causal and a contingent variable in this process.
In other words, lack of English language competence at the time of arrival was a potent factor in defining the narrow range of occupations available to the majority of migrants but this very occupational distribution was associated with a number of factors which reduced the ability, or even the inclination, of migrants to overcome this initial lack of competence. Chief among these were the segregation of considerable numbers of migrants into occupational enclaves where English language competence was neither required nor encouraged; lack of access to conventionally-delivered English language instruction (which was, in any case, generally under-resourced and pedagogically inappropriate); and consequent exclusion from more general skills acquisition opportunities such as labour market programs.

The methodology of all the studies reproduced in Volume Three reflects these propositions, as can be most clearly seen from the study of English language acquisition in the Illawarra conducted during 1981. Here, a sample of 320 people equally stratified by gender and eight ethnicities was tested for English language proficiency and the results of these tests correlated with a wide variety of socioeconomic characteristics and indicators of life experience. The sample survey was accompanied by extensive key informant interviews to establish the institutional structure and pedagogic practice of the key provider of English language instruction, the Adult Migrant Education Service.

The results of this approach are best summarised as follows.

The factors which determine an individual migrant’s English proficiency are extraordinarily complex and interconnected. No simple bivariate analysis will generate very high measures of association because of the number of causal influences at work; and the colinearity of many variables (such as year of arrival and education level) make multivariate analysis of any sensitivity extremely difficult.  
(Morrissey and Palser 1983: 20)

For this reason the main quantitative tool utilised for the purpose of general conclusions was discriminant analysis which found that the most important discriminating variable in relation to English language competence was, in fact, the respondent’s level of general educational achievement in the country of origin; and
Our previous analysis indicates that ethnicity is an important correlate of English language proficiency in the sense that the mean... (language competence test) ...scores of the different ethnic groups vary over a considerable range. Having said this, however, what do we mean? We might observe that Latin Americans have a far higher proficiency level than Greeks; but, in saying this, we might be making any or all of the following statements:

- South Americans are culturally advantaged in relation to Greeks in the matter of English language acquisition since, e.g. they share a common orthography with Australians and Greeks do not;
- South Americans in Australia are of generally better educational background than Greeks because of conditions in the country of origin at the respective times of immigration;
- South Americans generally organise themselves better to learn English since they are less determined to retain their distinctively ethnic characteristics than Greeks;
- South Americans have jobs which force them to speak English and Greeks do not.

The truth (or falsehood) of these statements is irrelevant... (They) ...illustrate four qualitatively different statements which might be subsumed in a single statement about ethnic differentiation............... We suggest that in many contexts ethnicity itself has been used as the explanation of the social or behavioural characteristics of an ethnic group, that is, it has been used as a substitute for genuine knowledge of the socio-economic, local characteristics of the group in question.

(Ibid)

This emphasis on the links between socio-economic and ethnic diversity (and on socio-economic diversity within ethnic groups) was set against an institutional analysis of the Adult Migrant Education Service which produced a series of recommendations based on the conclusions that;

1. Migrants are not a homogenous group. This is true of English language learning as it is of anything else. If we take only four groups

- the elderly
- women with young children
- shiftworkers and
- newly arrived refugees

then different approaches are needed for each because not only are their needs and abilities different... but their attitudes to classes vary greatly. There are many other subgroups, including ethnic ones.
2. This diversity of needs and attitudes should elicit a flexible approach on the part of the AMES in which programs are 'targeted' to particular groups and work in close consultation with migrant communities.

3. With very few exceptions the AMES in this area does not meet these requirements......

This underlying analysis of disadvantaged migrant groups being further marginalised by lack of access to under-resourced and inappropriate services organised around an inadequate understanding of the dynamics of ethnic differentiation was carried through to the other three selections contained in Volume Three which all relate, in one way or another, to the efforts of the Hawke government to promote the recovery of employment from the sharp recession of the early 1980s.

As seen in relation to Volume Two, it was this recession which commenced the process of increased differentiation in the labour market experience of migrant workers. Prior to this, differentiation had been observable mainly in relation to segmented patterns of employment at the level of occupational and sectoral distribution. After this, another dimension of differentiation opened up as unemployment rates for migrant workers and the Australian-born progressively diverged.

To the extent that the labour market programs of the early to mid-1980s had any effect at all in promoting recovery from the recession, a partial explanation of this differentiation in the labour market experience of ESB and NESB workers presents itself in the selection of writing presented in Volume Three. Essentially, NESB migrants were excluded from these programs, as was detailed in the work carried out for the Committee of Review into Labour Market Programs or Kirby Committee (Morrissey 1985 [a]). The extent of this exclusion is illustrated by a critical commentary on a 1983 Bureau of Labour Market Research report on labour market programs over the preceding five years:

....a careful reading of the BLMR report quoted above shows that the word migrant does not appear once; a fact we highlight without any intention of pillorying the BLMR since the report in question is probably a fairly accurate description of what actually happened (Morrissey 1985 (a): 18)
This report went on to find that the pattern of exclusion was repeated in a subsequent, much larger program, the so-called Wage Pause Program, even though people with English language difficulties were nominally a priority target group of this program (ibid: 19-23). The report contained a detailed and critical review of resources available for English language learning and their organisation and made comparisons with provisions and organisation in France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

These themes are revisited across a broader front in the second of the two 1995 studies selected in Volume Three (Morrissey 1993 [b]). The starting point of this study (as commissioned by the [then] Department of Employment and Industrial Relations) was industrial democracy/employee participation. However, both the vagueness of these concepts and the paucity of evidence for migrant participation in any of the small number of such schemes in operation in Australia drove the study towards a wide-ranging examination of the causes of marginalisation of migrant workers.

The approach taken in this study is exemplified by an introductory statement that:

...it is by no means a simple task to disentangle the causes of the marginalisation experienced by some groups of migrants. Very often what appears to be a specifically migrant problem is, in fact, a pronounced form of something also affecting very substantial sections of the anglophone workforce. (Morrissey 1995[b] :2)

As an example of this, the report noted that both fieldwork and the literature review for the study indicated that NESB migrant participation in the office-holding and leadership levels of trade unions was very low, even in unions in which such migrants constituted the large majority of members, and even though the level of union density among such migrants was substantially higher than the density for all workers. The report commented:

The question of the causes of non-participation ......(is)......not simple. The pat explanations revolving around migrant 'apathy' and anglophone unionists' prejudice do not go far enough in that they take no account of the structure of unions in this country and the effects of that structure on workers of all ethnicities. We argue that the question of migrant participation in unions should be seen as one facet of a process of raising the level of consciousness and activity of all workers...... (Ibid : 3)
As an example of the structural factors which needed to be addressed the report quoted work on the highly legalistic and complex structure of industrial relations in Australia which tended towards the creation of an ‘industrial relations community’ and the minimisation of rank and file participation (e.g. Anderson 1984), commenting that:

workers who have poor English and limited knowledge of procedures in the industrial relations system will be doubly affected by this lack of participation; and a system that generally does not inspire the active participation of its Anglophone members is unlikely to develop....strategies to integrate its non-Anglophones (Morrissey 1985[b]:37)

In summary, then, this work argued and presented cumulative evidence to the effect that:

- lack of main language competence not only reinforced labour market segmentation but that very segmentation in turn reproduced and reinforced workers’ deficient competence;
- lack of main language competence tended not only to confine migrant workers to particular occupational and sectoral segments but also to isolate them from labour market programs, employee participation schemes and active involvement in trade unionism; and
- government and other institutional responses to this source of labour market disadvantage had been ineffectual in terms of organisation (as in the failure to integrate second language education into labour market programs) and inappropriate in terms of educational and pedagogic practice.

In the 1986 report on the language learning needs of unemployed migrants these themes were explored in more detail and with more of an emphasis on future policy development. The conclusions of this report with regard to pedagogy, the organisation of service delivery and future research needs were based on a large survey and a comprehensive literature review. They are included in Volume Three.

5. Volume Four: Community and Culture

The selections presented in Volume Four of this thesis are listed as follows.

The theme linking these selections is that of the informal definition, reproduction and renegotiation of the boundaries of ethnic 'communities' and the content of ethnic 'culture'. This is interpreted as taking place through a number of processes of group self-definition and definition/ascription by 'definers' from outside the groups in question. As examples of the first are various types of ethnic organisations and such activities as the production of ethnic-specific newspapers and other publications. Typically, the most important processes/sites through which definition/ascription by others takes place have been in connection with migrants' interactions with the professions (particularly the medical profession and various academics) and with various parts of the bureaucracy.

Following this distinction, the 1997, 1991, 1985 and 1980, selections all deal with the migrant as object; or, in other words, with certain aspects of how relatively powerful definers have shaped perceptions of the cultural nexus between migrants and what has often been referred to as 'mainstream' Australia. The specific site in which this process is observed and analysed is that of migrant health, but this is complemented by the 1992(b) selection which gives an example of the way in which what appears to be 'value-free' and empirical work on immigration (as on much else) can contain an unspoken but still powerful ideological loading.
By contrast the 1992(a), 1994, 1995 and 1996 selections all place more emphasis on the migrant as subject. The 1994, 1995 and 1996 selections are from the most comprehensive study of the Australian non English-language press ever carried out and, as such, they deal with one of the most important mechanisms through which ‘communities’ are either created or maintained or redefined (or any combination of these three) out of the raw material of groups of people who speak the same language (other than English). Finally, the 1992(a) selection, in comparing migration from Italy to Australia and Argentina, examines some of the structural factors determining the nature and extent of cultural adaptation by both immigrant and native populations and indicates some of the very different cultural outcomes which may result from differences in these structural factors between different countries of immigration.

The starting point for the health studies included in Volume Four was a survey carried out by Jean Martin (Martin 1978:170-169) in which she attempted to assess the way in which the Australian medical system approached the health needs of immigrants by reviewing all the available and relevant literature published since 1945. This gave her a total of 118 publications, the majority by medical doctors and published in medical journals of one sort or another (mainly the Medical Journal of Australia). The results of this survey are summarised as follows in Morrissey 1997 (98-99)

Of the 118 items reviewed by Martin, the vast majority portrayed immigrants as in some sense importing their problems. Only ten of the articles nominated inadequacy of Australian health care provisions as a problem and the overwhelming tendency was to stress the premigration experience of the immigrant, the migration process or the immigrant’s ‘culture’ generally as being in some sense pathogenic. Moreover:

The most striking thing about the literature reviewed is the disjunction between assertions of the importance of socio-cultural and economic sources of health-related problems, on the one hand, and indifference to systematic research on the effects of these sources on health, on the other hand. Research ... concentrates on familiar 'hard' facts like age, sex, education, birthplace, duration of residence, family status, employment and knowledge of English. The meaning to be attached to these 'hard' facts has almost always to be sought outside the research data. It is found in the general experience of the researchers, in overseas literature and in the reported experience of colleagues. (Martin, 1978: 162-3)

The 1980 study of occupational health used Martin’s work and produced an analysis which stressed the socio-economic position of NESB migrants in a segmented
workforce and which, while admitting the existence and significance of cultural
difference in relation to questions of health, also stressed the importance of relations
of power and subordination between different groups in the production of public
knowledge about migrant health. An exemplary case of the processes at work was
summed up in relation to a well-known phenomenon in the field of occupational
health, namely the so-called accident victim syndrome in which an individual’s
psychological and physical reactions to occupational injury appear to medical
practitioners as disproportionate to the injuries originally sustained. The analysis is
best summed up in the following quotation.

In recapitulating the preceding argument it is worth referring back to the point
made implicitly by Cole; that the ‘disease model’ effectively substitutes for
knowledge of the ‘situational problems’ of injured workers Neither the social
position of middle class medical practitioners nor their training nor the context
within which they interact with injured workers allow them to appreciate and
respond to the problems of these workers in a sensitive way. Thus the behaviour
of at least a proportion of these workers seems to the professional to be ‘irrational’
and a disease model explains this ‘irrationality’. In the case of injured migrants an
‘ethnicity model’ supplements or infuses the disease model. Ethnicity, in a sense,
is seen as pathogenic in itself. This tendency to view the problems of the
patient/client/claimant in terms of ethnicity is exacerbated in its consequences by
the quality of the information available. It is likely that the ethnicity of the
individual will be perceived in the light of a few untested generalisations about
‘ethnic’ peculiarities which may or may not apply to the individual, to that
individual’s ethnic group or, indeed, to any ethnic group at all. Once again the
elements of class and culture mingle in a complex way to disadvantage the
migrant in his relations with mainstream Anglo-Australian society. Paradoxically
it is the exclusive focus on the cultural disjunctures in the migrant’s relations
with the host society which in part produces this disadvantage.
(Morrissey and Jakubowicz 1980: 35-36)

This analysis was later deepened (Morrissey 1985) by the inclusion of a gender
dimension and widened to include a broader analysis of the production of cultural
‘knowledge’ on the one hand, and the consequences of this knowledge production
across a wide range of service provision on the other. (Morrissey et al 1991). In
addition, the latter study confronted the problem that the 1980s had seen a massive
qualitative change both in the nature of the migrant intake and in the socio-economic
structures to which the newly-arrived were forced to adapt if they were to survive.
The former study included a case history, taken from the files of the Lidcombe Workers' Health Centre which detailed the treatment of a Greek-born female process worker suffering from repetitive strain injury. This woman was consistently informed that her injury was 'psychological', she was repeatedly threatened with dismissal if she did not recover and different medical practitioners variously explained her 'psychological' condition in terms of her culture and her lack of a sexual partner. This four-fold objectification was analysed as follows.

both at work and in relation to the doctors, this woman's 'migrantness' is one element in a series of social situations which reduce her to an object and prevent her imposing on the situation her own sense of reality. An Anglo-Australian male worker would not be open to the last two of these forms of psychological assault. If he were a skilled worker in a relatively secure job his vulnerability to the first two would be sharply reduced, compared to an unskilled male worker in a marginal industry. The differences in ideological treatment directly relate the fragmentation of the working class in which ethnic stratification, sexism and craftism form distinct elements but often have synergistic consequences (Morrissey 1985: 80).

The object of the 1991 study was to examine the role of the family in the settlement process of recent immigrants and to examine the services provided to help them in settlement. The study consisted of four main parts, namely:

- an examination of theoretical issues relating to the family (chapter 2);
- a series of brief social histories relating to the family in England, China, Cambodia, the Philippines and southern Latin America (chapter 3);
- a review of Australian literature on family and settlement; (chapters 4 and 5); and
- a sample survey of 250 individuals drawn in equal numbers from the migrant groups listed above (chapter 6).

At the outset the objectives of the study posed some distinct conceptual problems which compounded the issues raised above.

First, the concept of 'family' was found to be an extremely elusive one, particularly in the cross-cultural context. The stereotype of the heterosexual married couple living in a nuclear unit with their children simply does not apply to a wide range of people who
live as single parents or whose family units are the product of divorce and remarriage. In addition we faced the problem of the uncertain relation between the 'core' or household and the more extended family.

The simple notion of the nuclear family implies that the most important ties of affection and obligation are between spouses and between parents and children. In many other cultures, however, there are other family ties which are equally important, at least in the traditional form of that culture. Given this emphasis on cultural diversity, the problem was to find ways of establishing the content of this diversity and its effects on the dynamics of a number of social processes, the most important of which, in the context of the publication in question, was the propensity of migrants to use and draw benefit from, the relevant elements of the social welfare system.

The major conclusions of the study were negative ones: namely that the whole notion of 'settlement' was extremely problematic; that the settlement process, whatever it may be, was often viewed through the distorting glass of implicit and inappropriate theories; and that there was a dearth of empirical ethnographic material relating to the people who actually formed the immigrant intake in the 1990s and to the problems that confront them.

It was a general theme of the study, also, that perceptions of the settlement process on the part of some academics and most service providers were still heavily coloured by the experience of the period from the late 1940s to the early 1970s which was no longer relevant given the migration patterns and socio-economic structures which had emerged in the 1980s. First, and most obviously, the ethnic composition of the immigrant intake was radically different from that of twenty years before so that much of the material on the settlement patterns of migrants was extremely dated and of limited relevance to people currently arriving. There were virtually no recent ethnographic studies of such groups as Chinese and Filipino immigrants, still less of such groups as the British, New Zealanders or South Americans.

Second, the parameters of the migration and settlement processes had changed. In the 1960s a high proportion of southern and eastern European immigrants came from
rural backgrounds; the 'traditional' societies of modernisation theory. By the early 1990s, it was probable that only refugee groups contained people from this sort of background.

Third, the migrants of the 1950s and 1960s arrived in an expanding industrial economy for which they provided the labour force and they generally made their homes in inner city suburbs. Throughout the 1980s the manufacturing labour force had been contracting and the gentrified inner suburbs became prohibitively expensive. In other words, immigrants were confronted with different settlement tasks in relation to housing, employment and English-language proficiency.

In the theoretical and social history sections of the study, these questions were examined and the relevant literature reviewed. The main conclusion was that, as a source of knowledge about the lived culture of migrant groups, anthropological studies from the countries of origin were highly suspect, partly because the migration process is highly selective demographically and in terms of socio-economic stratification and partly because it is, in any case, highly conducive to cultural change on the part of the migrating group. Moreover that literature was, in any case, far from unambiguous in its conclusions as was vividly illustrated by the fact that the actual structure and dynamics of the traditional Chinese family have been and remain two of the most controversial subjects in Chinese anthropology.

This was particularly important in view of the fact that a recurrent theme of the literature reviewed was the deficiencies of the then existing research corpus. On virtually every issue there was inadequate information about the contemporary nature and form of ethnic cultural differentiation and how this affected the dynamics of virtually every process from the settlement of refugees to the establishment of migration chains (see, e.g Wooden et al 1990:34 and passim).

Given that the review of services contained in the 1991 publication showed that one of the recurrent claims of service providers was that immigrants underutilised services because the services are, to varying degrees, culturally inappropriate, such lack of ethnographic knowledge is of great significance. It showed up in the fact that assertions
about the lack of cultural ‘fit’ in service provision were almost invariably unaccompanied by any prescription about how to correct this state of affairs; and, in addition, the emphasis on cultural differentiation tended to be abstracted from questions relating to social stratification and gender.

This was illustrated in the report by reference to some case-studies whose authors interpreted in entirely ‘ethnic cross-cultural’ terms a number of community-based health schemes, the most important elements of which were, in fact, the establishment of non-traditional doctor-patient and non-traditional gender relationships. In an expanded form, Morrissey (1997) depicted this process as follows.

In an account of a ‘transcultural support group’ for a number of Turkish women who exhibited persistent symptoms of ill-health, Isaacs (1989) reported substantial improvement in the health of these women after they had benefited from a period of group counselling and other activities of a more social nature. Bilingual para-professionals were present to assist in the explanation to them of their condition by the (anglophone) doctors and other health workers and in such activities as providing dietary and psychological advice.

Isaacs saw the major problem affecting these women as social isolation arising from separation from the network of female kin who, in Turkey, were their major source of sociality and support. He attempted, with some success, to assist them in building female networks based on their neighbourhood in order to replace the missing kinswomen.

Some elements of Turkish culture entered into this project, most obviously the use of the Turkish language and also of some systems of imagery relating to illness and diet. Overall, however, we can see that the major cultural adaptation involved in the project was the fact of a Western-trained male doctor giving serious attention to the self-defined social needs of the women as a factor in their health. This is probably quite contrary to ‘traditional’ Turkish culture, as is the remedy of the women actively seeking to build non-kin female networks outside the home.

It should also be stressed that a heavy reliance on female kin for support and a consequent trauma on being separated from them and placed in the anonymity and loneliness of a large public housing development is not something unique to Turkish women or even to immigrant women as a whole. It could also be argued that the normal, culturally-conditioned response of Australian doctors to the symptoms affecting these women would be to prescribe a course of Valium. In short, a great deal of cultural renegotiation was going on in the course of Isaacs’ project, but it extended a lot further and to a lot more levels than that of simply ensuring that the health care provider was aware of, and sensitive to, Turkish culture.
Also in the medical area was the study of drug and alcohol services for ethnic minorities listed as 1992(c). Included in this study was a review of the extensive American literature on cultural aspects of alcohol and other drug use among ethnic minorities in the USA and of great interest was the fact that this literature was characterised by exactly the same deficiencies as the literature on migrant health in Australia; namely the imposition of static ethnic categories on research data and the abstraction of ethnicity from issues of gender, class and geographical location. A comprehensive review of this literature presented at a 1989 international conference characterised it as follows:

Although the literature has indicated differential rates of drug use according to ethnic or racial status, it is beset with three basic limitations. First, definitions of ethnicity are often vague, if stated at all. Racial groups such as White and Black are occasionally referred to as ethnic identity. The concept of ethnicity is indeed enigmatic and more subjective than many researchers would prefer to acknowledge. ... The conceptual and measurement problems regarding ethnicity will likely remain formidable. However this should not impede research nor discourage researchers from clearly delineating their measure and concept of ethnicity.

A second limitation of the current literature is largely a structural one. Ethnic or racial comparisons are usually restricted to broad heterogeneous groups, typically White versus Black. Yet important ethnic variation may exist within these broad categories.

The third limitation is a consequence of the largely descriptive focus of many epidemiological studies. The first and foremost purpose of these studies is to estimate use among particular and aggregate groups. Consequently there is often an emphasis on differential rates of usage among subgroups rather than a search for intervening or causally prior variables which may account for observed differences. (Adlaf et al. 1989: 1-18)

Almost all the review material from America cited in the drug and alcohol study, and reproduced in Volume Four accepts that there are wide ethnic differences in the patterns of most varieties of substance abuse, but also demonstrates that the ethnic groups who most abused drugs and alcohol showed no more historical or cultural propensity to do so outside the US than did the groups with the least serious patterns of abuse. On the other hand, the vast bulk of the American literature failed even to address the causes of this historical disjuncture and preferred instead to place a racist stress on the 'susceptibility' of particular groups (e.g. Native Americans) to substance
abuse. There were also ample indications that groups of people from the same ethnic group showed very wide variations in behaviour depending on, among other things, geographical location and that, for individuals, the social context of (for example) alcohol use was just as important a determinant of the nature of that use as the 'ethnic' culture of the person concerned.

Thus

.........I have referred to the example of an American Indian man who abstained from alcohol in his middle-class neighbourhood, did 'White drinking' with his fellow construction workers and engaged in 'Indian drinking' when visiting his relatives on the reservation during vacations. (Westermeyer, 1984: 10)

In relation to much of what has been outlined above, it is useful at this point to utilise a metaphor originated by Ernest Gellner and later appropriated by Ulf Hannerz. Gellner contrasts two sorts of 'ethnographic maps', one of which resembles a painting by Kokoschka. The riot of diverse points of colour is such that no clear pattern can be discerned in any detail, though the picture as a whole does have one. A great diversity and plurality and complexity characterises all distinct parts of the whole.....(Gellner 1983: 139)

Hannerz glosses Gellner’s metaphor as follows:

Gellner’s other map resembles Modigliani rather than Kokoschka: very little shading, neat flat surfaces clearly separated from one another, little ambiguity or overlap. The first map, according to Gellner, is from before the age of nationalism, the other “after the principle of nationalism had done much of its work”. The second map is one where the state and culture coincide, where an industrial economy requires mobility and communication between individuals, and where the state, through one way or other of controlling formal education ensures that suitably modular individuals are made available (Hannerz 1996: 65)

Hannerz acknowledges the heuristic value of Gellner’s metaphor but is deeply sceptical about the Modigliani map as a description of reality at any time, and particularly in the contemporary world of mass migration, multiethnic and supranational states and global communication. A better model, he says, is Rushdie’s novel The Satanic Verses

(which) celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs. It rejoices in mongrelisation and fears the absolutism of
the pure. *Melange*, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is how *newness enters the world*. (Rushdie, 1991: 394 quoted Hannerz, 1996: 65)

This chapter is not concerned with theories of cultural change at quite this level but Gellner’s metaphor is still useful since it can be used to propose that the ‘ethnographic maps’ generated by the processes with which Volume Four is concerned are much more likely to resemble Modigliani than Kokoshka, even though the actual terrain being mapped resembles the latter more strongly than it resembles the former.

Collectively the work in this volume proposes that a substantial proportion of the social creation of ethnic categories has been done by the relatively powerful and done to the relatively powerless. It has often been done from the outside on behalf of people within the group under construction: and, when ethnicity has been constructed by people located within the group under construction (or reproduction), it has often been done from a particular social stratum within the group. With no disrespect intended to many fine scholars in Australia, a great deal of it has been done, to requote Jean Martin, in an atmosphere of ‘indifference to systematic research’ (Martin, 1978 162-63).

All of this tends towards the production (at the level of *public* knowledge) of oversimplified, static categories of analysis or, at worst, the generation of categories which have no operational value except to stereotype what are, in reality, extremely heterogeneous groups of people, and very often in a pejorative way. The generalised theoretical disarticulation of ethnicity from class, gender, spatial location and, on occasions, *temporal* location, all contribute to the generation and operational use (bureaucratically and otherwise) of such categories as ‘the migrant family’, ‘the settlement process’, ‘Asians’, ‘third world migrants’ and many others which turn out to have little relevance in any context when subjected to close analysis.

Modigliani, it needs hardly be said, is probably more congenial to the bureaucratic mind than Kokoschka, at least in the context of ethnographic maps: but the generation of sterile analytical categories has not been confined to the bureaucracy. The article on immigration multipliers included in Volume Four (1992[b]) concerns itself, in part, with Robert Birrell’s attempt to argue that what he termed ‘third world migrants’ had,
for cultural reasons, a much greater propensity to utilise sibling sponsorship provisions than immigrants who did not come from the 'third world'.

The article demonstrates not only that Birrell's assertions run counter to the findings of American research that he cites as supporting his point of view: but that they are also made in the complete absence of longitudinal and demographic work which might have cast severe doubt on these cultural explanations of differing sponsorship propensities (or even on the existence of these differences as a stable characteristic over time). In addition Birrell offers no clues about what, precisely, are 'Third World' migrants and why they are, in his own words, 'non-westernised and culturally distinct', nor, equally to the point, what ... they have to do in order to become 'westernised' and against what yardstick (or yardperson, or yardgroup) is their distinctiveness to be measured. (Morrissey 1992(b): 118-9)

The inclusion of this article in Volume Four does not have the goal of insinuating that all (or even a considerable proportion) of Australian research is as bad as the publication it criticises but it does illustrate the problems that can arise from the general absence of detailed ethnographic work and the opportunity afforded by this absence to deploy analytical categories of almost breathtaking theoretical sterility (such as 'third world migrants'). The paucity of ethnographic studies available in Australia is a consistent theme of the selection in Volume Four, as is concern with the research methods necessary to accommodate the complexity and dynamism.

Thus 1992(c) reviews some of the more successful approaches to ethnic-specific drug and alcohol research in the United States listing neighbourhood studies with an ethnic emphasis, longitudinal studies and action-based studies of therapy, education and prevention. This selection also includes a model evaluation design in the shape of an action research project with the guiding characteristics of:

• a locality rather than ethnicity basis;
• direct community involvement;
• knowledge of community structures and dynamics;
• linguistic availability;
• a training component;
• an evaluation component; and
• reflexivity.
In all of this, the first necessity is to treat ethnicity as process rather than category, as can be illustrated by the two remaining selections in Volume Four.

The first of these, (1992[a]), compares Italian migration to two different countries (Argentina and Australia) during two different periods (1870-1914 and 1945-1992 respectively). It illustrates both the complexity and diversity as well as the dynamic quality of the manifold processes of cultural redefinition; and it makes some very tentative suggestions about the effects of differences in the socioeconomic parameters to these processes in the two countries.

The second (very much larger) study was published in three volumes (1994, 1995, 1996) and provides a comprehensive analysis of the content, circumstances and social roles of the non-English language press, based on detailed content analysis and in-depth interviews with editors and proprietors. In the interests of brevity only the conclusions and a small sample of the presentation of results are included from a study which ran to over 300 pages and analysed sixty-two different publications spread across fourteen different languages. However, the basic thrust of the findings can be seen from the conclusions to Volume Two, summarised as:

[S]tage Two of our project has continued and developed some of the themes we initiated in Stage One. The most salient among these are an emphasis on the diversity of functions, style and presentation of non-English language publications, both within and between language groups. We have also emphasised such factors as the immigration history and socioeconomic circumstances of individual ethnic groups in understanding the functions of the press in relation to that group. We have stressed that it is important to be aware of the relationship between language and ethnicity (in terms of our distinction between 'ethnic-specific' and 'world' languages) and that current events (such as those in Bosnia) will have profound (but possibly temporary) effects on the content, style and function of some groups of periodicals. (Pe-Pua and Morrissey 1995:113)

These conclusions were primarily based on the empirical answer to

......the question of whether it was possible to talk about an 'ethnic press' in the sense of a group of publications which overall had similar content, style of production, objectives, philosophy and so on. We found that this categorisation had little relevance except in the trivial sense that all the publications we examined were written in languages other than English and were directed primarily at ethnic minorities. The overall impression was one of diversity
rather than homogeneity. Furthermore, we found that this diversity persisted even at the level of individual language groups. Across the relevant indicators there was as much difference between newspapers within language groupings as there was between newspapers grouped by language. Our most important generalisation was that it was foolish to generalise, at least at the level of individual publications. (1995: 100)

It is reported that, on hearing Jazz described as ‘mere folk music’, Louis Armstrong replied. ‘All music is folk music. I ain’t never heard no horse singing’. The study of the ethnic press demonstrates, in the same vein, that, viewed in one way, all newspapers are ethnic newspapers and, viewed in another way, none of them are: perhaps in just the same way that everybody is, in some sense, ethnic but that ethnics are a creation of particular places and times.

5. Conclusion

In the preface to his book of readings on the theory of ethnicity, Werner Sollors (1996: xii) notes the results of a 1974 survey on definitions of ethnicity by Wsevolod Isajiw which concluded that four out of five of the sociologists and anthropologists surveyed preferred to leave the term undefined. Sollors went on to state that this was still the case over twenty years later in that

[M]ost commonly ethnicity is not defined and discussed as such but in relation to other concepts and terms; and quite prominent among these are ‘class’ and ‘modernity’. (ibid).

Sollors explains this in terms of the complexity of the concept and the large variety of theoretical approaches taken by a number of scholars; but a more fundamental explanation is provided in the following postmodernist critique of the very attempt at definition:

The social sciences have had predictably little success in furnishing uncontentious definitions of ethnicity and racism. There is little agreement except around the points that the term ‘ethnicity’ derives from the Greek ethnos meaning a people, a collectivity sharing certain common attributes, and that ethnicity ought essentially to be regarded as a cultural marker or, indeed, container in which some conception of shared characteristics is crucial...But what, precisely is meant here by ‘culture’? Is any particular shared ‘cultural’ attribute any more important than any other - for instance, language, territoriality or religion?

Do notions of ‘shared origin’ smuggle in ideas of shared biology? How is ‘ethnicity’ to be consistently and usefully distinguished from ‘race’, and
'ethnocentrism' from 'racism' and both of these from 'xenophobia' and 'nationalism'?.....
The inherent conceptual difficulties of strong classificatory programmes in the human sciences have, around these questions, been hopelessly exacerbated by becoming intertwined and having to come to terms with the astonishingly complex manner in which populations appear to draw and redraw, maintain and breach, narrow and widen the boundaries around themselves and others....
In this context the first 'postmodern' move must be to decentre and de-essentialise, by postulating what is often glimpsed but rarely acknowledged: that there are no unambiguous, watertight definitions to be had of ethnicity, racism and the myriad terms in-between. (Rattansi 1994: 53)

In reality Rattansi protests a little too much since there is a long and strong sociological tradition of 'decentred' and 'de-essentialised' approaches to ethnicity and 'race', as can be seen in the following two quotations from Max Weber and Louis Wirth.

We shall call 'ethnic groups' those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or of both, or because of memories of colonisation and migration.....Ethnic membership differs from the kinship group precisely by being a presumed identity, not a group with concrete social action like the latter. In our sense ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere. (Weber 1922:56)

A race, it turns out, is a group of people we treat as if they were one. You belong to a certain race if you feel yourself to be a member, and if others treat you as if you were. (Wirth, 1928)

In short, a lot of social theorists have been aware for a long time that race and ethnicity are not things which exist, but processes which happen.

Behind all of the large amount of writing presented in the four volumes of this thesis, this awareness is present, as is an awareness of the tension between the non-existence, (in Weber's words) of ethnic groups as 'groups with concrete social action' and the pervasive belief throughout Australian society that such groups do, in fact, exist. It is hoped that what follows this introduction conveys at least a taste of the complexity of social processes which result from this tension.
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