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attitude which allowed them to define the patterns of their new life and maintain a greater self-sufficiency. But resignation was the predominant response.

This argument and the author's marshalling of his evidence are heavily dependent on studies that were carried out in Europe, Britain and the United States during the 1930s. The work of Marie Jahoda, Paul Lazarsfeld and Hans Zeisel on the Austrian village of Marienthal is perhaps most seminal. Broomhill suffers from the disadvantage that he is unable to duplicate the earlier writers' systematic survey of behavioural indices. For example, the Pilgrim Trust researchers who looked at several British localities produced detailed statistics to show participation in clubs and societies among both employed and unemployed residents. The comparatively high rate of participation in the Rhondda could be contrasted with pronounced abstention in Blackburn, Lancashire, to illuminate the greater cohesion of the Welsh valley. By contrast, Broomhill relies heavily on interviews with about one hundred respondents to an article in the *Adelaide Advertiser*, and the provenance of his testimony raises the methodological problems of oral history in particularly acute form. Leaving this issue to one side, serious objections must be levelled against the psychological approach. While the work of Jahoda does locate some of the inhibitory factors operating upon the unemployed, it suffers in my opinion from such a high degree of psychological determinism that insufficient space is left for men and women to shape their own lives. To put it crudely, the social psychologists tell us that most unemployed surrender; some of the minority fight and destroy themselves, some fight and survive. An individual's outcome is determined by the conjunction of a cluster of personality predispositions and the social context in which he or she operates. And however much Broomhill tries to develop the social context (most notably in his references to the special character of Port Adelaide), it is the psyche that is paramount.

In rejecting this approach I do not mean to appear hostile to the use of psychological theory. But there does seem to be an important distinction between psychological history and social history. The social historian might be either attentive to or neglectful of the psyche, but in the last analysis he seeks to understand human activity in terms of an ensemble of social relations, for it is these that are historically specific. My worry about the use of psychological argument in this excellent book is that it leads the author away from important areas of analysis. Thus one of the unfortunate methodological consequences of Broomhill's approach is that he says not nearly enough about the character of Adelaide's social mores since consciousness is explained in psychological rather than cultural terms. Writing as one whose grandfather, a Congregational minister, organised a soup kitchen during these years, I would like to know much more about civic and religious mentalities and their institutional forms. To declare a second interest, my own work on three British localities suggests that the response to mass unemployment can only be understood by detailed examination of local social relations, and the exclusive concentration on the unemployed alone will not uncover these. But these criticisms should not obscure the value of the author's achievement. It is by far the most searching analysis of the Depression that we have so far. I recommend it most strongly to readers of *Labour History* and hope that the publisher will put it into cheaper paperback form.

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STUART MACINTYRE.

Keith Windschuttle: *Unemployment: A Social and Political Analysis of the Economic Crisis in Australia*. Penguin Books, 1979. \$3.95.

Windschuttle has written a very stimulating book. By applying insights

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from both political science and sociology, he has succeeded in bringing to light a number of trends in Australian society (and Australian politics) which tend to remain hidden because unemployment is now less visible than it was in the Great Depression. Amongst these might be mentioned the higher and higher levels of youth unemployment—induced misery in such places as Wollongong and Newcastle. Good use has also been made of the much under-rated Henderson Poverty Enquiry and the Royal Commission on Human Relationships.

When he turns to economic aspects the author is saying a lot more about big questions than can be found in the writings of any of the leading academic economists such as Corden and Gruen. In fact, his very sensitive approach to unemployment and its causes adds a dimension which is lacking in the toolbox of the economists. It could, I suppose, be argued that Windschuttle has not engaged in a dialogue with such writers, and that his source material is rather overloaded on the side of writers of the modern political economy school. However, give the abdication of the leaders of the economics profession from the responsibility of giving a thorough analysis of the problems raised in this book, this is not a reason for substantial criticism to be levelled.

My main caveat is rather whether too many social ills are attributed to unemployment. It is certainly relevant, as he points out, that Newcastle and Wollongong are the leading analgesic centres in the world. However, some *ordering* of unemployment's role as compared to that of political stalemate in the polity, the danger of war, the breakdown of the nuclear family, sexual revolution and the general impersonal atmosphere in fields, factories and offices would have made the case more convincing.

Analysing official handouts and various bulletins of the Flinders Institute of Labour Studies, the author shows that these studies have no analysis worth anything concerning the actual causes of unemployment, and that 'changes in DIRECTION were beyond them'. His own analysis in Chapter 2 points to a conjecture of three trends which explain the severity of 1970s unemployment: a Kondratieff long cycle coinciding with the structural decline of indigenous manufacturing industry, and the increased use of labour-saving technology. This analysis is undoubtedly correct, although the exact mechanisms by which they are superimposed on the ordinary business cycle might have been spelled out. The critiques presented of the Keynesian and monetarist (Friedmanite) schools are well made and score heavily. He then draws attention to the fact that a serious vacuum has been left in modern economic thought which led to a situation in which pre-Keynesian theories, touched with the right wing anarchism of Ayn Rand serve as a 'pragmatic' basis for government anti-crisis policy. Their irrelevance to the true trends at work had the effect of greatly accentuating unemployment. At the same time, as the author skilfully points out, the government was able to push the political debate to the Right, so that 'dole bludgers' or unions became the culprits, instead of gross errors in government diagnosis and policy. These are conclusions which would not, obviously, be acceptable to orthodox economists and political commentators. However, I feel they are most convincingly made.

What were the true trends at work?

Chapters 3-7 look at the social consequences of unemployment. The youth unemployment question is discussed, and comparisons made with Italy where *explosive* political consequences have followed. He demolishes 'demographic' explanations for youth unemployment (pp. 45-48), and the view that rising youth *wages* are a substantial cause of it (youth wages relative to adults remained virtually static between 1966 and 1976). The political conviction of employers' groups about voluntary youth unemployment are shown

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(pp. 52-53) to be a case of employers imputing their own value systems to others. Evidence from sociology that young people are *not* primarily motivated to work by money is usually ignored, although the Williams Committee of Enquiry felt obliged to note it. On pp. 63-66 there is a very valuable and moving account of the problems of young unemployed in finding shelter at the time of a slowdown in building, and the contrast is made with the fabricated media examples of the 'luxury' life of youth, with their resources pooled into collective living. Perhaps the most important point made is that whereas in the 1930s unemployed youth sought farm or country road-building work, today this option is no longer open; the RED scheme has been abolished by the Fraser Government; farms are now mainly mechanised.

Windschuttle makes it very clear that the figures released on 'dole-bludging' did not measure 'dole-bludging' at all, but rather the slowness of the Department of Social Security to record people whose status had changed. He shows that the use of the loaded term 'cost to the taxpayers' by the Liberal government was never applied evenhandedly, e.g. to superphosphate bounties, the running costs of the Wool Corporation etc. Instead, work-tests and departmental harassment were vigorously stepped up for the Fraser government's own political purpose. This was done in the face of the Myers report, and other surveys which denied that the dole provided a disincentive to work. Windschuttle might have pointed out also that the orthodox academic economists some of them A.L.P. advisers (F. Gruen, M. Corden), also studiously ignored this evidence and began to issue pamphlets and articles about 'voluntary unemployment'—notably at the May 1978 Conference of Australian Economists (Sydney). The role of the economist as official adviser is an important *political* role, reinforcing the desire of Capital to resolve the economic crisis by making it a crisis for the working class.

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B. J. MCFARLANE.

John P. Nieuwenhuysen and Neville R. Norman: *Australian Competition and Prices Policy*. Croom Helm, London. \$9.20 paper.

The authors of this work are outside the mainstream of orthodox economists in Australia in recognising frailties of the market economy and that the network of *ad hoc* government instrumentalities and boards that exist are monuments to market failure.

Price rigging, cartels, 'pies' and other corporate trade practices such as discounting and resale price maintenance not only interfere with competitive forces but tarnish the image of Australian economics, representing part of the 'unacceptable face of capitalism'.

The book under review presents a concise account of how such practices have developed in Australia, and how successive governments have attempted to deal with them by such actions as Restrictive Practices Legislation (Sir Garfield Barwick) and the Prices Justification Tribunal (Gough Whitlam).

Some economists think that the Trade Practices Tribunal has enshrined consumer sovereignty as its key criterion for the 'public interest' (Hatch). The evidence in this book, however, points more to the conclusion that elimination of monopoly in distribution was more significant a target.

Sections of the book sum up the great debate on tariff reform, another area impinging on market imperfections. Although scant justice is given to the achievements of the New Protection and the success of the Australian economic model 1901-71 based on 'tariff-for-high-employment', the reader will find the debate lucidly summarised. Here the labour historian, mindful of such earlier arguments as H. I. Jensen's *The Rising Tide*, and the historian of

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economic thought, mindful of the writings of F. List, have a contribution to make in humanising and putting into perspective the work of economists.

The authors note that policies adduced from the formal models of welfare and competition are apt to go astray. They attribute this to the intractability of the problem and are worried that a vacuum is left in which policy makers depend on a vague set of criteria. Yet this is only an admission, an honest one, that in the area of applied economics an interdisciplinary approach, which does not exclude the sociologist and the historian, has become necessary to achieve a balance between what economists want and what capitalist pressure will allow.

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B. J. MCFARLANE.

Neville Hicks: *This Sin and Scandal: Australia's Population Debate 1891-1911*. Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1978. pp. xvii + 208. \$13.50 cloth, \$7.95 paper.

'Sin and Scandal' encapsulates the way a powerful conservative minority viewed the spectacular decline in the Australian birth rate in the last decade of the nineteenth century. This minority dominated public opinion and established the contours within which the population debate was carried on. In much the same way today, organisations like Right to Life and the Festival of Light, by making a noise far beyond their numbers and drawing constant attention to themselves, manage to represent the centre of public opinion as much further to the right than it actually is. This has two serious consequences. It frightens politicians out of their wits and makes them unable to respond to the wishes of the majority on matters like reform of the law on abortion or homosexuality. Secondly, it generates a hysteria about 'the permissive society' which side tracks attention away from the difficulties of analysing and understanding complex social changes as we live through them.

In the 1970s we have been fortunate in that the Royal Commission on Human Relationships withstood these pressures to provide a humane and sensitive account of the contradictions of everyday life. In the 1900s it was otherwise. Neville Hicks concentrates on the Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth-Rate, set up in N.S.W. in 1903 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Charles Mackellar. This was very much the centrepiece of the contemporary debate and reflected 'a particular moral view about the course of Anglo-Saxon civilisation' (XVII). It was not so much an enquiry as a compilation of material that would confirm the Commissioners' initial premise 'that vice was rife and immorality rampant and contraception was ruining the moral fibre of the nation' (30).

In some areas they were sloppy and in others downright dishonest. For example, they continually equated 'high' with 'natural' fertility, failing to note that by the 1880s fertility had reached a level that was 'unnaturally' high when compared with earlier periods. They provided no evidence for their assertion that large families were desirable and implied that doctors were unanimous about the horrific dangers of contraception and abortion. Economic factors in the decline of fertility were completely discounted. Thus the 'true reasons' were arrived at. In a word it was 'selfishness', a desire to avoid sacrifice and self pleasure, which was made possible by the decline in religious feeling and the availability both of contraceptives and information about them.

With fine under-statement Hicks comments, 'it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the inquiry . . . was rather less than an open-minded search for truth' (16).

The published Report of 1904 amounted to little more than a public breast-beating (literally, since women were allocated most of the blame). The

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