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# Unemployment and Citizenship: Reconstituting Social Policy in the Twenty First Century

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ROB WATTS

Central to debate about the future of the 'welfare state' is the problem of employment, and its relationship to citizenship. This problem is central to the formation of just policy by government both in 1995 and into the next century.

For the unemployed for whom last year's White Paper on Employment *Working Nation* (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994) seemed to offer so much, a year as they say among political journalists, has proved a long time. After the hooplah of May 1994 the unemployed have returned to the margins, and the profound political silence that surrounded them through most of the 1980s has once again become the norm.

The 1994 White Paper claimed a direct line of continuity between the Curtin-Chifley style 'social democracy' of the 1940s and the Keating government's commitments of the 1990 (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994: 4). Built from the fundamentally flawed materials of textbook as opposed to 'real world' neo-classical economics and given a distinctive spin by the merchants of 'public choice theory', the combination of intellectual vapidness and policy cowardice that the document actually manifests suggests initially why we should treat such claims with contempt. Further a commitment to a free-market hyper-economic growth model is inherently problematic for reasons that are more substantive than is revealed only by a critique grounded in outlining the aporias of neo-classical economics (For basic critiques of the neo-classical synthesis see Eichner, 1979; Arestis 1992).

More ominously the White Paper remains silent on two central issues for the future; (i) can and should a regime of full employment be restored? and (ii) what are the implications for a regime of citizenship and citizenship rights if the answer — as traditionally defined — is no?

It is imperative to insist that the problems of under-employment and unemployment are not simply the consequence of a business cycle downturn and are consequently no longer unequivocally amenable to Keynesian demand management strategies as was the case in the wake of the 1930s depression. Globalisation of investment, involving a major relocation of international capital investment in the region to our north along with changes to our capital and labour market, constitute what may well turn out to be a permanent crisis of underemployment (Beck, 1992).

Near-permanent underemployment poses a major challenge for social policy-makers, and to the whole community. Social policy and citizenship in Australia between 1945–75 presupposed a certain relationship between full-time wage labour, taxation and the social security system. ‘Full employment’ was the effective keystone of the national welfare state erected after 1945. Underneath the labour market was strung a safety net of social security benefits a system which in turn assumed as a given a powerfully gendered division of labour and a corresponding set of differential citizen rights for the ‘citizen worker’ and the ‘citizen mother’ (Shaver, 1992).

*Permanent underemployment problematizes the central role longplayed by full-time wage Labour as a source of income, status, identity and social integration.*

## TOWARDS A NEW SOCIAL POLICY

There are a number of arguments that make social policy reform imperative, and in particular indicate the introduction of basic income as the centre piece of reform. I briefly outline a case for reconstituting the ‘welfarestate’ by introducing the principles of a *basic income* (van Parijs, 1993) for all citizens in the twenty first century. This I suggest should be carried out in parallel with a commitment to restoring a feasible degree of employment for those Australians who seek access to the wage labour market. This could be done through (1) a combination of governments serving as the ‘employer of last resort’, (2) through shortening the ‘normal’ working weeks, and job sharing, and finally (3) by experimenting with more fluid relations between the formal labour market, domestic labour (and a whole variety of nurturant and caring work), and a vigorous ‘third sector’ model of community work.

There are three arguments **for** these reforms spelled out here, the arguments to obsolescence, to citizenship, and to social creativity.

The first argument in favour of basic income rests on the capacity of 'basic income' to deal with the problems which have arisen since the 1960s after the partial de-linkage of wage work and income. The second, no less significant, argument in its favour is its capacity to further enhance and promote the elements of citizenship and the third its capacity to underwrite those transformative impulses already straining beneath the surface **of** the old order to give birth to new forms of social creativity. The argument to obsolescence is the prolegomena to making basic income the foundations of a new conception of citizenship in a society undergoing profound transformation. In this regard we need to go well beyond the kinds of incrementalism present in mainstream social policy development.

Together a modified 'full employment' project complemented by a platform of citizen rights vested in the principle **of** basic income will rejuvenate the idea of citizenship, and underwrite the kind of experiments in social creativity which we have no choice but to pursue.

### THE ARGUMENT TO OBSOLESCENCE

The first argument in favour of radical changes in social security and labour market policy is the capacity of basic income to deal with the problems which have arisen since the 1960s consequent upon the partial de-linkage of wage work and income.

The social and economic attitudes and relationships which sustained the creation and growth of the Australian 'welfare state' are now either disintegrating or obsolete.

The keystone of the 'welfare state' that emerged after 1942 in Australia (Watts, 1987) was 'full employment' and *not* the emergent social security program. 'Full employment' presupposed constant growth in an economy steered by a technically proficient state reliant on Keynesian technique and the operations of a heavily protected 'free market' economy (Kelly, 1994).

The so-called 'crisis' of the welfare state (O'Connor, 1973; Dobell, 1981; Mishra, 1984) points to the unbridgeable **gap** between those foundational assumptions of the architects of the welfare state in the 1940s, and the remarkable transformations in the social **and** economic fabric of Australia which have taken place since then (MacDonald, 1990). That gap is about (1)

the de-linkage already taking place between wage work and income security as a consequence of the re-emergence of widespread long term structural unemployment, and (ii) major changes in the social patterns of work performance. Irrespective of the desirability or feasibility of returning to full employment, the gap is there — and will need to be addressed.

By the 1990s the architecture of assumptions and social practices that had sustained the ‘welfare state’ between 1945–75 had simply unravelled or been rendered obsolete. Yet it is not surprising that in large measure the modern White Paper assumes a model of social policy which is as obsolete as the older Keynesian ‘social liberalism’ with its faith in a linkage between (male) wage earners, limited forms of government intervention into the market and a weak social-security system.

Five foundational assumptions that informed the architecture of the full employment-social security welfare state have been rendered obsolescent since the 1970s.

#### Assumption I

*That wage work in combination with the social security safety net was adequate to prevent poverty*

It was held as a matter of fact that wage work on a full-time basis was effective in preventing poverty for all Australian workers and for their dependents. This was because the full-time wage incomes of men were believed sufficient to keep a man, his wife and their children out of poverty.

In Australia this view had been enshrined as early as 1907 in the Harvester judgement brought down by Justice H.B. Higgins in his ‘basic wage’ award, which appeared to take the needs of such a family into account when determining the value of minimum wages (MacIntyre, 1985). The firestorm of the ‘great depression’ of the 1930s convinced most Australians that unemployment was the obvious source of poverty, and as a corollary believed that abolishing unemployment abolished poverty,

It was a long cherished belief in Australia after 1945 that ‘poverty’ and unemployment had been effectively banished. Full employment together with the safety net of social security benefits and pensions had seen to that. So influential was this reasoning that when Henderson ‘rediscovered’ poverty in 1967, that **all** sorts of ‘disabilities’ other than unemployment were used to explain this phenomenon, even though the bulk of those with the ‘socially disabilities’ he listed were actually excluded from the labour market.

Subsequent research carried out consistently since the early 1970s indicates clearly that (i) extremely low income levels were indeed possible for people consistently excluded from the labour market and (ii) that even for some families with breadwinners in the full-time labour market economic hardship was a reality. A significant number of the Australian population live in straitened economic circumstances and this trend may well be set to increase into the twenty first century. The traditional Henderson 'poverty line' would suggest that only around 10% of Australians were in poverty in the years from 1983 to 1989 for example. We know that about 20% of the population are reliant on Social Security. It is not unreasonable to suspect that another 5–10% live in circumstances not much better. (The Henderson 'poverty line' was always known to be extremely austere). The current recession 'we had to have', with its high levels of unemployment with between 10% and 20% of the workforce jobless, will undoubtedly attack those Australians already vulnerable by reason of low incomes and reduced access to other cultural and social resources.

It is now clear that neither the current levels of employment, nor the social security system are able to protect a significant minority of Australians from economic hardship. And the prognosis for the future is hardly an optimistic one.

### **Assumption 2**

*That a reasonable degree of equitable income distribution would be achieved as a consequence of Australia possessing a progressive income tax, in combination with the achievement of full employment and a social security system.*

A modest degree of income equality was established after 1945 on the back of full (male) employment and modest levels of growth in GDP into the 1970s. Since the 1980s and 1990s this has been comprehensively undone (EPAC, 1995).

Lombard (1993) and others suggest that in part the move to an increasingly unequal distribution of income and wealth reflects deliberate policies pursued at the national level. These include the use of the taxation system to redistribute share of national income to already advantaged income earners, and the refusal to intervene directly into the labour market to ameliorate unemployment.

## Assumption 3

*That paid labour was both desirable and was actually available on a full-time basis in quantities sufficient to ensure to all full-time workers freedom from economic hardship.*

Perhaps the single most striking acknowledgment that economic hardship for wage workers was now a problem, came with the Hawke government's decision to introduce a Family Allowance Supplement in 1987. This was a salutary reminder that the 'working poor' were a reality. The Family Allowance Supplement is made available to low income families with children and both legitimises low wages and tacitly accepts the existence of a gap between need and wage levels for a significant minority of families. The existence of the FAS illustrates in a simple yet graphic way the point that not everyone in full-time wage work has adequate resources to support a non-income earning partner and children.

Secondly full-time wage work is no longer the dominant feature of the labour market it once was, and underemployment seems to have become a permanent feature of the labour market, as the proportion of people working on a part-time basis have increased.

In 1966, as the 'golden years' rolled on without apparent end, only some 9.8% of all employed persons were part-time workers. In 1966 very few men worked part-time, testimony to the still powerful gendered assumptions that men's work had to be full-time. Only 3.7% of men worked part-time, whilst 24.0% of women were working part-time. Between 1966 and 1994 part-time employment for both men and women almost quadrupled, with the increase proving to be very sharp for men after 1990. Through the 1980s the proportion of part-time workers (as a % of workforce) increased from 17.7% (1984-5) to 20.9% (1989-90). By the 1990s part-time work has become a significant feature of the labour market.

It has been widely acknowledged that the much touted 'job-creation' of the 1980s was a consequence of a reduction in full-time work and an increase in part time work. Through the 1980s full-time work force was increasing annually on average by about 2.6% whilst part time work was increasing on average by 6.6%. There is no evidence of this trend ceasing because of the continuing restructuring of traditional industries, like the manufacturing and primary industries, and the radical increase in the role of the service industries in areas like fast food, hospitality, personal, community and financial services which increasingly use part-time workers.

The trend towards increased part-time work also means that minimum wage levels will be lowered over time and this will sustain a trend towards greater income inequality.

#### **Assumption 4**

*That the sexual division of labour and the distinction between paid and unpaid labour which it sustains is a normal and inevitable feature of our society*

The 'welfare state' and the reconstruction of the labor market which took place in the 1940s and 1950s was built on the continuing subordination and the invisibility of women's domestic labour. It was held as a matter of faith that there were only two kinds of work done in Australia, paid work and unpaid work. Unpaid work consisted of domestic labor, done largely by married women who chose freely to be financially dependent on their breadwinner husbands and who chose domestic labor. Paid **work** on the other hand was organised on a formal full-time basis between employers and employees, the bulk of whom were men within the prime age band of 16 to 65. The premise that they were primarily to be involved in domestic labour in turn played a large role in structuring married women's access to the labor market.

Since then, Australia, in common with other western societies, has undergone far-reaching changes in the division of labour and the self-identity of women (Cass and Whiteford, 1989). This has led to **an** erosion of the once firm 'traditional' sex roles **and** the gendered division of labour. The traditional sexual division of labour had women type-cast as houseworkers and child carers, whilst men went out into the labour market to earn the family's income. This 'traditional' picture held true till the late 1960s and early 1970s (Bryson, 1988). Thereafter it has changed dramatically. By 1994 women made up 46% of employed persons; 32% of these women were working full time and 75% of those were employed on a part-time basis. For **all** women the participation rate in 1994 was 52% compared with a female participation rate of around 36.3% in 1966.

Current projections suggest that by 2005 there will be a 60.5% female participation rate based on a continuing greater proportional increase in the female participation rate for women (projected to increase by 1.3 million women) than for men (projected to increase by 700,000). And it remains clear that the absence of children is a greater determinant of labour force participation than marriage (ABS, 1993:122).

It would be going too far to say that a gendered labor market has been abolished in the 1990s. It is clear however that the gendered division of labour of the 1940s is no more. It is also clear that the processes of social transformation and the enhanced capacity of women to play a more socially creative role in the labour market needs to be both protected and enhanced by encouraging greater flexibility and cross-over for both men and women between the labour force, caring work and community participation.

### Assumption 5

That full employment and high rates of economic *growth* were both feasible and desirable objectives of *national* economic policy

The architects of the welfare state in the mid-1940s held that an average state of 'full employment' for this primary labour force was both feasible and desirable, and would ideally provide work for all genuine job seekers. Unemployment would, therefore, only affect those who had fallen into the unemployable category or those who were 'between jobs'. High rates of economic growth were both feasible and desirable and would be achieved by purposive state interventions employing Keynesian demand management techniques (Smyth, 1994).

The post-war compact that established the 'Keynesian welfare state' linked high economic growth—based on a mass-consumption model and Fordist work processes—to the achievement of 'full employment'. 'Full employment' of course, was designed amongst other things to provide a market of eager, income-spending consumers who would provide the sustaining demand for goods and services necessary for growth.

Well after the demise of 'full employment' in Australia (which began circa. 1974–75), the political, administrative and secular cultures remain emotionally preoccupied with, even obsessed by, the idea of economic growth. In a more ambiguous way 'full employment' retains a central normative status even if the political will or the technical capacity to achieve it has attenuated.

In the 1980s, the considerable public and political attention paid to the problem of unemployment (as distinct from the problems of the unemployed) was confounded by governments refusing to actively promote job creation and retreating into the 'active society' rhetoric of the OECD.

The 'active society' model tacitly accepted that returning to a regime of 'full employment' was no longer an option given the priority to be accorded economic liberal policy frameworks that favoured deregulation, privatizing

and downsizing the public sector and prioritizing market forces. Employment creation was increasingly a matter left to market forces, with a clear priority in the Accord framework after 1983 to trading off gains in productivity and efficiency for more unemployment and reduced real wages. The 1980s saw violent oscillations in a cycle of bust-boom-bust, as short term job-creation boomed, under the stimulus of deregulation, whilst a culture of pseudo-entrepreneurialism wrecked the economy on the shoals of paper profit making and unproductive debt.

What then do all these changes mean?

The disintegration of the foundational assumptions of Australia's liberal welfare state and the increasing likelihood that both high growth and a return to full employment are increasingly problematic has rendered the architecture and the logic of welfare state interventions increasingly obsolete a point the Department of Social Security and a succession of Ministers since the late 1980s have refused to accept.

We can no longer rely on a full-time labour market to secure full employment, equitable incomes of a reasonable standard of living for most Australians. We can no longer assume that a full time (male) labour force can secure the economic basis of Australian family formation. We can no longer assume that a mean, means-tested and complex social security system, increasingly targeted at the least well-off since the mid-1980s, can provide the kind of long-term and flexible forms of economic or social security for all who need it.

Finally, we can no longer assume that once clear-cut distinctions between paid and unpaid work, or between full and part-time work are either desirable or sustainable in the 1990s, or that insisting on retaining rigid distinctions between the forms of access to the labour market and wage incomes will best meet the needs of an increasing number of Australians in the twenty first century. Introducing fundamental reform into our social security system by way of the principle of 'basic income' is one way we can address the problems of an obsolete welfare state.

## **BASIC INCOME**

There is nothing new about the idea of 'basic income'. It has gone under any number of names in its short history as an idea whose time was yet to come. Pixley documents the Australian debates and discussion about basic income (Pixley, 1993:98–123). In Australia, Ronald Henderson gave the idea currency in his 1975 *Main Report* for the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty

(Henderson, 1975) when he argued for a 'Guaranteed Minimum Income' (GMI). In Britain it has been called a 'universal grant' (Ashby, 1984), a 'social dividend', (Miller, 1983), and a 'citizens wage' (Purdy, 1989:194). In America McGovern argued in 1972 for a 'Demogrant'. It has also been referred to as 'negative income tax', 'guaranteed adequate income', and 'social credit'. Here it is referred to in its simplest form as *basic income* (Purdy, 1989: 194; Cass and McClelland, 1989: 21–28).

It had its first airing at the hands of Tom Paine in the last decade of the eighteenth century. More recently it was extensively discussed in Britain from the 1920s through the 1940s (Milner, 1920). The Australian civil servant Sir Frederick Wheeler developed an argument for it in 1942 (Watts, 1984: 231). It was extensively revived by Henderson in the 1970s — and by economic liberals like Friedman (1977). Even more recently the idea has been at the centre of an extensive process of policy research and discussion in Europe (van Trier, 1990) since the establishment in 1986 of the Basic Income European Network (BIEN) chaired by Offe (Miller, 1988). It has also become increasingly controverted in discussions and debates between post-modernists (Jones, 1982; Gorz, 1982;1988; Offe, 1993; Mathews, 1989) and left progressives (Wright, 1986; Berger, 1986; Nove, 1986; Frankel, 1987). In Australia there has been cautious support for a severely attenuated version of basic income (Cass and McClelland, 1989: 21–28) and it has been contested strongly in a recent major intervention by Pixley (1993).

The principle of '*basic income*' is simple. By *basic income* is meant **an income paid unconditionally to all citizens on an individual basis, without means test or any work requirement or activity test** (Cited in van Parijs, 1993: 3). Offe eg. has defined it as 'an unconditional, subsistence-level, tax-financed right to income based upon citizenship rather than labour market participation' (Offe, 1993:73).

It would constitute a form of minimum income security different both from those social security systems that are found in European countries as well as in kind and in scope from the Australia's 'welfare state' because :

1. It is paid to individuals rather than households;
2. It is paid irrespective of any income from other sources; and
3. It is paid without any present or past work performance, or the willingness to accept a job or training program if offered.

Basic income realises the principle that no Australian should have to live in fear or insecurity about their economic well being — as is currently the case

for perhaps one in three Australians. It also recognises the belief that Australia can and should provide for all its citizens a basic level of income security to provide the flexibility and adaptability as we experiment with or experience major changes in traditional patterns of work.

These include:

- a rapidly changing labour market, including increasing part time and casual labour, and the possibility that an overall reduction in working hours may need to be divided up between more workers
- an increase in the expectations of rapid job and skill change, and a very large increase in the future in the amount of time people spend in formal and informal training and education;
- changes in social role expectations between men and women regarding caring and domestic labour;
- new forms of productive work including community based volunteer work, and co-operative and barter arrangements.

Any scheme of social citizenship should be seen as a means to an end and as subject to continuous review and amendment as we enter a century likely to be full of change, both planned and unplanned and unintended consequences.

Any scheme of social citizenship will continue to affirm the priority of wage work for its social, community, environmental and personal benefits, whilst acknowledging the need to provide a platform from which individuals and the community can experiment with new forms of work and new linkages between wage work, leisure and domestic caring linkages and patterns of work as we enter a century full of the challenge of tremendous innovation.

A viable scheme of basic income would:

- replace all current social security benefits and schemes,
- and introduce in their place a single universal and comprehensive scheme providing a simple, accessible basic income for all citizens as of right from birth to death to provide the kind of flexibility in regard to wage work, the redistribution of the forms and hours of **work**, and access to continuous education within a strong policy guarantee of economic security for all.

Note: The introduction of a basic income program would require reform of and strong integration between the Department of Social Security and the Taxation Office and its policies and procedures.

Basic income could be introduced so as to offer two rates of social citizenship security;

1. All young people from birth to their sixteenth birthday could receive an annual amount paid throughout on a regular weekly or monthly basis to a nominated parent or guardian.
2. Some adult citizens would receive an adult basic income (while others would receive a tax credit for those earning above a determined level of income from other sources). For about one third of the population applications will be received to pay such an amount to the individual on a regular basis; for the balance of the citizens the amount will be in effect treated — as is currently the case — as a tax free income threshold, when their annual income tax liabilities are being assessed. The basic income could be CPI indexed.

(Questions about its implementation, funding and relationship to a radically revised taxation system cannot be dealt with here).

It should be pointed out that basic income is designed to provide a basic and minimally adequate level of income security, which will not seriously affect the propensity of most adults to prefer waged income.

For young people, especially those over 16 and engaged in education and training it provides a strong base for independence, freer and more responsible choices about where and how to live, and the capacity, if living in the family home to support their parents, and to plan for their years in education with confidence. It will make possible a radical attack on youth homelessness and hopelessness in a time of major and often cruel economic transformation.

For those with hitherto marginal attachment to the labour force it will provide a foundation of economic security and confidence from which to build as they educate or retrain themselves, or engage in job sharing and other creative experiments in time sharing wage work, or **plan** to share domestic care responsibilities. For those with strong labour market attachments there is the added security of knowing that changes to their work situation will not prove catastrophic and will build in additional flexibilities in planning their careers and making family and personal choices. Its tight integration with a highly equitable taxation scheme further enhances the value of basic income as an integral part of social citizenship.

Note: Not all security needs will be met through the basic income proposal since it is designed as a universal system which provides a floor for everyone.

Special needs will continue to exist for those with particular problems such as physical or mental disadvantages, or special social circumstances which warrant further intervention. Concessions already in place which assist with housing, energy or utility provisions for low income people would for example need to be reviewed and improved on a regular basis.

The idea of basic income is not new, It is also a highly controversial idea with many critics worried about its economic feasibility or its effects on the motivation to work. I don't think that these concerns pose insurmountable problems. More interesting are recent arguments that insist both on linking citizenship to employment and rejecting the idea of basic income. I want to look at a number of recent arguments that insist on the link between citizenship and employment, because I think these arguments are profoundly mistaken and rely on an unacceptable narrowing of the domains of social participation and citizenship,

#### ARGUMENTS TO CITIZENSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

It seems increasingly evident that the social transformations referred to above also pose a major question about the practice of citizenship, which to a considerable extent presumed a largely implicit relationship between citizenship and employment. That relationship as Shaver (1992) and others have pointed out, produced a bifurcated regime of citizen rights, one for the 'citizen worker' and the other for the 'citizen mother', a distinction increasingly rendered irrelevant in the 1990s.

In a context of permanent underemployment, disappointment at the failures of the 'welfare state' and the ethical and linguistic vacuums which have occurred as 'older reformist discourses about social justice have been hollowed out', some return to social citizenship. There has been a large movement over the last decade or so to 'rediscover' citizenship and to re-write the history of 'welfare states' as a history of citizenship discourses triumphing over unrestrained capitalism. Wiseman calls typically for:

... rethinking and reworking the category of citizen. An important starting point is to reclaim the value of the 'social' and to articulate an ideal of citizenship defined in terms of social rights and responsibilities' rather than the more narrowly individualistic market citizenship associated with the economic rationalist agenda (Wiseman, 1993 : 289-90).

The wave of 'new' arguments about citizenship often take Marshall as their point of departure (Andrews, 1991; Barbalet, 1987; Turner, 1986; Turner,

1991; Hindess, 1987; Yeatman, 1994). 'Citizenship' has consolidated its status as the 'spray-on' word of the 1990s rivalling its predecessor of the 1980s, 'community' for sheer ubiquity.

In particular, Australian writers like Cass and McClelland (1989), and Pixley (1993) have resurrected 'traditional' arguments for an identity between (full) employment and citizenship partly drawing on Marshall's account of social citizenship. Pixley insists on an identity between (full) employment and citizenship, partly as a polemic against post-industrial and 'workless' utopias, and partly as advocacy for full-employment policies (Marshall 1950; Pixley, 1992; Pixley, 1993). She offers a comprehensive critique of the entirety of progressive and conservative post-industrialist arguments that would break the wage work-citizenship and security nexus by pushing on to a 'post-work society'. Pixley argues that only labour market participation secures access to other forms of social and political participation which she argues are the *sins qua non* of 'active citizenship'.

Pixley begins with Marshall's conception of a fully developed citizenship:

An adequate form of citizenship depends upon full civil and political rights being extended to all and enhanced by welfare rights. But rights alone are insufficient. Democratic citizenship concerns obligations as well and there is a sharp difference between the obligations freely taken on by *citizens*, and the duties prescribed by the welfare state for everyone else, *the marginal citizens* (Pixley, 1992:217). (My stress)

We should wonder at what lies in the distinction between 'citizens' and 'marginal citizens'. Much seems to hang, as in Marshall, on the notion of being able to 'participate fully in society', which is a resonant yet curious phrase. As Pixley puts it:

... employment is very much a part of being a citizen and ... the issue of employment must be cast in terms of rights and obligations that make it possible to *participate in the life of the society*. The case is **not** so much that wage labour is good or that the meaning of citizenship should be reduced to membership of the workforce ... the issue is rather that *exclusion from the mainstream of economic life cannot even allow for the possibility of developing an inclusive active citizenry*. (Pixley, 1992: 210) (My stress).

In support of full employment 'as an aim and as a trend', Pixley argues that an 'active and inclusive conception of citizenship' requires 'independent participation' by citizens in both government and in the labour market (Pixley,

1993: 269). While she does not privilege employment absolutely, she argues that relatively in choosing between:

... paid labour and unpaid caring **work**, there is 'a much greater potential of employment than **housework** for participation' (Pixley, 1993: 270).

In the course of her analysis she defends two analytically distinguishable yet politically inseparable propositions. She argues that mass unemployment is not open to a progressive solution (like 'basic income') unless a return to job creation is at the forefront of any attempt to find one and, secondly holds that the separation of income from work is neither timely nor desirable (Pixley, 1993: 2–30). Without using the term Pixley suggests that one of the consequences of crisis is that a new 'underclass' has emerged of dependents and poor people who 'are no longer even part of a reserve army of labour' (Pixley, 1992: 233). In effect the crisis of the past twenty years **has** produced a new dual citizenship regime of first-class citizens, largely male and involved in skilled full-time employment, and a second-class citizenry of excluded, 'outcast', 'underprivileged', marginalised and unemployed people.

It is because of this social bifurcation that she rejects post-work and post-industrial 'soft option' policies as alternatives to what she calls 'proper employment policies'. The reason? Such policies (like 'basic income') rapidly transforms into harsh options for marginalised group ... the only progressive solution to contemporary joblessness **lies** in genuine employment (Pixley, 1992: 302). Pixley argues that this is so because (a) practical **and** theoretical testing of the case for post-industrial unemployment shows it will only ever further disempower the underclass; and (b) citizenship to be effective has **to rest** on employment in the labour market and the opportunities that it (plus unionism) offers to collective actors to participate fully in a civic culture and to collectively make history. Participation becomes the key category in Pixley's work

In the changing world created by Hawke-Keating policies, she **asks** what is to be the basis of social let alone political participation to replace the old commitments to male breadwinners? (Pixley, 1993: 303). She answers that:

The market ... is still the main arena for the acquirement of citizenship status ... markets now demarcate citizens from second-class citizens in access to jobs, shelter, goods and services like health, education and old age care **as** well as the political and economic decision-making processes (Pixley, 1993: 140).

By 'citizen' here Pixley means someone who 'participates' fully in society/politics. That is, citizenship for Pixley is now defined **as** the capacity to participate in social and political processes.

Indeed she holds that employment and citizenship are conjoined in ways that may not be lightly dissolved by the ‘post-industrial utopians’. Her critical strategy involves showing what happens when such ideas are implicated in an unholy alliance between radical post-industrialists and conservative governments and business interests. Post-employment arguments she argues (i) have most frequently been promoted by well-intentioned rural utopians and hippie communalists but (ii) get adopted by conservative and punitive governments who use post-industrial arguments to assault the living standards of vulnerable workers, savage the unemployed and the vulnerable and impose new regimes of control. The result she argues, is a defence of, rather than a challenge to existing social and economic arrangements. It also denies the capacity or opportunity to act collectively and to participate in political processes that are the essence of an ‘active citizenry’ which employment in the labour market goes a long way to securing, in ways which exclusion from the labour market whilst supported by ‘basic income’ (which she calls ‘minimum income’) can only obstruct.

For Pixley a distinction can be drawn between ‘full citizens’ and ‘second-class citizens’. ‘Second-class citizens’ are those within what is now called an ‘underclass’ who Pixley argues are doubly disadvantaged by the shift to a restructured labour market and by disenfranchisement after Hawke’s ‘reforms’ to the social welfare sector; ‘There are now more excluded, non-citizens in dependent client status than in private dependency’, because the Hawke government has ‘dualised the labour market and increasingly limited and restricted the criteria that enabled ‘targeted’ clients to make claims on the state’ (Pixley, 1992: 240).

I agree with Pixley that there are strong grounds for reinstating a commitment to the idea that governments should function as an employer of last resort in a modified return to full-employment. However I want to open up the question of whether social participation understood as a basic achievement of citizenship can and should only be achieved through access to the labour market — as Pixley asserts. Rather than continuing to see unemployment only as a pathology, and wage employment as the only way to secure participation, I suggest we can and should as a community look to the prospects for new forms of social creativity arising out of the transitions away from the old patterns and assumptions about full employment. These I suggest go to the heart of the idea of citizenship and participation.

## CITIZENSHIP AS PARTICIPATION

There are several major problems with Pixley's argument.

1. The first problem is that Pixley essentially gives up on citizenship rights. Pixley argues that claiming rights ends up with all sorts of tensions and contradictions which can undo the claims of 'minorities' like blacks or women. Competing rights advocated on behalf of 'fathers', 'men' or 'whites' can and do restrict the rights for example of blacks or woman: 'These political problems with an exclusive rights strategy strongly suggest that some concept of duty or obligation is equally important' (Pixley, 1992: 222).

Accepting that it can be tedious to have to thread one's way through competing rights claims is not in and of itself a compelling reason to dispense with rights claims altogether. A good deal of discussion that is still fruitful can proceed around the notion of citizen's rights and it seems a trifle cavalier to dispose of them just because they are frequently contradictory or involve adjudicating between competing claims. It seems almost that Pixley, having understood the point of postmodernist critiques of claims to universalistic criteria (namely that they frequently dissolve into competing and unresolvable particular claims) has inclined her to be rid of the whole mess and retreat into what she hopes will be a more solid defensive position, namely a defence based on the idea of participation.

She claims that Marshall's defence of social rights is inadequate and that a defence of citizenship must also go to the matter of 'citizen's obligations'. She distinguishes 'obligations' from 'duties' as the preferred accessory to rights because:

Duties arise out of the contractual aspect of liberalism; they are prescribed, and require obedience. Obligations however arise from liberalism's radical humanism: they enhance participation and provide a basis for rights claims (Pixley 1992, 222).

Duties in short are exacted from citizens and to that extent detract from citizens' rights; obligations are freely, even cheerfully adopted or accepted and extend the realm of citizen rights. She reiterates Pateman's claim that, '... relationships of obligation depend upon and arise from the complex web of intersubjective meanings and constitutive rules of social life' (Pixley, 1992: 223).

It is on **this** basis that Pixley moves to the nub of her ethical claim for the equation citizen = work, a claim based on the premises that from ‘obligations freely assumed’:

... we can argue that we **all** ‘ought’ to **work** when we can (and actually have the opportunity to work and to participate in the **work** of society, and thus be ‘independent’ of the state or spouses) (Pixley 1992:224).

2. Given the centrality of the idea of participation it is a second and more substantial problem that we don’t ever learn from Pixley what she means by *social and political participation* or even what might conceivably be meant. This is a grievous omission: like so many other writers, she assumes we already **know** and approve of the idea of participation as an unqualified good. Given Pixley’s account of the reconstitution of citizenship under Hawke-Keating, it seems that she is implying that somewhere in the past, full-citizenship was actually realised at least for males. Yet given the absence of any discussion of what participation might mean, we cannot assess the extent to which this ‘participation’ was achieved. (Possibly that period might have been the time when full (male) employment reigned — from 1945 to 1975 — and we should expect to find, according to Pixley’s account of citizenship-as-participation, a high level of political and social participation on the part of employed men. But since we don’t actually learn from Pixley what she means by participation, it is difficult to know what we would be looking for anyway!).
3. Thirdly, it is the equation of ‘independence’ plus ‘participation’ equals ‘full citizenship’, that is central to the dark **and** nostalgic heart of Pixley’s imagined community of working citizens, and which most needs deconstructing. ‘Dependence/independence’ and ‘participation/exclusion’, are the two central binary categories she relies on for much of her critique of both current **policy** achievements and of ‘post-industrial post-employment policy’ options (like ‘basic income’). These binary oppositions rely on a collapsing of different logics of social action which I suggest have a serious ethical and social effect on any conception of social participation worth pursuing.

## THE ARGUMENT TO SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND NEW FORMS OF SOCIAL CREATIVITY

Pixley’s claims about citizenship-as-participation relies on a number of notions of participation.

One is Marshall's notion of a 'common civilisation' or a 'common social pattern' which is at once 'sociological' and normative and from which some people (like Pixley's 'dependent persons', or **an** 'underclass') are somehow said to be excluded. Such a notion is found in Townsend's method of 'measuring' poverty as 'relative deprivation' (Townsend, 1979). Townsend operating in a direct line of descent from Marshall develops the idea of full citizenship **as a normal level and degree of social participation**.

Townsend began his enquiry into poverty by measuring the distribution of income and other material resources which contribute to the standards of living of individuals or households. (He worked within an invisibly gendered and quite mainstream economic model of income and consumption (see **Watts**, 1993). He tightly notes that any index of resources will not by itself establish a marker for 'poverty', since it will only measure a pattern of inequalities. He claims that what is needed is **an** assessment of how the distribution of resources affects the ability of people to 'participate in the life of a society'. This mean we must:

... endeavour to define the style of living **which** is generally shared or approved of **in each** society, **and** find whether there is ... **a point** below which, as resources diminish, families find **it particularly** difficult to share in the customs, activities and diets comprising **their** society; style of living (Townsend, 1979 p.60). (My stress)

Townsend — and those who follow him — fail to deal with **two** basic problems. Firstly, he presupposes that a generally shared 'civilization' or 'style of living' comprising 'common diets, activities and customs' can be clearly identified, permitting the identification of **an** obvious, even objective and well-defined category of persons who fall outside that common pattern. Yet in a society as radically unequal **as** ours, it seems fruitless to **look** for anything other than diversity **and** unequal access to customs, activities and diets. **If you** want to define the common 'style of living' in the face of this actual inequality you will end **up** doing what is done when 'measuring' 'poverty' in **the** face of a pattern of unequal income. The researcher will arbitrarily draw a line at some point on a vertical index **and** say this **is** where the 'common pattern' stops. Differences in taste, custom or diet clearly have a lot to do with differentials in material resources, so that the notion of a shared 'style of life' enjoyed as a commonality seems highly improbable (Bourdieu, 1979; Piachaud, 1981).

The second problem with Townsend's approach is the assumption that 'the poor' are in some important sense either 'different' from us, because they lack certain things we have and lack this in ways that makes them obviously and collectively different from 'us', so they become 'outcasts', 'marginal' or as is currently the case, an alienated underclass. This is more a discursive artefact than anything real. Townsend wants us to believe that there is a single criterion of poverty (however complexly assembled) and that this is shared by all those who are 'poor'. Yet if the problem is the inequality of resources and activities, customs and diets, then that is all that can be said. There is inequality and if we object, as **we** ought to inequality, then we should aim to fix it up. But this does not entitle us to **fall** back as intellectuals have so frequently done on elaborate, victim-blaming discourses about 'the poor', and their membership of a 'culture of poverty' or an 'underclass' (Carey, 1992).

Piachaud **has** rightly noted that '[t]he poor are worse off than others; but for the most part, they are members of society, not outcasts' (Piachaud, 1981 p.421). Given the insistence of all those who currently speak of the underclass as 'marginal', 'feral', or 'excluded' **we** need to put the ball back into their hands and **ask** simply: how is it possible to be excluded from 'society'?

A second and related 'reading' of what Pixley might mean by 'social participation' hinges on her repeated complaint that 'social exclusion' is tied to 'social dependence'. Pixley holds to a view of labour **market** exclusion/unemployment **as** a bad thing because it creates 'dependency' which in turn has a close affinity with the old and the new 'economic liberal' view that the normative human condition is independence whilst dependence (or what used to be called 'pauperism' is deviant. Pixley claims that there is:

... a new division of the workforce into a privileged core and a flexible periphery of unprotected, casual workers, neither peripheral workers **nor** today's welfare clients can lay claims to benefits enjoyed by the working man ( Pixley, 1992, p.217)

Is there not here either some view of dependency as *ipso facto* a bad thing that clings to a view of non-labour market involvement as a major source of 'bad dependency' (as I think Pixley seems to assume) or else a view of interdependency that fails to recognise that interdependency is already the normal requirement/practice of modernity even if the political or conceptual schemes haven't caught up with this yet. (The distinction between a 'bad' dependency and a 'good' dependency relies on recent feminist insistence that not all dependency like that of a baby on its mother is *ipso facto* a bad thing)

Since Pixley has not spelled out what she does mean here, Gorz possibly summarises the view she has when he writes:

.. in a complex modern society, income and membership in a micro-social community is not enough to make you feel that you are a citizen, anyone else's equal, and 'participating fully' in that society. To feel anyone's equal, you also need to feel that you are useful to that society as a whole, and that it needs whatever skills or capabilities you have. In other words you need a job, and what is more not any casual job like walking someone's dog, shoe shining or selling flowers at street corners (Gorz, 1992,p.180).

Later Gorz clarifies what this entails:

You will earn economic citizenship solely by those activities which you perform as a citizen, in the public sphere, for the benefit of others as citizens; for their benefit **as** citizens and not as private individuals ... Working in the macrosocial sphere means (1) that you are performing work which earns you the social recognition of your usefulness and makes you feel that you hold some role or place in society, that you are **as good as anyone else** — anyone else's equal and (2) that you do not work for your boss personally but to **fill** some social needs or requirements (Gorz, 1992,p.181)

Isn't the insistence on 'independence' and on men earning their keep just another instance of middle-class anxiety about the 'unwashed unemployed' and the 'dependent pauper'? (The question of private or social 'dependence'/'independence' for women is a different matter).

This argument seems to land Pixley in some fairly odd political company, since it is precisely the new right which has reinvented the old arguments that social security beneficiaries become dependants, and worse may fall into something called like an 'underclass' of permanently unemployed, demoralised and work shy poor people. Plant (1993) has argued recently that the recrudescence of a Benthamite ethos of independence and hard work has promoted the view that 'welfare rights' undermine some essential human characteristics like 'self-respect' and independence. There is a certain irony in Pixley's partial support for a discourse about citizenship that runs the same line.

Plant's examination of these arguments is an important reply to Pixley's largely unargued claim that independence is a good thing and dependence a bad thing. Plant notes that **part** of the New Right attack on welfare has proceeded by way of a claim that too much insistence on welfare rights undermines far more basic moral goods like self-respect and independence. (These

values informed the New Poor Law ‘reforms’ of 1834, and the whole notion of ‘deserving poor’ and ‘undeserving poor’ (Dean, 1991). There is also a whole tradition that claims that becoming a pauper — that is a ‘poor person’ dependent on the State for welfare/charity — creates a condition of ‘demoralisation’ ca. 1830–1940, or more recently measurable forms of clinical depression ca. 1970–1994 (Jahoda, 1982; Winefield et al, 1993).

Novack for example has led the right’s attack claiming that self-respect is not about common needs or generic needs, but about living in ‘accordance with the norms and standards of human excellence in a particular society’. (This represents a major retreat from universalistic claims). Novack claims that respect is earned in most ‘Western’ (ie capitalist) societies, by being independent, self-reliant, resourceful and self-motivating. To the extent that there is support for welfare rights, these critics argue this is because ‘society’ expects the discharge of social ‘obligations’. If there are to be entitlements then they should be conditional on discharging certain obligations either to train, to work or to perform some other socially useful task. (My observations here embrace other policy writers like Cass and McClelland (1989) and Campo and Cass (1994) who have given too much away to the enemy in arguing for reciprocal rights and obligations).

Several responses are possible. The attack on welfare recipients by the right and by Pixley, Campo, Cass and McClelland do not make either civil or political rights dependent on claimants to such rights performing socially useful tasks. The notion that one has to do something useful in order to vote for example would be condemned out of hand, and rightly. It is not immediately apparent or obvious why we should make an exception when dealing **with** social — or ‘welfare’ — rights. Why then would such progressives seriously propose that social or welfare rights should be conditional on the performance of tasks that preserve self-respect or independence. That they can to some extent ‘get away’ with this claim, suggests a sizeable blindspot on their part — and the extent to which Libertarian and free market ideas have gained a large foothold in the public sphere.

Now of course as Plant points out those who wish to make welfare rights conditional on the performance of tasks defend themselves by claiming that to promote welfare rights has effects quite dissimilar to those when civil or **political rights** are extended to persons; unlike civil or political rights, *giving* effect to welfare rights undermines independence and self-respect. As Plant puts it this amounts to a claim that:

... the security of income detached from obligations to the labour **market cuts** people off from the discipline and **self** respect that comes from **work** or training. Welfare rights create privatized and ill-disciplined individuals (Plant, 1993, pp.44-5).

(Pixley seems to have accepted much of the force of this critique advanced by the likes of Novack). Yet it is not clear why or how extending social rights such as rights to 'free' education, 'free' child care or 'free' health care (free only in the sense of low or no cost to particular individuals) should undermine self-respect or independence. By and large these kinds of benefits are rarely targeted as problems in the sense that they are alleged to produce undisciplined or unruly or marginalised persons; indeed these kinds of social provision are generally surrounded with a halo of social acceptability and 'functionality'.

However if by 'social rights' these critics (as is indeed more usually the case) want to focus on income support — to the elderly, the unemployed, single parents or other categories of welfare recipients — and their alleged effects, again it is not clear in what ways the payment of benefits will create privatized and ill-disciplined individuals. Typically of course this is where the demonizing of the underclass as 'feral adolescents', 'criminal', 'alcoholic' or 'drug abusing' and generally 'socially pathologies' and families plays such a key role. Here the critics can point to the substantial social science literature and to the extensive media construction of the underclass; these representations confer a 'facticity' on the links between welfare dependency, criminality and anomie that has for so long 'conclusively' demonstrated the links between unemployment (like Braithwaite and Chappell, 1994) and crime and poverty, or low socio-economic status and crime (Braithwaite, 1979).

*I think we need to approach all such claims with a deep and radical skepticism (Watts, 1994). A small proportion of welfare dependents: currently numbering in excess of 3 million Australians commit crime. Most do not and are never likely to. Claims that welfare dependents are 'criminal: 'anti-social: 'anomic', or whatever because they are 'dependent' and have lost their 'self-respect' are ultimately empirical claims that can be simply and easily tested — and I think easily rejected. The argument to dependency is a discursive *furphy* which puts inequality off the agenda and adds a significant and unwarranted degree of social anxiety to a public agenda already preoccupied with ideas about crime waves and the menace of the underclass.*

### THE DIVERSE LOGICS OF CITIZENSHIP AS PARTICIPATION

Finally I want to suggest that the most worrying element in those arguments — like Pixley's — which insist on an identity between wage work and citizenship is that they analytically and experientially collapse separate logics of social action and insist on the dominance of one level or logic of social action at the expense of others to produce a very narrow conception of citizenship.

Touraine reminds us through what he has called a 'sociology of action' (Touraine, 1984; 1989), that we can reinstate a social theory capable of understanding how a social world is constructed out of social relations and in historically specific ways. Beginning with the fact of a multiplicity of meanings both internal to and external to real social actors, Touraine and theorists like Dubet, suggest that social experience must ultimately be grasped from the point of view both of the actors and from the social relations those actors are engaged in. Central to this rethinking is the idea that there is no single dominant social logic or singular meaning encapsulated in notions like 'the logic of capitalism' present in any social setting but rather a multiplicity of meanings, logics of action and forms of social relationship which do not 'add up' to anything that is conspicuously coherent or univocal.

Dubet in a recent quite powerful theorisation (1994), has argued for a diversity of levels of social action which can also be seen as systems of action *and meaning* and identity. These include the level of action identified in terms (i) of community which carries the impulse to integration and involves forms of action like co-operation and friendship, and techniques of inclusion and exclusion; (ii) of instrumental forms of action such as participation in an economic market that deploys egoistic and strategic calculation and the relations of competition; and finally (iii) forms of social creativity such as are encountered in social movements and are expressive of new modes of relationship, concerned to undo relations of domination and exploitation and the like. At the level of social actors, these diverse logics and fields of social action are experienced as contradictory experiences which in the way of such things we attempt to hold together and render coherent as far as it is ever possible to do.

Dubet reminds us in the context of this discussion, that citizenship involves a form of identity and modes of social action *that may cross over all of the levels or logics of social action.*

That is, one can be a citizen by engaging in market-based activities which may directly provide a range of economic and social and cultural rewards. But equally we can also be citizens by engaging in the life of the local community

and do so in ways only possible in some instances by not being involved in the labour market, or alternately we can also be citizens by engaging in the life of the great social movements of the second half of the twentieth century

Pixley's insistence that citizenship is possible by engaging in the labour market is right but only as far as she goes; it is not an exclusive identity, There is far more to citizenship than she allows.

We need to **ask** — and have empirically supported answers — to the question of whether exclusion — voluntarily or involuntarily — from the labour market leads to a denial of social creativity or to a breakdown of identity, or an impassable interdict on forms of social cultural or political creativity.

It may well be a fact that some, possibly many Australians, especially those in paid-employment currently operate with a hierarchy of respect based on an axial distinction 'earning a living'/'not earning a living'. This is also a gendered distinction. For people who worry about the alleged loss of self-esteem and independence that goes with being unemployed and on the 'welfare', women's dependence is not as much an issue as it is when the subject is male.

Gorz puts it this way:

... in a complex modern society, income and membership in a micro-social community is not enough to make you feel that you are a citizen, anyone else's equal, and 'participating fully' in that society. To feel anyone's equal, you also need to feel that you are useful to that society as a whole, and that it needs whatever skills or capabilities you have. In other words you need a job, and what is more not any casual job **like** walking someone's dog, shoe shining or selling flowers at street corners (Gorz, 1992: 180).

Now it may well be the case, especially after Lane's survey of the research evidence (1994) that many people work for all sorts of reasons other than, and/or in addition to, earning an income. These reasons include:

- affirmation of an identity (as teacher, cook or potter);
- the opportunity to exercise skill and talent;
- the opportunity to exercise some autonomy and creativity;
- the opportunity to engage in social relations and to express soci-ability, to establish friendships; and
- the chance to feel valuable and responsible.

I suspect that for many Australians one's real (male) identity, one's (male) value and (male) status and to that extent one's (male) citizenship comes from

earning a living, and having a civil status as doctor/labourer. (Pixley certainly pushes the historical argument that this has long been at the basis of male working-class objections to the 'dole'). Alternately for many Australians the other side of this equation is that being unemployed (and male) is to be a 'bludger', to have no identity and indeed is to suffer diminished respect for 'being dependent'. This however is only the view of those who are not so afflicted by exclusion from the labour market.

Does exclusion — voluntarily or involuntarily — from **the** labour market lead to a denial of social creativity or to a breakdown of identity, or an impassable interdict on forms of social cultural or political creativity? There is evidence that it does not. Craft workers, creative workers and political activists have frequently adopted a 'marginal' role based on exclusion from the labour market because it gives them the freedom to pursue their interests. Activist organisations from environmental groups to the various state Councils of the Aged for example rely on their unemployed/'retired' memberships for political activism, research and lobbying. Social movements have long relied on a mixture of paid and voluntary labour and support to mount campaigns and provide the technical and support apparatus for their activities.

How does this work in regard to the matter of women as dependent?

Much of the discussion about women and citizenship begins with the claim that woman-as-wives-and-mothers and as domestic labourers have been trapped in the 'private' world of the household economy and denied access to the public world of citizenship and by implication given an equation between citizenship, employment and paid work, have therefore also been denied 'full' citizenship. Pateman is the most strenuous critic of the invisibly gendered basis of Marshallian citizenship, and points to the implicit assumption within Marshall that citizenship and its reciprocal rights and obligations presumes a male wage-earning worker. **As** she writes:

It was not until the late nineteenth century that civil society developed into an 'employment society' in which 'work' was the key to citizenship and full (male) employment became the central political demand of the working class movement (Pateman, 1988:136).

There are a number of consequences:

The patriarchal understanding of citizenship ... allows two alternatives only: either women become [like] men and so full citizens, or they continue at women's work, which is of no value for citizenship ... Women cannot be full citizens in the present meaning of the term; at best citizenship can be

extended to women only as lesser men (Pateman, 1988: 197). Yet I suggest that Pateman's discussion of women and citizenship presupposes an essentialist account of 'woman', 'man' and 'citizenship' such that: 'Women cannot be full citizens in the present meaning of the term; at best, citizenship can only be extended to women only as lesser men' (Pateman, 1988: 197).

This is not to deny that there are real issues for *some women* such as those Pascall refers to when she suggests '... women's citizenship in practice is restricted by family dependency' (Pascall, 1993: 113). It is clearly a problem when a woman's capacity to leave a violent, abusive or simply unhappy relationship is denied by her lack of economic or other relevant supports to leave that situation. The real question is how far does a reductionism of women to family/dependency apply? Pascall claims that: '... unpaid work roles in the family limit women's citizenship through paid work and political activity, Women's dependency within the family reflects unpaid work roles, lower pay and less secure employment than male partners; it also leads to great insecurity on marriage breakdown' (Pascall, 1993: 114). This is not the same as simply assuming a simplistic dichotomy between man/public and woman/private as some feminists keep on assuming — and which Plant accepts: '... citizenship, is about a public identity and a public status that derives from that ... feminist critics point out that this can be very deceptive in circumstances in which so much of woman's life is privatized in the home' (Plant, 1991: 255–6).

Are we entitled to insist on essentialist distinctions between 'private' and 'public' and participation/exclusion based on the location *of* women in 'private families' as though this becomes the basis for far-reaching social exclusion? Again we need to ask what social exclusion means anyway, and how is social participation to be understood. In an obvious way, how is it possible for people to be 'excluded' from 'society'? Is family dependency the basis for social exclusion or is it simply a basis for different forms of social involvement and participation in what for example Gorz has called: '... micro-social communities namely a family, a club, a co-op, a self-help network, a neighbourhood association for self-help and so on' (Gorz, 1992: 178).

Is there really compelling evidence that more women are excluded from networks of association in micro-social communities more than men **and** are so excluded by virtue of their privatized existences inside 'family homes'? For all of these reasons I do not think Pixley has yet indicated why we should accept her link between full citizenship-as-social participation and people working for a living through the labour market. In this final section I turn finally to the central elements of social policy transformation.

## RENOVATING SOCIAL AND LABOUR MARKET POLICY

It is plain that basic income will not by itself issue in some new non-wage workerist or egalitarian millennium. By itself it is a modest proposal to build in a basic platform of economic and social security for all Australians as we confront the likelihood of permanent underemployment. As ever the linkages between all the elements of policy will be crucial to achieving desirable policy and social outcomes.

Introducing basic income will need to be tied to a major increase in the progressivity of income taxation. All of this I suggest should be carried out in parallel with a commitment to restoring full employment. By this I mean insisting that governments assure a feasible degree of employment for those Australians who seek access to the wage labour market. This could be done through (1) a combination of governments serving as the 'employer of last resort', (2) through shortening the 'normal' working weeks, and job sharing, and finally (3) by experimenting with more fluid relations between the formal labour market, domestic labour (and a whole variety of nurturant and caring work), and a vigorous 'third sector' model of community work. Basic income to work effectively will need to be integrated with labour market policies permitting more fluid interchanges between part-time and full-time paid work and between paid and unpaid work forms, as well as more creative forms of job sharing and reduction of working time norms.

Together a modified 'full employment' project complemented by a platform of citizen rights vested in the principle of basic income will rejuvenate the idea of citizenship, and underwrite the kind of experiments in social creativity which we have no choice but to pursue. Introducing the principle of basic income aligned with a major increase in the progressivity in income taxation recognises the problems which have arisen since the 1960s after the partial de-linkage of wage work and income. We need to address the problems of economic hardship that now affect a substantial minority of Australians and their families.

## CONCLUSION

As we debate the nature of a Australian republic in the 1990s let us not lose sight of the need to insist that we still have some way to go yet before we have secured a full complement of citizenship rights. The second, no less significant, argument in favouring the extension of the right to social security that

basic income represents is the need to further enhance and promote the elements of citizenship, particularly those aspects of social, political and cultural participation which freedom from wage work will further enhance. If universal suffrage was the indispensable component in the civic architecture of citizenship in the nineteenth century, basic income is the indispensable armature for a fully realised regime of economic and social citizenship rights in the 21st century.

Finally, we need to underwrite those transformative impulses already straining beneath the surface of the old order to give birth to new forms of social creativity. We need to encourage more men to take a larger role in family work and domestic labour; we need to encourage more women into a variety of forms of paid work we need to further encourage job sharing and more fluid interchange between paid work and caring work between volunteer work, and participation in social movements and we need to do this in ways that do not unnecessarily penalise them economically; basic income offers an administratively simple, economically feasible, and more egalitarian way of underwriting the transformation towards a more just and diverse and fair society.

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