

FOREWORD

Issue 23 of the *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand* features papers submitted by keynote speakers from the “Strengthening Family Relationships” conference, held in Wellington in December 2003. The speakers, Paul Amato and Thomas Bradbury, are researchers at the top of the field of family relationships, and they have sent us papers based on the topics they spoke on at the conference.

The paper by Thomas Bradbury and Benjamin R. Karney is really three papers in one, as the authors tackle a series of three questions about the origins of variation in marital satisfaction over time. In addressing these questions, they draw extensively on their own body of work, with references to the wider literature. Paul Amato, in his paper, summarises what is known about the mechanisms by which children's outcomes are compromised when parents separate. He goes on to discuss what we know about the effectiveness of programmes that have attempted to ameliorate the effects of parental separation.

Ethnicity and its measurement are topics of ongoing importance, as evidenced by Statistics New Zealand's recently completed Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity (now available on <http://www.stats.govt.nz/ethnicity>). We have two papers in this issue that address significant aspects. Paul Callister reviews the recent history of recording ethnicity in the New Zealand Census, outlining the changes recommended by the Review. He particularly focuses on how best to recognise multiple ethnic membership and the implications of this for social scientists and policy makers. The paper by Tahu Kukutai deals with the questions of how to define who is a Māori and the significance of these questions for public policy. She provides an analysis of the issues and offers some solutions.

For many years research groups in government agencies have grappled with issues concerning how to do effective and ethical research in Māori communities. We have brought together three different approaches to this work for this issue of the journal. A team of researchers from the University of Auckland's International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education, better known as IRI, describe the operation of Kaupapa Māori research in the course of the “Māori and Iwi Provider Success” research project. In their paper, Tim McCreanor, David Tipene Leach and Sally Abel discuss a small-scale, qualitative scoping project undertaken with members of the national Māori SIDS Prevention Unit. John Waldon's study is a piece of quantitative research, aimed at understanding health-related behaviour, norms and values of older Māori.

David Craig discusses an issue of increasing interest in policy circles, that of government–community partnership. He takes Waitakere City as an exemplar, and draws on lessons learned throughout its history of active collaboration, as well as on recent developments elsewhere in New Zealand and on the international literature, in order to explore certain policy areas critical to planning and working in a collaborative way.

Also addressed are some of the broader issues of linking social policy and research. Amanda Wolf suggests five strategies for making research more relevant to the development of social policy. Her advice focuses on understanding the complexity of making things change in the real world, as well as using a pragmatic approach to the policy–research relationship. The paper by Frances Butcher is also about the policy–research nexus. Her study of the wider impact of occupational injuries provides an example of how innovative research methods can be used to explore the complex effects of interconnected policies and their influences on people’s lives.

We are also pleased to provide several reviews. Simon Chapple assesses *The New Zealand Macroeconomy* by Paul Dalziel and Ralph Lattimore. The “Stop It, It Hurts Me” National Seminar is discussed by Mike Roguski, and he goes on to consider some of the policy implications of the presentations. Justine Cornwall, who attended the “Promoting Resilient Development in Children Receiving Care” conference, presents an account of the issues raised there. Celia Briar reviews the New Zealand Conference on Pay and Employment Equity for Women. Finally, Clive Aspin discusses the “Traditional Knowledge and Research Ethics” conference, as well as the community response to it and involvement.



Anne Jackson
General Manager
Centre for Social Research and Evaluation
Te Pokapū Rangahau Arotake Hāpori