

From *moorditch moort* to 'capacity building': a history of community development in Western Australia



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Complementing oral histories of the following community workers:

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INTRODUCTION

Recently there has appeared in the talk of people such as government officials, academics, practitioners and policy people a burgeoning faith in ideas about community development, community capacity building and community participation. Particularly since the last change of state government in Western Australia this interest has spread to shape policy debates, governmental programmes and a wide range of community service interventions. Typically policy talk has turned to ideas and practices such as social inclusion in active citizenship, the building of partnerships, agreements, memorandum of understandings and codes of conduct between non-government groups, local government, developers, business and other community groups (see for example Robins, 1996, p. 37-43). Increasingly community programs are calling for such things as more engaged and resilient communities, often in an attempt to control graffiti, vandalism, anti-social behaviour and protect other 'community' interests (Hill, 2000, p. 65). Other initiatives, broadly identified as community development in orientation, have sought to create just, vibrant communities in which all citizens can participate and share in the rewards of sustainable economic, ecological, and social development – the 'triple bottom line' (see Watts, 1999). Much work in this area has focused on the ways in which governmental interventions can contribute to the building of social capital, and how this can be measured and accounted for (Salvaris 2000; Siggers *et al* 2002, Cox 2000).

One feature of this is considerable faith in community as necessarily healthy and community development as inevitably progressive and emancipatory. As Bauman (2001, p. 1-3) says, this talk of community feels good, it appeals to our sense of comfort. To many of us community is a warm place, a cosy and safe idea. Community is something we all think we understand. It involves moving along together in consensus, assured that we can count on each other. Community is a place we seem to yearn for, a place we dearly hope to return to. However, in all of this talk about community and rhetoric about community development we often forget that with community comes costs, costs that can involve the absence of the Other, the absence of a space for difference and the diminishing of freedom for some.

Another feature of this turn to community development and capacity is a failure to recognise that community work has its own history. Many seem to accept the claim that community development is a novel way of dealing with new social problems. Conference brochures, professional development adverts and book sleeves introducing community development claim that people will discover in it innovations, up-to-the-minute strategies and original approaches.

There may well be considerable valuable and illuminating work that is being undertaken under the auspice of community development. Some of this work may be inventive and fresh. However, attempts at using community building as a way to improve the lives of people are as old as politics itself.

Some of those who welcome the adoption of community development may not be very familiar with the vast body of work undertaken in the last 200 years by scholars interested in the sociology of community. Some may not know that sociologists have long taken an interest in understanding the features, formation and the costs of community.

What follows may go some way in helping people recognize the breadth of this history. It is intended as a guide to the history of community development. The paper begins with a short description of a research project that prompted this review of literature on community work. It then offers a brief

review of some of the work produced by sociologists interested in the study of community. Next it turns to the contribution of those keen to help illuminate our understanding of recent shifts in conceptualizing community. This will serve as the background to a review of the history of community development, both in other continents, elsewhere in Australia and in Western Australia. Finally, the report examines change and continuity in community development language and practice.

REVIEWING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HISTORY – THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Between early 2003 and mid 2004 we invited 13 people to talk with us about their experience of community development in Western Australia. All of these people were carefully chosen after advice was sought from a small reference group. It was important to choose people with considerable experience but also some diversity of involvement in community work. Of those interviewed three were from Indigenous Australian backgrounds, 7 were women and 6 were men. A number had worked in state government departments while some had worked with non- government organizations. Experience of community development was quite varied with people having had a history of working with young people, migrant groups, trade unions, children and families, Indigenous communities, women, in community arts, health, local government, planning, policy, research, politics, education, sustainability, the peace movement, economic development and overseas contexts.

The general aim of the project was to research and prepare a set of narratives or stories concerned with the history of community development in Western Australia. Specifically this involved recording oral narratives of people who have had a longstanding involvement in community development in Western Australia. The interviews were recorded using digital video and sound.

The plan for carrying out this work involved 7 stages:

1. An initial discussion with each participant outlining the project, objectives, scope, ethical obligations and negotiations over use of the material;
2. A second meeting for the initial interview over 2-3 hours (in some cases this involved undertaking the work over a number of sessions);
3. The preparation of a draft transcription of each taped narrative session;
4. The participant being sent a draft for review;
5. A discussion with each participant to review the initial draft and ask any supplementary questions;
6. A final edit of transcriptions;
7. The final transcription signed off by each participant.

As well as reviewing their personal accounts of involvement in community development topics explored during interviews included:

- Social processes and the range of contingencies that shaped various community development initiatives;
- Organisational forms and changes to groups/stakeholders involved in community development;
- Shifts in community development rationalities;
- Transformations in programmes and models of practice;
- Instances of failure and difficulty in community development.

To buttress the oral narratives, a review of scholarly literature, education and training material, key government reviews and annual reports and other relevant 'grey' documented sources was undertaken. This work focused on broad policy trends, organisational activity, shifts in discourse, changes to people involved, and macro/micro social changes. What follows is a discussion of this literature.

COMMUNITY – YEARNING, NOSTALGIA AND THE DESIRE FOR CONNECTION

Early work concerned with ‘community’

Those interested in the business of conceptualising community have long mapped the range and diversity of ways of thinking about and treating it. Social theorists from Aristotle to Durkheim, Weber, Marx, Simmel, Hillery, Elias, Friedman, Young, Garfinkel and Sacks (to name a few) have all usefully pointed out that community is many things to many people (see Wild 1981 and Mowbray 1985 for a detailed examination of the many uses of community). Indeed Hindess (cited in Malpas and Wickham 1998, p. 354) alleges that the most notable thing about reference to community in popular discourse is the difficulty of clarifying what one actually means by it. As Malpas and Wickham (1998, p. 354) claim, there is considerable arbitrariness when thinking about any community. Indeed those interested in the study of community are confronted with a massive range of competing and contrasting ideas about what it is.

For example, many continue to see community as necessarily tied to geography and place. Others are more inclined to see it as shaped by ideas, values and political interests. Often it gets used to refer to people who share cultural traditions or countries of origin. Sometimes it denotes those who share common ties such as occupation, skills or a connection to technology. Likewise, there are long standing romantic traditions that see community as something once experienced in a golden age and capable of reviving a sclerosed society. Here community is seen as the harbinger of hope. This kind of community is often yearned for and seen as something to be preserved, reignited and sought after (Taylor 2003, p. 3, Delanty 2003, p. 15).

Much of this kind of thinking rests on conceptions of community associating it with a period of innocence when close, intimate and wholesome life was the norm. This way of conceptualizing community is strongly influenced by eighteenth and early nineteenth century German theorists who rediscovered the positive qualities of community that they imagined existed in the classical Greek *polis* (Mowbray 1985, p. 43). These kinds of communities, often associated with Tonnies’ (1955) pre-industrial *gemeinschaft*, were seen as virtuous until spoiled by the cruel distortions of modernity and *gesselschaft* or modern forms of association. This romantic longing for the qualities of community lost to modernity functioned to explain modern problems as the natural consequence of the demise of community. It then followed that the obligation of those responsible for the care of community is one of protection against the evil influences of modern life.

This line of argument has long been attractive to researchers and social engineers keen on reforms that deal with social problems. From the early twentieth century, members of the Chicago School of Urban Ecology, led by figures such as Robert Park (see Ritzer 2000, p. 192), began to claim a causal relationship between the growth of urban cities and the growth of urban social decay and social problems. Family breakdown, crime, deviance, poverty, normlessness and housing problems were all assumed to be the consequence of a shift away from community towards modern urban cities. It was though these shifts prompted malaise, disquiet and a lack of drive in modern individuals, particularly the urban poor. The perception was that modern cities led to the loss of local attachments and the rise in social disharmony and unrest. Predictably intellectuals and reformers such as Charles Horton Cooley and Robert Park embraced romantic ideas of community, best represented by the small town, as the way to reinvigorate civic life. Impersonal and centralized government at a distance, often associated with the evils of Irish political influence, were criticized and grass roots, democratic local community organization were heralded as the panacea for urban decay (Berry 1974, p. 19). The resolution of these problems were held to be organized and rational town planning and community

development initiatives. Community rebuilding programmes, slum clearances, beautification initiatives and the formation of neighbourhood associations, civic groups, community centres and community councils were promoted as the way to building civilised cities (Mowbray 1985, p. 44-45, Delanty 2003, p. 52-63).

At approximately the same time in Europe others embraced the loss of community thesis to explain modern ills. According to Mosse (1982), the political Right began adopting community as a central platform late in the 1800s. Indeed leaders such as Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler began to erect their programmes for a regenerated Europe around ideas about community building. Political figures like Mussolini and Hitler gained popularity amidst large-scale social change in Europe, Their political influence grew in response to the rapid shift from feudalism to industrialization, intensified social mobility, the displacement of large social groups, political tensions, and the military defeat of Germany and Italy in the Great War. Keen to gain power, both Hitler and Mussolini embraced community and the formation of what they saw as grass roots local political cells (called *fasces*). The German Nazis in particular were influenced enormously by ideas about *gemeinschaft*. Many of them were driven by the call for a reconstruction of the allegedly lost 'organic community'. Indeed for Hitler the concept of *Volksgemeinschaft*, or the national or people's community, was central and Nazi propaganda urged people to put "Gemeinnutz vor Eigennutz" – put the 'community before the individual' (Leach 1991, Pakulski 1991, Delanty 2003).

For Hitler, class, religious, and sectional divisions were to be displaced into a new set of values drawing strength from an idealized German past. He saw modern people, living in modern society, as alienated by urban industrialised civilisation. As a consequence modern Germans needed to be transformed by the sense of belonging to the *Volk*, the united and pure 'people's community', a community built on mythical ideas about heroic Germans of the past. This new order would recreate the alleged simplicity, clarity and purity of the legendary Germany of yesteryear (Pakulski 1991).

According to the European fascists, individual interest needed to be subordinated to collective racial and community values. Parties, unions, groups, legal frameworks that promoted institutional pluralism, as well as liberal ideas about individual freedom and the laissez-faire institutions of market capitalism, were all condemned as sham and perpetrators of moral decay. The fascist ethos was encapsulated in the concepts of health, natural condition, order and vitality, discipline, spontaneity and hierarchy. A healthy society meant a harmonious national community (*volkgemeinschaft*) with no place for political conflict, dissent or cultural variation. The slogan was "one nation, one culture, one leader." Shaped by romantic myths about Germanic leaders from the past the Nazis were obsessed with the need for obedience to the *furher* or community leader. Their view was that order could only be achieved when members of the community deferred to charismatic, almost religious leadership (Pakulski 1991).

In contrast those who took inspiration from the nineteenth century thinker Karl Marx were more inclined to welcome the destruction of the old coercive and narrow traditional world of *gemeinschaft* (Little 2002, p. 17). Marx saw the movement to modern forms of social relations as civilised and a way to remove tyranny. In fact, he maintained that the shift from country to town to city brought with it the transition from barbarism to civilization (Wild 1981, p. 19). In his view contractual relationships between individuals would wipe out the tyranny of custom and replace it with a new order that eventually would involve the emancipation of communities. He saw the myths and traditions of early times as being swept away with the spread of capitalism (Wild 1981, p. 19).

For Marx, human society was at first wholly communal. In his view, the technological achievements of capitalist industrialisation paved the way for harnessing of the means of production to achieve

what he called a communist world – a world not unlike Tonnies’ traditional community in some ways – a utopian world free of exploitation, where co-operation, shared government and human emancipation occurred (Wild 1981, p. 18).

Indeed to Marx, a central feature of capitalism, competition, was antithetical to community. He saw competition as separating individuals and thus inconsistent with the human condition that sees us acting in commune. According to Marx, the capitalist mode of production isolates people from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse.

Many, such as Cockburn (1977), drew on the Marxist tradition to help think about the way we use the idea of community. In her British based study she alerts us to the ways the term was hijacked by those in power and used to obscure the massive inequalities existing in society. She said that this kind of talk about community helped mask the fundamental conflicts between classes and gave people the sense that ‘we all share a common set of values and interests’.

Cockburn (1977) argued that used in this way the term community distorted people’s understanding of power relations in capitalist systems. She said that it allowed those who use it in this way to centre social problems in ‘the community’ away from their structural conditions – not problems that reflect fundamental social inequality and wealth distribution but as problems the community must somehow resolve. Likewise Repo (cited in Kenny 1999) claimed that the idea of community tends to get used to give the impression of equality and that simply people coming together to cooperate can sort out problems. She said that community control denies the existence of class divisions and essentially involves middle class people undermining and fragmenting the working class.

Cockburn and other socialists (see Bailey and Brake 1975 and 1980, Bolger, Corrigan, Docking and Frost 1981, and Corrigan and Leonard 1978) argued that talk of community during their time legitimised state driven interventions, largely aimed at regulating the working classes and others whose existence threatened the interests of the ruling classes. They cited community policing programmes, community care, community development and community psychology initiatives as examples of interventions that targeted the poor and working class. Similarly two Australian writers Bryson and Mowbray (1981) claimed that during the 1970s and 80s the term community was used predominantly to make invisible political divisions, describing it as an ‘elixir for invigorating the democratic state.’ Furthermore they claimed that its use legitimised the work of those such as social workers and community development officers who were essentially concerned with putting the working class in their place.

Since at least the 1970s feminists have also had things to say about community. Like many neo-Marxists they too were intolerant of its uncritical acceptance. Feminists like Weiss reminded us (1995, p. 3) that much of the history of thinking about community from Plato to the present involves misogynist conjecture. Indeed since at least the days of the early Greeks the very idea of community has been constructed on the negation of women’s participation.

Other feminists interested in the study of community reminded us that women are often the victims of community, stereotyped into their various roles in community, regularly the subjects of limits to their autonomy and routinely locked out of community (Martin 1995). For these social analysts community can and has been a place of stress, destruction, excess and violence for women.

Feminists have also been vocal in challenging the idea that community has any unitary form or features and that community is necessarily a safe place for all. Indeed Young (1990) argued that community often has controlling, authoritarian and totalitarian tendencies. Speaking of the ideal of

community she said that it:

privileges unity over difference, immediacy over mediation, sympathy over recognition of the limits of one's understanding of others from their point of view. Community is an understandable dream, expressing a desire for selves that are transparent to one another, relationships of mutual identification, social closeness and comfort. The dream is understandable, but politically problematic ... because those motivated by it will tend to suppress differences among themselves or implicitly to exclude from their political groups persons whom they do not identify (Young 1990, p. 281).

Too often, say this group of feminists, women have been the ones called upon to sacrifice themselves and their interests for the greater good of the community. Doyal and Gough (1991) also pointed out that with calls for 'more community work, participation and involvement' usually comes the unquestioned supposition that women will increase their unpaid labour. Work on community is most often characterised by what Kenny (1999, p. 95) describes as vertical gender segmentation, in which women are represented in the subordinate working roles and men take the lead in rhetorical work, leadership and management. In other words, doing work on community most often involves men talking and directing and women bearing the bulk of the costs. For example, community care, community education, community policing and community development is carried out principally by women.

However, community can and is often a place that sustains women. Studies by feminists such as Abu-Lughod (1995) and Ringelheim (1995) also make clear that even in seemingly highly restrictive and violent circumstances women form communities of association to help through their lives. In addition, there often exists in traditional communities aspects of culture and rules that can curb at least some of the worst excesses of male domination and brutality (Weis 1995, p. 10).

Recent work on 'community'

More recently talk about community has both rehearsed older and more established ideas and reconfigured and formed new ideas. One relatively new influence on talk about community comes from the work of communitarians, who over the past ten to fifteen years have attempted to respond to the popularity of neo-liberalism. According to Giddens (2001, p. 1) communitarianism and its political offspring "Third Way" politics, is the product of countries and economies recovering from and reacting to long and unsuccessful periods of neo-liberal rule.

Communitarian thought offers one diagnosis of the present ills of Western democracies. In a manner not too dissimilar to neo-conservative politics, communitarians point their finger at the growth of 'special interests and moral decay'. All kinds of problems are blamed on a weakness of community spirit and a shift away from core common values. These weaknesses are seen as having led to rising divorce rates, escalating crime, urban chaos, welfare dependency, economic insecurity, cultural conflict, political corruption, and easily available pornography. Communitarians also believe that unless we begin to redress the unbalanced obsession with individualism our society will continue to become normless, self-centered, and driven by special interests and power seeking groups. In other words, communitarians claim that in the West there has been a one-sided emphasis on rights (Delanty 2003, p. 73).

According to communitarians, improvements hinge upon a reawakening of a sense of individual and community responsibility. Key themes are that individual rights need to be balanced with social responsibilities, and that autonomous selves do not exist in isolation, but are shaped by the values

and culture of communities. The claim is that rights tend to be asserted without a corresponding sense of how they can be achieved, or who will pay for them. "Rights talk" thus corrupts our politics. It is used to escalate claims, induce guilt and polarize debate. It is employed without a corresponding sense of responsibilities, other than not actively inflicting harm (Taylor 2003, p. 39).

Communitarians believe deeply in preserving rights, and extending them in regimes that are non-democratic or practice discrimination. But they believe that rights need to be seen in a more balanced framework, and that places such as the U.S. would benefit by a temporary moratorium on the manufacture of new rights (Rose 1999, p. 181).

In recent years communitarianism has flourished in global politics particularly during the reign of President Clinton in the US and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. This means that parties like the Democrats in the US, the Labour Party in Britain and the ALP in Australia are now more inclined to stand for the community rather than their old constituency of the working class (Bennett 2002, p. 46-48).

Much of the Australian shift towards 'third way' politics is largely informed by communitarian thought. This endeavour to find a third way is concerned to move beyond what are seen as the outdated politics of the 'Old Left' and the 'New Right'. Prompted by the belief that the two ways that have dominated political thinking, socialism and classic market economics are no longer applicable and have failed or lost their purchase (Giddens 2001, p. 2).

An influential set of ideas resonating with communitarian thought, indeed seeming to share similar origins, is the conceptual engagement with ideas about social capital, a term made popular of recent times by the work of American sociologist Robert Putnam. According to Putnam (2000 p. 18-26), the core idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value. Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. Thus social capital increases a society's productive potential.

In one of his studies on different regions in Italy, Putnam (cited in 2000, p. 18) discovered that those regions that were most effective in their form of government and more advanced economically were also the most civically minded regions. He demonstrated that where there were strong habits of cooperation and an appreciation of shared responsibility for collective endeavours there was also economic prosperity. Putnam then argued that social capital is a strong precondition for economic development and effective government. In other words, it is social capital that lubricates democracy and commerce and not the reverse (Taylor 2003, p. 41).

Putnam likens social capital to what others have called civic virtue. In his book *Bowling Alone* (2000), based on a vast array of social scientific data, he claims that we have become increasingly disconnected from family, friends, neighbours, and our democratic structures. He warns that our stock of social capital - the very fabric of our connections with each other, has plummeted, impoverishing our lives and communities. Putnam draws on evidence including nearly 500,000 interviews over the last quarter century to show that we sign fewer petitions, belong to fewer organizations that meet, know our neighbours less, meet with friends infrequently, and even socialize with our families less often. We are even bowling alone.

Others, including Australians Eva Cox (2000) and Mark Latham (2001), have argued that social capital is eroding because purely economic criteria are being applied to transactions between people and individual achievement has come to replace community and social solidarity.

The reasons for this are many according to communitarians:

- Increased time pressures – people don't have as much time to meet others and participate in local activities;
- Residential mobility – people move more frequently and get less involved in their community;
- Increased labour participation of women – women have been disproportionately involved in civic engagement historically; because they are now more likely to be employed, civic participation is dropping considerably;
- Growth in the welfare state – in the past communities relied heavily on voluntary groups to provide social support; many of these functions have been taken over by the state and therefore usurping a primary mechanism for civic involvement;
- Erosion of civic culture in the 1960s – the culture of the 1960s emphasised a more individualistic rather than social orientation;
- Growth of suburbs – suburban development fosters alienation;
- Television – often blamed for the lack of community involvement because it takes up so much time (Putnam 2000).

The answer for those subscribing to this way of thinking lies in re-engaging in civic associations – some call them community groups. It is these associations or community organisations that generate the networks, norms and social trust that facilitates co-ordination and co-operation. This in turn increases economic prosperity. This work is having a great deal of influence on recent talk about community development, talk often littered with the notion that social problems are a reflection of people's declining levels of inclusion in civic life. For those claiming this thesis, something has gone awfully wrong with the social fabric. In ways that seem to appeal to many on the Left and from New Social Movement traditions, advocates of the new community development approach call on us to develop 'social capital', build community capacity, encourage partnerships, support community entrepreneurship, highlight the need for 'sustainable and healthy communities', and strengthen democratic and civic participation. In addition, there has been an amplified emphasis on the obligation of local governments to measure the progress of community development through social and performance indicators, benchmarking and auditing.

It follows that social values must be rebuilt and nurtured so that socially excluded groups feel a sense of trust and ownership in their community. The problems of those 'alienated and on the margins' can be addressed by programmes that seek to encourage them to become active in civic life. These programmes need to promote voluntary associations and help people to work co-operatively as members of active and healthy communities. Interventions that seek to build people's capacity to participate in civic life are now burgeoning in the new expert discourse and professional vocation of community development. A popular panacea for social problems here is a faith in 'community participation', a set of ideas that puts great stock in slogans such as 'local solutions to effect local change' and the preaching of the virtue of co-operation, consensus and civic engagement. Some, including Putnam (cited in Rose, 1999, p. 181-182), argue that "successful outcomes for people in education, urban poverty, unemployment, the control of crime and drug abuse, and even health ... are more likely in civically engaged communities."

Another place where new insights applicable to the study of community have emerged is in work concerned with order, politics and the social. In particular some of the commentary inspired by Foucault's project on governmentality have made helpful conceptual contributions. This governmentality literature posits that recent shifts in the governing of community reflects changes in

modern forms of government more generally, changes driven by a particular set of political rationalities (or ways of thinking about government) often described as advanced or neo-liberalism (see Rose and Miller 1992; Burchell et al 1991, Miller and Rose 1990, O'Malley 1996, Hunt and Wickham 1994, Rose 1999). According to then governmentality theorists, classical liberal political rationalities sought to advance the interests of the individual, inculcate in subjects self-management and self-regulation and minimise direct governance by the state (see Rose 1996, Beeson and Firth 1998, O'Malley 1999, O'Malley and Palmer 1996). During this period (the early 19th century) close government of individuals was largely seen as outside the limits of state responsibility. Only those who posed a direct danger to the interests of civic life were to be disciplined. Following emerged a period of expansive-liberal governance or what many know as welfarist political rationalities. During this period (roughly these set of rationalities were popular from about 1901 to 1975 in Australia) the task of government became to balance the public good and social solidarity. This meant that there was an adoption of Keynesian economics so that the state's role in the welfare and development of groups such as the poor, young people, and Aborigines expanded. This style of government involved significant interventions in a range of social, economic and cultural activities. It also included the creation of a state-run wage regulation system, a national system of industrial arbitration, extensive tariff protection for local industries, racially based immigration policy (the White Australia Policy and various Aboriginal Affairs Legislation governing according to racial categories), a commitment to full employment, social security for the elderly, unemployed, sick and dependent, Keynesian demand management and a mixed economy (Bessant 1997).

After the 1970s, and particularly into the 1980s there was another 'sea change' in political rationalities driven by a series of social and political forces. These included a world economic crisis, an international restructuring of financial markets, major changes to manufacturing and the labour force, a shift in mass production, a reduction in government expenditure at the same time as an 'internationalisation' of economic relations. One effect of this was the shift towards a faith in the ability of markets to deliver social outcomes and the belief that communities were better situated to manage and resolve their own problems. Onus was then placed on the importance of reducing the state's role in government and increasing the role of the market and community in managing its affairs and protecting itself against dangers and risks. Here we saw a shift from state responsibility in the welfare and government of groups such as youth, the poor, Aborigines and the disabled to a faith in the market to protect and the responsibility of community to police and manage. During this period what emerged was an upsurge in the privatisation and corporatisation of services and the involvement of community in policing, crime prevention and care. Along with this mentality of government came an emphasis on the moral and social deficiency produced under welfare. A popular claim became that welfare provision stifles self-autonomy, responsibility and initiative. Additionally, groups seen as dangerous or a threat to the moral order were constituted as a direct threat and affront to the allure of neo-liberal ideals about freedom, initiative and fairness (Bessant 1997).

As a consequence greater emphasis was placed on reducing national government expenditure, 'downsizing' public sector employment, delivering budget balances and surpluses, the selling of public assets and deregulation of various markets (eg. financial and labour markets). In addition, great emphasis was placed on introducing business practices into the management of public service organizations, contracting out of government services and a shift from needs to outcomes based welfare provision (Bessant 1997). All of this had a significant impact on both the use of the idea of community and the popularity of community development as a method of governance. With this shift towards market driven principles no longer was community something outside of government. Rather it became a 'stakeholder', one of the many consumer markets to be targeted. This prompted

a move towards a reliance on economic theory as a way of understanding the needs of community. At the same time governments reduced spending on welfare provision and the funding of community groups, instead privatizing services and introducing competitive tendering for community services. This led to a substantial downsizing of employees in community organisations with many groups defunded and ceasing to exist. At the same time, those who had previously been seen as needy communities found themselves increasingly regulated with income security being tied to the building of self-management skills, mutual obligation and entrepreneurialism in welfare recipients (Rose 1996).

In addition, neo-liberalism embraced the adoption of private sector management practices and languages (eg, developing business plans, Quality Assurance, Corporate vision) into community service culture. In order for community groups to receive any government funding they needed to measure their work in terms of the application of performance indicators. Generally the new policy regime was reconfigured so that ideas and practices were couched in terms of the language of market economics and groups were forced to quantify and account using methods adopted by commerce and the business sector. The language of community shifted towards the language of market and the consumer (Brennan 1998).

Nevertheless, like other political rationalities neo-liberalism had its critics and its limits. Indeed the perception that neo-liberalism has failed or at least disenchantment with neo-liberalism as the universal remedy for governmental problems, says Rose (1999), is one of the reasons why we have seen a resurgence of faith in community as a way to manage social problems. Community became the technical device, the symbolic mascot for those who have been keen to find a 'third way' of governing, somewhere between the authority of the state, found wanting by advocates of neo-liberalism, and the amoral forces of the market.

However, say a number of observers (see Rose 1999), the work that 'community' is being asked to do is qualitatively different in this new political environment. Traditionally the term community often formed part of a system of contrasts that places community on one side of a divide and government on the other. In earlier discursive moments community was deployed as part of a critique of centralized government, in opposition to what was perceived to be remote and distant bureaucracy (Rose 1999, p. 175). Community was conceptualized as that which people make for themselves, not what outside forces (like governments) impose on them. Also traditionally community was most associated with the daily and intimate round of personal relations, rather than social relations that are more distant and bureaucratized.

In the new policy arena government now has an interest in promoting the spread of effective community, particularly the strength of people's attachment to community. Community is now seen as something that will assist in achieving greater social solidarity and cohesion. In this way the new language of community, largely influenced by communitarian talk, prompts a shift towards community as a technology of government, something that serves as a means of restoring some kind of moral order to society. Rather than being primarily a geographic space, a social space or a service sector in the economy, it is "a moral field binding persons into durable relations" (Rose 1999, p. 172). This moral field is now being embraced and used by government rather than being a contrast to government. Indeed community in its contemporary form is actually instituted as a sector of government (Rose 1999, p. 176). Rose (1999 p. 175) says that "within a rather short period, what began as a language of resistance and critique was transformed, no doubt for the best of motives, into an expert discourse and a professional vocation, community development."

To put it another way, the new language of community is used to bring into being new ways of

governing populations (called communities). Community is now something to be programmed by governmental actors such as community development officers (Rose 1999, p. 175). Governing by community or governing through appeals to community involves such things as reducing reliance on state run institutions, encouraging communities to be more self-sustaining and cultivating their own support, justifying the breaching of rights for those whose interests are thought to be counter to the interests of the 'broader community'. In the new talk about community, "a sector is brought into existence whose vectors and forces can be mobilised, enrolled, deployed in novel programmes and techniques which encourage and harness active practices of self management and identity construction, of personal ethics and collective allegiances." (Rose 1999, p. 176) Rose calls this new shift, "government through community".

This means that community has become something other than simply a description for certain kinds of social cohesion, characterised by intimacy, trust, common geographic affiliations or a shared set of values. It has become much more than simply a descriptor of a state of affairs. In the new language of Third Way politics, community is much more a way of governing people through calls to such things as civic engagement, self/community discipline, the rejuvenation of virtue, moral education, mutual obligation and a lessening of reliance upon the state and more on local associations. Community then becomes tied up with a new way of governing people through moral appeals to see ourselves, less as global citizens with fundamental human rights and more as members with obligations specific to local communities (Rose 1999, p. 172-177).

On the other hand, much of our recent talk about community is not particularly new. In addition to reconfiguring policy language, the new discourse of community as government also rehearses older ideas inherited from neo-liberal rationalities. Behind much of the new language of community development is the notion that it is a cost efficient and much cheaper way to govern. Community education schemes, community policing, the Community Development Employment Programme (alias work for the dole in Aboriginal communities), and community care initiatives all draw heavily on voluntary work and the resources of those previously the subject of direct government expenditure.

The new language of community development is also littered with conceptual influences from classic market economics. For example the buzzwords of the moment include references to social capital, capacity building, assets based practice, resilience, auditing community participation, measuring community indicators and community entrepreneurialism. These concepts are overwhelmingly influenced by the language of auditors and accountants and treat community almost as a corporate entity that can be managed using business principles and ideas taken from market economics.

In addition, recent talk about community and community development seems to be largely devoid of market criticism. Indeed it often seems as if the voice of radical, Marxist, feminist critique is all but gone. Much of this discursive work appeals to the active involvement of the big end of town and corporate players so that increasingly emphasis is placed in gaining corporate sponsorship, funding and the need for strategic 'stakeholder partnerships' with 'stakeholder' standing for business groups.

The field of postcolonial studies has also offered illuminating insight in relation to the work that community does in contemporary times. This body of work has gained prominence since the 1970s when it began to rise in the Western academy with the publication of Edward Said's influential critique of Western constructions of the Oriental Other in his 1978 book, *Orientalism*. Said's (1978) evaluation and critique of the set of beliefs known as Orientalism is highly relevant to community studies for it highlights the wide variety of assumptions that go to shape the way people think about communities constituted as outsiders, the Other or, in his case the Orient.

According to Said (1978), Orientalism is the system of ideas, writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly serving the interests of the 'Occident; or colonising forces. It is the business of imaging the 'Orient' in ways that work in tandem to regulate and shut them out of community. The Oriental, as the subjects of Orientalism, are constituted in such a way as to demean and distance, to make marginal and shut out. For example the Oriental man is depicted as feminine, weak, yet strangely dangerous because he poses a threat to white, Western women. The Oriental woman is both eager to be dominated and strikingly exotic. The Oriental is both a single image and a sweeping generalization, a stereotype that crosses countless cultural and national boundaries. Importantly Orientalism is a necessary part of community building in that it serves to both establish what community is not, and, by definition, what it is.

Also, importantly Orientalism involves the act of colonizing, invading and conquering the land, cultures and social lives of others (Ife 2002, p. 149). Often pursued with the best of intentions, it is driven by a sincere belief in the benefits to others of one's own enlightened ideals and civilized practices. Orientalism is motivated by the conviction that development is 'for their own good'. However, Orientalism ultimately serves the interests of Occidentals or the colonisers, often stripping indigenous groups of their land, their resources, their knowledge and their culture.

Said (1978 and 1993) argues that Orientalism has enormous influence over the attitudes and practices of those committed to community development. Programmes carrying the label of community development are often sponsored by organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank and other non- government aid groups, many of whom have been implicated in the colonising of non-western nations. The effect of these initiatives, argues Ife (2002, p. 152) has often been devastating to local groups, displacing existing systems of health and care, introducing alien forms of education and law and imposing inappropriate land use practices which have often led to environmental degradation.

Writing at a similar time and seen to complement Said's work is the conceptual contribution of Benedict Anderson who wrote the seminal piece *Imagined Communities* (1983). Although Anderson was interested in the analysis of nation making and the spread of nationalism, like Said his work has much to say about community building, particularly in late modernity.

Anderson begins by reminding us that communities are fabrications – not so much in the sense that they are lies or distortions but that they are made and remade. There is nothing natural or fixed about communities. He then goes on to point out that the word nation takes its meaning from the Latin 'natio' which means a local community, domicile, family, or condition of belonging. He also reminds us that notions of the nation and the community are often used interchangeably (Anderson 1983, p. 1-7).

Community making also depends upon the invention and performance of histories, traditions and symbols that sustain a sense of social solidarity and collective identity. As such community building is tied up with processes of land ownership, sovereignty, cultural identity and nation making. It evokes feelings of belonging, home and association and encourages boundary making. Indeed talk about community stimulates people's sense that they are the rightful owners of a specific area. Community then is driven by the construction of otherness so that one's community identity and affiliations to place are defined in relation to those who are constituted as outsiders. This means that the placing of imagined borders between communities is fundamental to their very existence. For example, the 'non-Aboriginal community' (white Australia) has long depended upon the invention and performance of histories, traditions and symbols about Aboriginal people as violent, criminal, drunk, lazy, uncivilized and subhuman to sustain their identity.

Another postcolonial figure, Homi Bhabha, has had much to say about the business of doing community. Like Said he acknowledges that the subjugation and exclusion of indigenous and other non-white groups has been crucially important in community formation. However, in his influential book *Nation and Narration* (1990), he argues against the tendency to essentialise the relationship between community and its Other. He points out that there is always ambivalence in community formation. Indeed he makes the case that community formation is always most productive where it is most ambivalent.

Bhabha (1994) partly accepts the thesis of Said that community building is informed by a set of assumptions that attempt to construe the Other as a population of degenerate types, often on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify their conquest. In other words Bhabha accepts that community making involves the use of stereotypes that represent outsiders in a range of derogatory ways. However, Bhabha argues that this important aim is never fully met. This is because discourse on community is ambivalent, always pulling in two contrary directions at once. At one moment community making involves distancing those who are different and outside. Indeed community formation relies much on the exclusion of those who are variously described as dangerous, criminal, barbaric, deviant and morally recalcitrant. On the other hand, if communities are completely successful in shutting out their dangerous Other then there will cease to be a need to community. In a strange and ironic twist the Outsider is central to community, at the same time both pushed away and relied upon.

For example, one of the features of community formation in places such as Australia is the extent to which those who are constituted as community insiders have love-hate feelings towards Indigenous people. Stories about Aborigines have been torn between long traditions of fear, hatred and contempt and almost as long by traditions of desire and yearning for Aboriginal culture. Said and Bhabha (1984) might say that Aborigines have come to serve as markers of what is dangerous and threatening, barbaric and unsophisticated. They serve as markers of those outside of community, ironically what it is to be un-Australian. However, at the same time they have often represented those who offer non-Aboriginal people a target to aim otherwise repressed feelings and desires. At other moments Aborigines get revered for their almost mystic affiliation with Australia, their spiritual connection to land and their uncanny ability to survive in the harshest of continents. Indeed for some, Aborigines also often perform a redemptive function and hold the key to communion with place (Palmer 2001).

This kind of post-colonial analysis is useful in understanding the strange and erratic attitudes of non-Aboriginal Australians - attitudes that find people at one moment despising Aboriginal people while the next featuring them as subjects to be celebrated. It helps explain why at one minute 'the Aborigine' can be both feared and secretly envied, hated but unconsciously loved, distanced but longingly sought after. Some might suggest that this merely serves as an example of non-Aboriginal people's double standards, ignorance and inconsistent values. However, Bhabha suggests that these inconsistent standards, this ambivalence, acts in a rather menacing way - always present and regularly available to disrupt and challenge discourse on community.

Such instances of ambivalence not only provide proof of the authority of colonial discourse and the double standards of groups like non-Aboriginal Australians. In addition this ambivalence shows us just how vulnerable, incomplete and prone to disturbance is community making in places like Australia. Such ambivalence then gives rise to the seeds of challenge for community (Ashcroft et al. 1998: 13).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – THE PRACTICE

Thinking about working with community

Like talk about community there is much diversity in discourse around community development. In reference to Western Australian state government practice Dwyer (1987, p. 5) says that community development has taken on a wide range of meanings often used to describe; a method of working with community, a single perspective embracing many different community practices, an explanatory device for funding arrangements. As Kenny (1999, p. vii) points out, elsewhere community development has been variously described as: a job or profession in itself, a set of specific tasks in community service work, a range of ideas about how communities should operate, a set of methods or approaches in social and economic development, and a political activity. As a set of ideas or broad assemblage of practices many different groups use it in a wide range of contexts. It has been taken up by those in: social and welfare work, local government, community services, remote area education, indigenous communities, community arts and cultural development, overseas aid work, economic and social planning, sustainable development, and urban planning. Talk about community development has also been shaped by a range of theoretical and political traditions including fascism, conservatism, classic liberalism, Marxism, feminism, anarchism, communitarianism, neo-liberalism and perhaps even post-structuralism. This means that one of the first and most obvious challenges confronting those keen to understand community development is that it is far from settled and very difficult to pin down. This makes the task of understanding its history difficult.

However, there do appear to be some general and consistent features in much of the literature concerned with its description. T.R. Batten (1957, p. 1), one of the earliest of advocates for community development, describes it as “a movement to promote better living for the whole community, with the active participation and if possible on the initiative of the community.” In this way community development has long been seen to be ‘non-directive’ (Goetschius (1968). According to Ross (1955, p. 39), although it may be undertaken by those who are ‘outsiders’ or non-indigenous to a community, community development occurs in such a way that locals consent and actively participate in change to improve their lot. He described it as,

a process by which a community identifies its need or objectives, orders (or ranks) them, develops the confidence and will to work at them, finds the resources to deal with them, take action in respect of them and in so doing extends and develops co-operative and collaborative attitudes and practice in the community.

In what some describe as a now classic description of community development Goodenough (1963) describes the following as pre-requisites:

- The development of mutually consistent proposals and procedures;
- A thorough knowledge of the values and principal features of the client community's culture;
- Taking into account the whole community;
- Goals that have a positive value to the community's members;
- Having the community as an active partner in the process;
- Starting from the material organisation and leadership resources of the community;
- Procedures and plans that make sense to community members;
- The earning of respect of community members;
- The dispensability of agents of change;

- Good communication among agents of change and communities.

Predictably most who talk about community development see it as something that targets itself towards the improvement of community (Kenny 1999, p. 9). This implies attempts at encouraging shared solidarity or the coming together of people to pursue common interests and aspirations (Ward 1993, p. v). It is also often understood as work concerned with the direct and active participation of groups of people who share interests (Ife 2003, p. 130). Often this mirrors the values of those involved in new social movements who invoke the language of grassroots politics involving small-scale and spontaneous attempts at social change (Ward 1993, p. v)). In addition, many taking on the rhetoric of community development aspire to unwrap people's potential, encouraging them to take initiative and equipping groups with the tools necessary to manage their own affairs (Kenny 1999, p. 9). In some discourse on community development there remains a commitment to the redressing of power and resource imbalance and subsidiarity, or the belief that power can and should be devolved. Often the catch-cry of those who claim to support community development is the empowerment of their charges (Kenny 1999, p. 7).

Says Twelvetrees (1991, p. 1), community development involves a process of "assisting ordinary people to improve their own communities by undertaking collective action". Kenny (1999, p. 3) has it that community development helps people "identify their needs and obtain resources, and collectively empowers people to have more control over their lives". McArdle (1993, p. 2) concurs claiming that community development is concerned to build mechanisms that allow people to meet their own needs. While various attempts at community development vary in emphasis many "share a desire to protect the commons" or defend those things we share such as public space, quality air, decent housing, health, education and equal opportunity (Dixon, Hoatson and Weeks 2003, p. 1).

The term community development has also been used interchangeably with a range of other similar notions to describe what people do. For example, community work and community development have regularly been used alternately to describe the practices of state and non-governmental instrumentalities. Other terms used loosely (and often without qualification) to denote a focus on community in practice include:

- Community based activities
- Community orientated approaches
- Community focused approaches
- Community based case work
- Community case work
- Community social work
- Capacity building (Dwyer 1987, p. 5)

Often those subscribing to community development as a discreet approach argue that there are a number of key principles that ought to drive its practice. For example, Swanepoel (2002) posits the following as "basic principles underlying the work" of community development:

- Human orientation (focus is the human being);
- Participation (local people are present and involved when decisions are made);
- Empowerment (the acquisition of power by local people);
- Release (freeing people from deprivation);
- Learning (local people are equipped with knowledge and skills);
- Adaptiveness (the flexibility to respond to change);

- Simplicity (small is better).

Ife (2003, p. 201-225) offers a longer list of principles that ought to guide community development practice. This reflects his view that contemporary community development practice amalgamate ecological and social justice values. These include:

- Holism
- Sustainability
- Diversity
- Organic development
- Balanced development
- Addressing structural disadvantage
- Addressing discourse of disadvantage
- Empowerment
- Human rights
- Valuing local knowledge, resources, skills and processes
- Consciousness-raising
- Participation
- Cooperation and consensus
- Peace and non-violence
- Inclusiveness
- Community building
- Linking the global and the local
- Anti-colonialist practice

Community development and community practice may also involve emphasising different but often interrelated approaches or methods. Rothman (1976) describes three discrete but often mutually beneficial approaches to community work: locality development and organisation, social action and social planning. Thomas (1983) classifies community work into five sets of approaches: community action, community development, social planning, community organisation and service extension. Kelly (1987) outlines what he calls five “patterns” of practice in community building: community service, community action, community work, community development and community of intention (also described elsewhere as intentional or alternative lifestyle community building). Following Rothman and Harris, Hoatson (2003, p. 24) suggests that community practice may involve building transnational solidarity, developing partnerships between community and government, engaging in local neighbourhood development, community organising, campaigning against the state, and creating and resourcing sustainable networks.

According to other early commentators the strategies used by people to achieve community development are varied. Following the tradition laid out by the French philosopher Alexis de Toqueville, Dunham (1963) claimed that this can be achieved through democratic processes, voluntary association, an emphasis on self-help, the nurturing of local leadership and educational advancement. Alinsky (1946) emphasized the importance of social action and the use of clever, humorous and theatric tactics. Ziblatt (1963) stressed the importance of building local organizations and the crucial part played by planning for change. In a similar fashion, Rothman (1976) described three discrete but interrelated elements to community work, locality development and organisation, social action and social planning. Thomas (1983) too claimed community development involves a number of ingredients adding to Rothman’s prescriptions, self-help and community service provision.

Various governmental programmes have also conceptualised community development in different ways at different points of their history. For example, in its early description of the aspirations of the Australian Assistance Plan, the Social Welfare Commission (1974, p. 24) described social and community development as, “the mobilization of resources of the community to stimulate and manage changes for social benefit by formulating policies and programs for the social sector of the economy such as health, education, social welfare, housing, recreation etc.” Almost ten years later the Social Welfare Policy Secretariat (Coleman 1983, p. 6) described community development as,

- The development of plans of needs for social infrastructure; and/or
- The consequent provision of social infrastructure such as human services and the facilities from which they are provided; and/or
- The organizing of these community services so that there is maximum user and local resident participation in their planning, management and day-to-day running; and/or
- Co-operative, grass-roots organisation for self-help, independent of formal service structures.

In preparing its recommendations to the Carter Inquiry into Welfare and Community Services in Western Australia the Department for Community Welfare’s Working Group on Community Development decided to accept a “broad and eclectic use of the term community development” because this better captured the different forms of intervention carried out by the Department (Western Australian Department for Community Welfare 1983, p. 7-11). In 1985 the Executive of the Department for Community Services issued an Administrative Instruction which stated that:

- A community focused approach to the Department’s work is a legitimate and useful intervention strategy.
- Community development should share equal status with other methodologies.
- A community focused approach by staff would be promoted to a higher degree than in the past.
- Affirmative action (time limited) be taken to promote a community focused approach.
- That a Community Development Training Consultant be appointed to provide training and support for those officers using/or who will use a community approach as a strategy in their work (cited in Dwyer 1987, p. 17).

In 1987 a Department for Community Services discussion paper on community work described it as the general term used to denote the different methods of working with groups in the community rather than simply work focusing on the individual (Dwyer 1987, p. 8).

Reasons for caution

Even if we accept these kinds of descriptions of community development practice there is still considerable ambiguity and vagueness confronting the novice. One key problem is concerned with the contradiction at the very heart of community development. We can see this when we briefly examine the etymology (the history of a word’s origins) of the term community. The use of community as a concept has long been torn between the idea that it involves coming together in solidarity and being forced into constraining relationships. The idea that community involves bonds that unite versus bonds that limit. For example, the Oxford English Dictionary posits that community has its roots both in the idea of *comunus* and *communis*. (cited in Van Den Abbeele 1991, p. xi). On the one hand *comunus* means what is together as one. On the other *communis* is much more the

sense of being bound, obligated or indebted together. We can see from this that there has long been complex tension involving community in the struggle between civility and freedom.

Another problem with much talk about community development is that it romanticizes social forms that have long gone. To cite Bauman (2001, p. 30) community is most often “nowadays another name for a paradise lost”. Community is also a place that is warm and comfortable, a secure zone that soothes us. It is something we once had that sustained us in moments of crisis. At the same time, and not surprisingly, community is something we yearn to return to. Unfortunately, this kind of community is neither something available to us now nor what actually ever existed. As Hindess (cited in Malpas and Wickham 1998) points out the community of premodern times was never as warm and cosy as we now like to imagine. In fact, life in feudal community was harsh, dangerous and brutal for many. Membership in traditional community demanded stern obedience in exchange for the limited protection of association. It placed huge burdens on the individual, insisting on unconditional loyalty, strict behavioural regulations and was often severe and unforgiving for those who breached the norms of local associations. For people living in traditional community anything short of total loyalty and complete compliance was seen as an act of treason punishable in the most severe way (Bauman 2001, p. 4). A return to this style of social organization is likely to have severe repercussions for most modernists.

This then ought to remind us that one price to pay for being in a community is freedom. Whether one calls it “self autonomy”, the “right to be yourself”, “self expression” or “individuality”, this is what we stand to lose much of when we gain community. As Bauman (2001, p. 4) says, “missing community means missing security; gaining community, if it happens, will soon mean missing freedom.”

While talk about community development may imply that it involves supporting a kind of natural, non-political or pre-political zone (Rose, 1999, p. 168) and give the impression that ‘we are all seeking to come together’, it does tend to encourage us to forget that with community comes exclusion and the locking out of the presence of the Other (Bauman, 2001, p. 115). The same ties that forge solidarity in members of a group also allow them to prohibit outsiders from joining in.

If this is right then community development necessitates exclusion. As Walzer (cited in Malpas and Wickham 1998, p. 354) says citizenship is always premised upon there being a class of people constituted as non-citizens. These excluding practices help to “cement the unity of a community against those who are classed as ‘foreigners’ or ‘aliens’” (Malpas and Wickham 1998, p. 354). Thus community formation rests on the denial of citizenship to certain groups whether they are metics, slaves and women in ancient Greece, Aborigines, Asians and other non-Europeans during the period of the White Australia Policy or more recently ‘illegal immigrants’, asylum seekers, Muslims and other refugees from the Middle East. In this way the stranger plays an important role in the actual formation of groups (Simmel 1999, p. 185).

As Weeks (cited in Bauman, 2001, p. 100) reminds us:

The strongest sense of community is in fact likely to come from those groups who find the premises of their collective existence threatened and who construct out of this a community of identity which provides a strong sense of resistance and empowerment. Seeming unable to control the social relations in which they find themselves, people shrink the world to the size of their communities and act politically on that basis. The result, too often, is an obsessive particularism as a way of embracing or coping with contingency.

Community development then can inadvertently support people and conventions that may be nasty and inhospitable for the stranger. The lessons learnt from the experience of European fascism in the early twentieth century demonstrate how brutal and inhumane community building can be to the lives of those constituted variously as Jews, Poles, Communists, Gypsies, Homosexuals and the Disabled. Indeed central to Hitler's prescription for Germany was the importance of a range of ideas about community that may well have similar pedigree to some recent talk about community development. For example, Hitler placed great stock in the importance of *volkgemeinschaft*, the forging of the people's community. He was most committed to the reconstruction of the allegedly lost 'organic community'. Like many using the language of community development, fascists argued that Germany needed a new set of values drawing strength from an idealised past, so that people could be equipped with a sense of belonging to the united 'people's community'. Hitler made much of the need for *Volkwerdun*, a 'people's or folk movement', made necessary by a perpetual battle between "the folk", who shared a traditional sense of community and outside others who sought to break down these traditions.

As many Marxists have argued, the term community development is also available for dubious ends in that it can be hijacked by those keen on obscuring inequalities. It has featured to help mask the fundamental conflicts between competing classes. It has been used in a way that gives us the sense that we all share a common set of values and interests rather than having discord at the heart of social relations. It has been, indeed is being used to legitimise state driven interventions, largely aimed at regulating the working classes and others whose existence threatens the interests of the ruling classes. Community development then can involve practices that take the responsibility off the state and place it in the hands of those who are more likely the victim of social inequality. Its use gives the impression that everyone is equal and social problems can be sorted out simply by local people coming together to cooperate. This kind of use of community development allows for the working class and their interests to be put in their place. In other words, 'community' takes the heat off class conflict (Bryson and Mowbray 1981).

Although it is worth remaining cautious about the idea that community development is simply a tool of the bourgeoisie, there appears precious little mention of inequality, poverty and the declining economic conditions facing those groups most often the target of community development. Instead poverty gets called deprivation and structural unemployment and is reduced to the problems of the disadvantaged. The subjects of community development are seen as suffering from 'ill health, financial delinquency, an inability to adjust, marriage breakdowns and emotional problems'. In a word, the victims are blamed. There is also much evidence that traditional community development has been essentially a management-oriented scheme, a 'new administrative arrangement' that targets groups like the poor and unemployed for improvement and extra regulation (Mowbray 2004).

Likewise lessons offered by feminists ought to remind us that community development can be reactionary and repressive to women. As Weiss (1995, p. 7) says, communities can be very destructive and violent places for women, damaging both those who are situated within and those outside. Traditionally many feminists have claimed convincingly that membership in a community brings with it many demands for conformity. The tighter the community, the more fellow members know you and your every move. Any problems you may have become more visible in community. This can prove claustrophobic particularly for those women who are suffering domestic violence, sexual exploitation or simply unable to exert any level of autonomy. For those women whose lives are perceived as unconventional, community can place extra restrictions on individual freedom and initiative, shutting down opportunity and confining independence.

Yet another tension rarely confronted by advocates of community development is that it is often seen as the harbinger of democracy and the place where self-government can be guaranteed. As Malpas and Wickham (1998) signal, there is good reason to be skeptical of the role community development can play in forging democracy. Even electoral democracy has little to do with letting community have their day and their say (Hindess cited in Malpas and Wickham 1998, p. 355). Rather government, even at the local level, is much more about non-voting entities such as corporations and organisations getting their way. It would then be a mistake to see communities as a place where self-government can occur independent of the influence of organizations and forces outside the immediate locale.

Much celebration of community development also fails to recognise how important it is in colonising processes. As Said's (1978) work demonstrates, European conceptions of community development have long been tied up with the making of the 'Orient' or non-European Other. He says that we have come to know ourselves as communities literally through making of those who we have colonised outside our community. From our earliest moments of acculturation into community we learn to define ourselves, demarcate who we are, against our colonial Other. In a rather bizarre twist, this means that those who are not our community, those who we construct as the colonial Other, become those we are drawn to for our own identity formation. In a peculiar way we are attracted to the colonised stranger for the continual sustenance of community. This means that groups such as 'Aboriginal youth' are highly productive in terms of the constitution of community. Through their being viewed as those who threaten the safety of public space and the health of community, Aboriginal young people become highly important in community making. A recurring pattern emerges in which the doing of community involves at one and the same time attempts to spurn indigenous Others to preserve order and safety while being drawn to them.

As a consequence the business of building community involves both reviling and desiring and finding repugnant and fascinating those who inhabit the space of the Other. In other words, at one and the same time groups like Aborigines are both repulsive-awful and necessary-desirable. This occurs, according to Stallybrass and White (cited in Young, 1995, p. 115), because the making of community relies so much on the exclusion and marginalisation of the dirty, lowly, barbaric and repulsive colonial Other. Indeed Bhabha (1994, p. 149) goes so far as to suggest that ambivalent identifications of love and hate are central in binding communities and identities together. Quoting Freud he says, "it is always possible to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left to receive the manifestation of their aggression." Bakhtin (1981) might say that all of this means that the indigenous Other is critically important to community formation.

Another difficulty with this unbridled faith in community development is that it can seduce us into missing the subtle but pervasive ways that community is used to perpetuate neo-liberal political rationalities with its emphasis on the logics of individualisation, normalisation and self-management and its amenability to the language of classic market economics. Rose (1999, p. 167) argues that the collapse of faith in both state socialism and the declining confidence in market economics has seen a "flowering of arguments which attempt to identify a 'third way' of governing", a way inhabited by the talk of community. Turning away from neo-classical models of free competition, policy work from the late 1990s embraced this third space, positing that community was the appropriate place to deal with crime control, punishment, mental illness, welfare, planning, policing, health, education and unemployment (Rose, 1999, p. 170). However, this new language says Rose (1999, p. 175-176), is infused with old rhetoric so that community gets used as a device to rehearse ideals about the importance of the market in dealing with social evils. According to Cohen (cited in Rose, 1999, p. 176) this makes talk about community vulnerable to colonisation by agents, institutions and neo-liberal programmes, at times encouraging and harnessing active processes of self-management (Rose, 1999,

p. 176) while eroding previously dominant 'social welfare' political rationalities. These neo-liberal versions of community tend to narrowly prescribe themselves in practice so that promises of greater grassroots 'community control' comes to resemble 'control through communities.'

As Cohen (1985) demonstrates, rather than reducing government, aspirations for community governance (expressed for example in talk about community health, community psychiatry and community care) has made space for the increased involvement of professionals in the regulation of groups like Aborigines, young people and the mentally ill. Says Rose (1999, p. 238), community has not resulted in the decline of regimes of control upon groups like youth, rather it has widened the net of regulation, dispersed a range of its functions of social control to 'community-based' institutions such as schools, families, neighbourhoods, and youth organisations. Rose (1999, p. 238) goes on:

this dispersion did not diminish surveillance; if anything it produced an intensification of the levels of detail in the conduct that was scrutinised and acted upon by reformatory regimes, as the minutiae of the behaviour, demeanour, time-keeping and daily activities of ex-offenders and juveniles were monitored and tracked in 'the community.'

One final set of difficulties with much of these calls for community development, higher social capital and capacity building is that it runs the risk of tautological trickery, rehearsing old formulas for blaming the wrong people and misdiagnosing the problems. The logic of much community development thinking, particularly work that accepts poorly considered ideas about the need for social capital, is that we can know that a community is low in social capital because they are more problem ridden and less well governed. This circularity in reasoning is reproduced when people talk about successful communities who are identified as those where economic successes have taken place obviously as a consequence of high levels of social capital. Not only is this tautological but it also tends to blame those who experience economic difficulty and congratulate those who enjoy prosperity. Although there is a little dressing up that goes on much of this faith in the new language of community is premised on old and well-established liberal ideas about the need for groups to 'pull their socks up' and 'sharpen up their act.' Additionally this fails to acknowledge that it may not be a lack of social capital that results in a group's continued diminished opportunities but the lack of economic resources, jobs, education and income security that underlies the poverty of groups targeted for community building and social capital development. In short the new language of government by community allows us to get rather forgetful of how relations of capital shape the material circumstances, cultural lives and social options available to certain population groups.

THE EMERGENCE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

To understand the emergence of community development in Western Australia it is best to identify some of the key influences that have helped shape its adoption across the globe. What follows is a discussion of some of these conditions. This section begins with the return to Europe, in the years following the Second World War, of missionaries and governmental workers who had previously lived in the colonies. It then outlines the influence of the New Social Movements. Next we turn to the influence of the professionalisation of social welfare, changes in policy rhetoric and the crisis on the welfare state. Finally we examine the impact that disaffection with modernity had on the popularity of community development.

Return of colonial government to Europe

The idea of community development was perhaps first associated with projects in the 'Far East', India and Africa in the years just after World War Two. This kind of work has its origins in the British, French and Belgian colonies, where just before they pulled out colonial administrators sought to build self-reliance and leadership amongst the Indigenes so that they might be better prepared for independence (Parsons, 1995, p. 503). According to Taylor (2003, p. 19), this was largely designed to create a new class of elites in the colonies, and manage the transition to independence without major conflict or revolution. According to Mowbray (1985, p. 53),

Such programmes were geared to the production of participatory structures – in villages, urban and rural co-operatives, etc – concurrently with the inculcation of appropriate political attitudes and skills amongst at least the leading participants. Of as much importance was the opportunity the strategy offered for co-opting unpaid or 'voluntary' indigenous labour in construction of the physical infrastructure for economic and commercial development.

It was on the back of these initiatives, initially called local development, that the term community development first gained currency. Many of those who had been involved in colonial administration returned to Europe with first hand experience of local participation in self-help and community management. A number, keen to apply this experience to the growing problems of urban decay and poverty, met at events such as a celebrated conference held at Oxford University in the early 1950s (Scott 1981).

According to Mowbray (1985, p. 55), in this way the Third World (South) became the "proving ground" for community development as a mode of governing that emphasized building co-operation, spreading pluralist ideals and exploiting the work of local people.

New Social Movements

Another major influence on the emergence of community development was the growth of new social movements that swept across many Western countries during the 1960s (Touraine 1981). During this period civil rights, peace, feminist and youth counter culture movements began to challenge the status quo, the authority of men, the West and the ruling classes and the idea that "we have never had it so good (Taylor 2003, p. 3). This in turn spawned significant development in political action and dissent aimed at social change (Kenny 1999, p. 46). In contrast to early social movements that had mobilised around class as the central issue, the new social movements formed around other social, cultural and environmental concerns such as gender inequity, interventions in Vietnam and other non-Western countries, racial discrimination, nuclear proliferation, animal liberation, conservation of the environment, human and welfare rights, democratic participation and alternative lifestyles. As a

consequence, women demanded equal opportunity, black, indigenous and other minority groups demanded equal rights and participation in government, disabled people demanded better services and access and the poor demanded housing, income security and welfare rights (Taylor 2003, p. 23).

There are a number of characteristics of these new social movements (see Burgmann 2003). Often they are specifically issued based and tend to cross old class lines. They tend not to involve those who are keen to seize political power by overthrowing the state. Rather they aim to mobilise people in support or the right to participate in or control decisions related to specific issues. They also tend to celebrate 'grass roots' or public interests and are not usually launched by or exist within conventional social institutions or government departments. Unlike organised political parties they tend to be structured loosely, be minimally organised and often do not aspire to permanence (Kenny 1999 p. 47).

With the growth of new social movements came a burgeoning of values which are now often associated with community development. These include:

- the challenging of established norms, conventional ways of seeing and acting,
- conceptualising humans as those who ought to create their own destiny,
- aspirations for human emancipation,
- the resolution of local issues by local people,
- transcending traditional class divisions,
- participatory and collective practice driving change and challenging authority,
- recruiting ordinary people to join local action
- existing outside of established institutions and mainstream political processes (Kenny 1999, Burgmann 2003).

Much of what had been learnt by those involved in new social movements were taken up by the early advocates for community development practice. For example, early community development learnt a great deal from those involved in new social movements who had trialled strategies for orchestrating change from below (Taylor 2003, p. 174). In the same way campaign tactics often successfully used by feminists, peace activists and animal liberationists proved applicable to those keen on community action. In addition, the new social movements proved to be fruitful ground for recruiting potential community development workers, often skilled in campaigning, social action, participatory methods, interpersonal relations and lobbying (Ife 2003, p. 287).

Professionalisation of social work and social services

The gaining of popularity in community development also owes much to the professionalisation of a number of areas, in particular social work and education. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the time when community development began to blossom in Australia, social work had become established as a clear profession, with its own methods, ideas and values, peculiar tertiary training and education programmes and organised associations. This new status for social work allowed members of the profession to 1) build some autonomy, shaping policy and practice from within, 2) build credibility and assumed status and 3) experiment with new forms of practice (Baldock 1977, p. 70).

This professionalisation of social work was important to community work for a number of reasons. The first is that it gave community work a home and considerable legitimacy. It was also important because social work, as a burgeoning profession, was in need of areas of specialisation to demonstrate the depth of its practice. Community work then became seen as a key method or set of

approaches in social work. Social work's emergence was not without its own tensions and conflicts. Indeed both those inside and outside the profession were highly critical of traditional case work, claiming that it was either an exercise in indulging the poor or perpetuating inequality. Community work, at least initially, was seen by many as a way of responding to these criticisms and attacks (Baldock, 1977, p. 69-70).

Crisis in the welfare state and persisting social problems

One cannot adequately trace the emergence of community work without also recognising the importance of the welfare state and its uncertainties and instabilities. The welfare state, attempted through a combination of government investment in social and economic infrastructure, a universal income tax and regulation of the economy, has long been riddled with tensions. Following the English economist J.M Keynes, architects of the welfare state sought to ensure social equality, social cohesion, minimum standards of social security and full employment while those in need were protected (Bessant and Watts 2002 p. 277). However, as Ife (2003, p. 2) points out, the modern welfare state has never been able to deliver all that its advocates promised. Partly this reflects contradictions between resource generation and fiscal management. During high levels of economic growth social expenditure and welfare services can be maintained. However, during a down-turn in the economy it is difficult for the state to afford those social services most needed during this time (Ife 2003, p. 3).

The failure of the welfare state has been important to community work in a number of ways. Initially, community work was seen as an important mechanism for achieving the objectives of the welfare state. One effect of the welfare state was the growth and expansion of new helping professions, those who provided relief and social services to the poor. However too much welfare without any social responsibility might, it was argued, breed a "hand out" mentality or dependency on welfare. Community work, with its emphasis on self- management, self-help and community participation, was one way to help achieve the balance between welfare provision and incentive. Community work also offered to discontented welfare providers what many saw as a radical alternative to emphasis on managing the cases of individuals (Baldock 1980 p. 40).

In addition, with the growth of the welfare state came rising expectations, increasingly impossible for governments to deliver. Partly this gave rise to local welfare rights groups eager to mobilise against the unmet obligations of the state. Equally it gave rise to a problem for authorities needing to manage disquiet. Community work benefited in two ways. Community work became attractive to those involved in protest groups as a means of helping resource themselves and a way of challenging welfare instrumentalities. In addition new posts were created by authorities who saw community work as a way to manage problems with minimal resourcing and direct confrontation (Baldock 1980 p. 40).

Shifts in policy rhetoric

Community development has also gained substantially by shifts in policy rhetoric, in particular the move towards what Rose (1999) calls, *community as a technology of government*. In the past community was long a part of the language landscape and seen variously as a geographic space, a social object, shared solidarity and, in some cases as in opposition to government. Within a relatively short period of time (through the sixties and seventies) community became transformed into a policy discourse and a professional vocation and so available to be programmed by governing agents. In other words, we began to see shifts in the policy idiom with community coming to stand for something to be used as a part of the process of governing. Since at least the 1960s it has been

somewhat fashionable in policy discourse to see community as the appropriate place and mechanism through which a broad range of governmental activities can be undertaken. Schooling, the control of crime, health provision, planning, architecture, psychiatric care, sport and of course welfare began to be imagined as best achieved in and through community. Subsequently community development, community policing, community safety, community education, community planning, community care, community housing and community arts programmes blossomed in popularity.

Of more recent times community has arguably surfaced in policy language with its promotion by communitarians and advocates of the Third Way. From those advocating this style of policy work, community is the perfect governmental counterpoint to, on the one hand, the individualism and rampant self indulgence promoted by market economics and, on the other hand, dependency and the lack of incentive produced by the welfare state (Taylor 2003, p. 38). Collective responsibility, civic engagement, voluntary association and social obligation, all features of communitarian values, have become attractive in policy discourse as the things governments think they need to help them form strong and active civil society. As a consequence, over the past ten years we have seen another surge in community development programmes as a way of governments “renewing civil society and thereby achieving greater social solidarity and cohesion” (Bennett 2002, p. 49).

Dissaffection with modernity and yearning for community

Another important element in shaping the popularity of community work has been disaffection with modernity, a nostalgia for the past and the yearning for a lost sense of community. According to Delanty (2003, p. 1), an often rehearsed set of ideas about the modern world, is that belonging and a sense of solidarity has been lost with the coming of modernity. Modernity, it is claimed, brought with it the dismantling of medieval guilds, respect for the authority of the church, commercialisation, individualism and various evils associated with city life. All of these features of modern life led to a disenchantment with community (Delanty 2003, p. 15). Consequently one of the greatest challenges confronting us is the recovery of community. This nostalgia for community involves the calling back of various conventions of pre-modern times such as the village, local associations, family, social obligations and a return to nature.

Not surprisingly then the problem social policy has sought to address in the developed world since the late 1800s has been to combat too little community cohesion. Initially, this took the form of governments encouraging local housing and community associations to form in an attempt to tackle broken ties and the problem of isolation. Later urban unrest, racial tensions, poverty and homelessness were seen as features of social and community dislocation and the collapse of traditional ties. The popular thesis has been that the “erosions of the institutions that formerly mediated between the individual and the state – family, community and other traditional associations – had led to alienation and insecurity” (Delanty 2003, p. 20).

This “restoring community” theme, recurring as it does in waves of nostalgia for lost community, gives a fresh lease of life to calls for community work (Delanty 2003, p. 21). Various community development, capacity building and community restoration campaigns gain their *raison de’etre* from this idea that “the system is failing” because of modernity’s quest to eliminate community.

COMMUNITY WORK IN BRITAIN, THE USA AND AUSTRALIA

Community development initiatives in Western Australia also owe much to other developments elsewhere, in particular in Britain, the USA and throughout the eastern states of Australia. According to Baldock (1980, p. 25), community work has a history that stretches back at least to the late 1800s while perhaps having even deeper roots. We can see traces of community work in the activity of Christian churches. Churches have long had considerable involvement in community work, relying on parish centred approaches to dealing with community problems and community cohesion (Kenny 1999, p. 36). Indeed, the person with the earliest claim to being the first British community worker was a Church of England parish priest (Baldock 1980, p. 30).

Europe

In Europe the history of community action is relatively rich and longstanding. For example, in the nineteenth century groups such as the Rochdale Pioneers fought to build co-operative movements. The idea that the privileged should live among the poor to replace the part squires played in premodern Europe led to the Toynbee Hall project being established in the East End of London in 1884. In 1915 local women from Govan took on campaigns to strike against excessive rent. In the 1940s the squatters organised community campaigns against the state and landlord's lack of responsibility in providing decent housing conditions (Baldock 1980, p. 26-30).

In Britain, after the Second World War considerable attention went into clearing slums so that returned service men and women could be accommodated in new housing estates, mostly outside of inner city areas (Taylor 2003 p. 19). Popular at the time as an explanation for the poverty experienced by those living in these 'slums' was the concept of 'cycles of deprivation'. This idea, which had taken root in the US, posited that in particular spatial locations dysfunctional groups had emerged, groups who lacked motivation, responsibility and a sense of community. In other words, certain communities experienced deprivation because they were deficient of cohesion and 'community spirit'. The solution was thought to lie in reinstilling a sense of responsibility and social cohesion; ie community (Taylor 2003, p. 21). The British Home Office orchestrated Community Development Projects (CDP) began in 1969 as a central government response to the problems of urban decay and deprivation. Small teams of action and research workers were employed to work in selected neighbourhoods. They were charged with improving the co-ordination of local services and stimulate self-help groups in poor areas. Underlying this national programme for urban reform were a number of important assumptions: 1) the deprived or poor were fundamentally responsible for social problems; 2) social problems were best dealt with by overcoming people's apathy and setting up self-help projects; 3) locally based research into social problems would bring about changes in local and central government policy (Thorpe 1985 p. 12-13).

One of the effects of this ill-fated programme was the organisation and mobilisation of groups of workers who called for radical and structural change. Partly this reflected the failure of the CDP as an exercise in reforming individuals and small communities. Partly it reflects the disenchantment of community workers who found the rationale for government involvement in the CDP highly conservative. CDP workers found themselves working with people whose problems centred around low wages, unemployment, poor housing and poverty. It seemed inappropriate for them to blame these people and ineffective to rely on self-help strategies when people were desperately lacking in resources, both economic and social (Thorpe 1985, p. 12-13, Baldock 1977).

United States

Similar patterns occurred in the United States. From 1895 to 1920, a period described by many as the Progressive Era, a series of social reformers, social scientists and middle class welfarists embarked on a national campaign to assimilate Afro-Americans, the poor and immigrants into middle class values and life. This movement emerged as poor Afro-Americans began to escape poverty and racism in the rural South moving to the cities in the North in an attempt to find work and security. At the same time, many migrants moved in large numbers to the same cities, as did large numbers of rural workers displaced by the depression and the decline in the rural economy (Delanty 2003, p. 56).

After the 1920s the Roosevelt Administration responded with the New Deal, a range of overlapping federal welfare and relief programmes to the poor (Rubin and Rubin 2001, p. 55-56). One feature of this era was the building of large new housing estates (often referred to as the Projects) and setting up community programmes. According to Sennett (2002, p. 6), in places like Chicago city planners sought to break white flight from neighbourhoods in which blacks settled by building new housing in the middle of Chicago, reserving a certain number of white poor, some for immigrants and others for blacks. These Projects became a laboratory for experimenting with urban problems through the use of various neighbourhood-building exercises (Delanty 2003).

From 1945 to the early 1960s, a period of economic prosperity, the community movement in the US turned its attention to more self-interested ventures. Conservative neighbourhood associations grew in number and influence, protecting property values and using their influence to exclude the poor and minorities (Green and Haines 2002, p. 19-21). At the same time the US pattern of corporate involvement in community initiatives emerged with a series of social welfare agencies collaborating with business elites to form the United Community Defence Services (UCDS), a country wide organisation designed to foster business involvement in local and community development (Rubin and Rubin 2001, p. 56-57).

During the late 1960s, in response to a perceived breakdown in community and pressure from those involved in New Social Movements, Community Development Corporations (CDCs) emerged across the US, particularly targeting poor ethnic and rural communities (Taylor 2003, p. 29). As part of the Federal Government's 'War on Poverty' money became available for Community Action Agencies (CAA) to work in poor communities to build homes, shopping centres and other community infrastructure (Rubin and Rubin 2001, p. 58).

Australia

The principle that communities should be empowered by governments to take responsibility for the management of their own affairs and resources has a much shorter history in Australia. Perhaps the first major Australian community work programme was the Post War Reconstruction Program instituted by the Labor Government. This national programme targeted rural reconstruction, housing and urban development, building a planned social service and welfare system and a strong emphasis on co-operative economic development (Coleman 1983, p. 6). Out of this program grew a number of organisations with a strong emphasis on local development and community care. These included the Union of Australian Women, the Kindergarten Union and the Women's Service's Guild (Meekosha and Mowbray 1990, p. 337).

According to Thorpe (1985, p. 18) the Vietnam War of the late 1960s marked a turning point for Australian community work. The failure and cost of the war added to the economic woes being experienced as the long boom came to an end. The Vietnam War marked the first time many

experienced disgust and anger at the way the government had handled its affairs. It brought on a new era of protest and marked the beginnings of their disaffection with authority (Thorpe 1985, p. 19).

At the same time other social developments influenced the growing protest against governments. These included:

- The discovery of poverty in Australia after the long boom of the 50s and 60s.
- The experience of unemployment, particularly for the middle class who had long been able to rely on a guarantee of full employment.
- Cuts in public expenditure and the social wage
- The emergence and increased visibility of minority groups such as Aborigines people, immigrants from non-English speaking countries, women and homosexual men and women.
- Alliances being formed between the middle class (educated) and labouring classes. For example, coalitions being formed between the Builders Labourers Federation and the Resident Action Groups around Sydney in the early 1970s who imposed 'Green bans' on socially undesirable development (Thorpe 1985, p. 19).

Also during this period, the provision of welfare was being evaluated by a growing number of young, educated and radical welfare practitioners. In 1970 the Brotherhood of St Lawrence, previously a Melbourne based church welfare organisation, set out to evaluate the success of its programs. It concluded that more traditional approaches to working with the poor were inadequate and not serving the interests of client groups. Consequently it began to change its mode of operating, rejecting earlier methods as band-aid and individualistic approaches to social problems. Those involved in and around inner-city Melbourne's Fitzroy area rejected this style of work where people were blamed or made individually responsible for their own poverty and economic pain. The Brotherhood closed its welfare operations replacing it with the Family Centre Project, later to become the Action Resource Centre for Low-income Families. This new organisation sought to give those previously constituted as 'clients' more control over their lives and the services offered to them. It also involved attempts to have people recognise that structural and economic factors, such as unemployment, substandard housing, low wages, inadequate education, were the things that caused people's problems (Kenny 1999, p. 36).

According to Kenny (1999, p. 36), this was the first time we saw a philosophical shift away from 'blame the victim' type welfare approaches towards initiatives that attempted to involve communities in trying to challenge deal community problems while maintaining control and autonomy and control over initiatives. Following their election in 1972 the Whitlam government, keen to demonstrate in practical ways its commitment to social reform, established a Department of Urban and Regional Development. Soon after it created the Australian Assistance Plan, a national community development programme similar to the British Community Development Projects, as an experiment in social and regional development. The AAP offered direct subsidies to local governments and small assistance grants to community groups in an attempt to deal with what was touted as 'urban decay'. These grants helped establish local organisations, called Regional Councils for Social Development (RCSDs), which consisted of local government representatives, community organisations and other welfare providers. The RCSDs were established and ran with the mandate to provide local people with direct participation in the planning and development of their communities (Kenny 1999, p. 36, Meekosha and Mowbray 1990, p. 338).

Like other national and government orchestrated community development programmes the AAP

was based on the premise that communities were the way to institute change, focusing on regional decision making as the basis for empowering local people. However, like the government that established it the AAP was plagued by controversy and had a relatively short life. One of its problems was that, as with many later community development projects, it was subject to criticism from both sides of politics. The conservatives saw it as an intervention from socialists who were keen on compromising market forces. Those on the left pointed out that claims the programme offered opportunities for participatory democracy were exaggerated. Participants quickly discovered that the AAP created little space for local people who may have been critical of government policy or who wanted to see major structural reforms (Kenny 1999, p. 36).

KEY MOMENTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Some may think that in Western Australia community development is new and unique. Indeed it is regularly asserted that in Western Australia community development is an “innovation”, an “alternative approach”, involving “cutting edge methods” and “ground breaking practices”. Partly this reflects the fact that community development rises and falls in waves of popularity so that the present generation of practitioners are unfamiliar with earlier work. Partly it reflects a longstanding rhetorical emphasis upon fresh, novel and original thinking in much talk about community and government. However, planned work with and behalf of communities has long antecedents in Western Australia. What follows is a brief review of key moments in history, important social policy and welfare changes and various organizations, programmes and initiatives that have impacted on community work in the state.

Indigenous practice prior to colonisation

Archaeological evidence suggests that Indigenous family provision and care spans at least 40,000 years in Western Australia (Pearce and Barbetti 1981, McDonald, Locke and Hovingh 1997, p. 6). The precise number of Indigenous people living in the area we now call Western Australia at the time of colonisation is impossible to know with any precision. However, early approximations suggest that when the Swan River colony was established the Swan Plain would have been able to sustain as many as 700-1000 Nyungar (Armstrong 1836, p. 797). At the very least 400 Nyungar lived in the general Perth region at the time of colonisation (Hallam 1977, p. 26-27).

According to available evidence, prior to the colonisation of Western Australia there was little need for welfare provision as we now understand it (Department for Community Development 1994 p. 4). Longstanding Indigenous systems of family provision and economy ensured that members of local groups shared in the provision of food, water, shelter and care.

Indigenous groups were, and in many cases continue to be, associated with specific areas within more general zones. These groups used highly intricate and sophisticated land management skills to assist in family and group sustenance. In the 1840s Lieutenant George Grey commented on Nyungar resourcefulness in this regard when he said that:

In his [sic] district a native ... knows exactly what it produces, the proper time at which several articles are in season. According to these circumstances he regulates his visits to the different portions of his hunting ground (Grey 1841, np)

Family was, and continues to be central to Indigenous culture and life. Indeed the basic unit of Indigenous social organisation tended to be a band or a small group of one or more families numbering up to approximately 40, depending on the season and the area (Locke and Burke 1998 p. 24). Ethnohistorical evidence suggests that these groups were dynamic, with individuals, families and local bands moving between areas, changing in composition and shifting territorial boundaries and social structure over time. This also partly reflected the importance of mutuality and the care of the collectivity (Glick Maunsell 1997, p. 19).

As with all social systems Indigenous life would have involved levels of inequality, a degree of ill-health and some crisis in the welfare of some groups and individuals. However, elaborate economic and social practices, based on reciprocity, the valuing of diverse skills and knowledge and a balance between individual autonomy, were comparatively fair and healthy. Indeed there is evidence that at the time of colonisation Indigenous Western Australians were “physically, socially and emotionally

healthier than most Europeans at the time” (Thomson 1984, p. 939).

The disruption and violence to Indigenous groups brought by colonization did not entirely destroy Indigenous systems of care and reciprocity. Despite the fact that many Indigenous groups had to endure enormous difficulties brought about by colonial disrespect and inhumane treatment many have been able to sustain themselves and their families. Notwithstanding the attempted imposition of a foreign culture and social and economic dislocation, many Indigenous groups have been able to maintain strong collective identity and distinctly Indigenous systems of welfare and care (Palmer 2002 p. 14).

1829-1900 – Colonisation, migration, the destitute and missions

The founding of the Swan River Colony occurred with considerable hardship being experienced by many, particular local Nyungar and members of the poor and labouring colonists. Partly this reflects the geographic isolation of Perth, the lack of familiarity with the land and environment and the fact that little provision had been made for the devastating impact of colonisation upon indigenous groups (Department for Community Development 1994 p. 2).

Indigenous administration

From the inception of the colony it appears that many non-Aborigines regarded Indigenous people as a nuisance, a problem and something to be dealt with quickly and with a minimum of attention. However, many humanitarians, church figures and others involved in the anti-slavery movement had their eye on the treatment of Indigenous Western Australians.

This prompted the new Colonial Government to appoint a Superintendent of Natives in 1833 so that arrangements could be made for the distribution of minimum welfare in the form of bread, biscuits and blankets (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 4). In 1836 an attempt was made by the Anglican Louis Guistiniani and his catechists, Waldeck and Jones, to set up a mission for Aboriginal children. This did not get far when Gustiniani was forced to leave the colony over conflicts with settlers over his support for the rights of Nyungar. However, in 1840 the Wesleyan Mission School was established to train Aboriginal children as servants and labourers for the non-Aboriginal community (Hetherington 2002, p. 118). In 1846 a similar ‘experiment’ occurred at New Norcia when Benedictine monks, led by Salvado, established a mission for Aboriginal boys who were said to have “left their families of their own free will”. Salvado’s aspiration was to educate and ‘civilise’ Aboriginal children, particularly those at risk of brutality and exploitation at the hand of the colonists (Hetherington 2002, p. 127). Over the seventy year period from 1829 to 1900 many residential schools and children’s homes were set up specifically to deal with Aboriginal children and their ‘care’. These included, Smithies Mission (1839- 55), Fremantle and Guildford Schools (1840-42), New Norcia Mission (opened in 1842), Annesfield School in Albany (1852-71), Ellensbrook near Margaret River (1878-1917), Swan Native and Half-Caste Mission (1880s-1921), Beagle Bay Mission (1890) and Broome Orphanage (1897) (Haebich 2000, p. 149). In 1838 10 Nyungar prisoners were taken to Rottnest Island. This began a long and painful process for many Indigenous people who threatened colonists as they pushed out the frontier and confronted those who resisted (Green 1984, p. 167).

After some public disquiet over the treatment of Aboriginal children in the north of the state and under pressure from various humanitarian quarters in 1886 the Aborigines Protection Act was passed, setting up an Aborigines Protection Board. This Board was responsible for the regulation of various aspects related to the lives of Aboriginal people and oversaw the limited provision of state money to missions (Hetherington 2002, p. 136)

Non-Aboriginal welfare

Official concern for the welfare of the State's non-Aboriginal citizens can be traced at least back to 1839 when the first Ordinance was proposed to make provision for the guardianship of juvenile immigrants. This Ordinance came into force to allow commissioners to act as guardians for those children sent by "The Children's Friend Society". In 1842 this was repealed to allow for an Ordinance protecting other juvenile immigrants. This allowed for the control of treatment of apprentices and included what many would think were harsh measures aimed at children absconding from their masters (Department for Community Services, nd. p. 2). In Perth posts and stocks were installed in the mid 1830s so that offenders, including children as young as 10 could be publicly whipped for their wrongdoings (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 3).

In 1845 another Ordinance was designed in response to the growing needs of widows and children who had become destitute or neglected. This made provision for the parent responsible to be summoned before the court to show cause as to why they were not caring for their wife and/or children. This was to become the forerunner to the child maintenance orders of today. In addition this Ordinance allowed for the courts to indenture children over the age of 10 until they were 18. It was also around this time that government moved towards the practice of treating children differently from adults. In 1847 an act was introduced allowing justices of the peace to dismiss an accused child "if they deemed it expedient not to inflict any punishment" in order to "avoid the evils of their long imprisonment previous to trial". This act also restricted the penalty that could be imposed on a child under 14 to a maximum of three months (cited in Department for Community Services, nd, p. 3).

In 1874, as a consequence of an increase in the numbers of children needing care, the Industrial Schools Act was introduced to give provision for the care and education of orphaned children and the placing of child offenders in situations other than prisons. This meant that child offenders could be placed in either the care of a certified "trustworthy and respectable person" or the Industrial School (reformatory) if they had been sentenced to more than three days imprisonment (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 3). When the Act came into force the following schools were in operation:

- The Orphanage Industrial School for Roman Catholic Girls (East Perth),
- The Orphanage Industrial School for Protestant Girls (Adelaide Terrace, Perth),
- The Swan Orphanage Industrial School for Protestant Boys (Guildford),
- The Subiaco Orphanage Industrial School for Roman Catholic Boys (Subiaco)
(Department for Community Services, nd, p. 5).

At the same time Poor Houses were set up as a last resort for those who were considered destitute and in need of desperate assistance. Relief was provided through these Poor Houses, modeled as they were on similar British institutions.

In return for this assistance people were expected to labour on public works programmes or do domestic work for government officials (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 3).

In 1882 a reformatory for boys was established on Rottneest Island. The establishment of this institution came from Governor Ord himself who was keen to see orphaned boys provided with training in carpentry, joinery and gardening in an environment that could improve their health. However, this was short lived ending in 1891 (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 9).

In 1888 an incident was reported in the “Western Australian” which prompted another legislative intervention. A baby left in the care of a Mrs Burton from Fremantle by her unwed mother had been neglected to the point where it starved to death. Mary Burton had been receiving maintenance from the mother and grandfather following a practice called “baby farming”. Within two years there were two new pieces of legislation introduced in order to combat this practice (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 7). In 1896 the Children’s Act was adopted providing that:

Before a child can be adopted ... the person proposing to become a foster parent will have to satisfy a Judge of the Supreme Court that he or she is a fit and proper person to have the custody of it (cited in Department for Community Services, nd, p. 7).

In 1898 the Health Act made provision for Infant Life Protection so that it became mandatory to register if one wanted to care for children in return for money (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 7).

In 1894, in response to the growing demand for welfare, a Government receiving depot for destitute children was established in Subiaco. Between 1894 and 1906, 414 male children and 107 female children were admitted to the depot (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 8). This and other similar institutions were designed to train young inmates, “to habits of industry, imparting to them an education of a plain and useful character, and endeavouring to bring them under the influences of religious principles” (cited in Department for Community Development 1994, p. 3).

It was during this period that we can see the birth of the Western Australian intentional communities movement. Perhaps Western Australia’s first attempt at establishing organised community work occurred in 1865 when about 1000 people tried to establish a commune at Camden Sound in the Kimberley region. However, this was a failed exercise because of the physical distance from other settled areas and the difficult circumstances confronting non-Aboriginal people who tried to live in very tough conditions (Metcalf 1995, p. 17).

1900–1938 – Child protection and welfare

While colonial government marked the beginning of intervention into the lives of Indigenous Western Australians it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when the state started to systematically change the nature of Indigenous communities. The 1886 Aborigines Protection Act was the “first comprehensive attempt to regulate Aboriginal people” (Ruth 1988, p. 35). However the 1905 Aborigines Act considerably expanded the extent of this regulation. The 1905 Act was inspired by the Roth Royal Commission into Aboriginal administration which found considerable evidence of exploitation of Aboriginal labour, growing levels of prostitution by Aboriginal women, the “mixing of blood” and the abandonment of Aboriginal children. The Act gave powers to the Chief Protector of Aborigines and his delegates (often the police) to restrict and prohibit the movement of Aboriginal women and young people. It vested in him legal guardianship of all Aboriginal people under the age of 16. In addition, the Act gave the Chief Protector power to remove children of mixed descent from their parents and control marriage relationships (Hetherington 2002, p. 194). The Act also enshrined in legislation social Darwinist ideas establishing different classes of Aborigines on the basis of their skin colour and “caste” and restricting the cohabitation between non-Aborigines and Aborigines. The Act also gave substantial powers to the Chief Protector in relation to the establishment and management of reserves. The Chief Protector could compel any Aboriginal person to live on a reserve thus controlling Aboriginal people’s employment, family relations and personal movement. Children were often prevented from returning to their families, excluded from their traditional lore and culture and taught to work in the labour force where needed (Haebich 1988). The effect of this

to Indigenous life was the demise of small kin based social organisation and the appearance, for the first time, of larger communities.

Charity and child protection

In 1897 James Longmore took up the post of Superintendent of Charities and Inspector of Charitable Institutions. As well as having a number of other reform ideas, Longmore introduced a system of caring for children by boarding them out in preference to sending them to orphanages. In his view:

As the community becomes more settled and suitable homes are found without difficulty ... more children will be dealt with in this way (boarded out), as undoubtedly this system for dealing with young children is a sound one, which has stood the test of experience. It has as its foundations, the family system, and is, if properly carried out, free from what is artificial or unreal (cited in Department for Community Services, nd, p. 11).

However, more controversy was to ensue when in 1907 another baby farming case came to the attention of the authorities. During the trial of Mrs Mitchell, a foster carer whose neglect had caused the death of the daughter of Elizabeth Booth, it came to the public's attention that over a period of six years 40 babies had died in her care (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 11). Mitchell was charged with murder and convicted of manslaughter (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 4).

This and other similar incidents prompted a series of public meetings to establish what might be done about the gross inadequacy of inspections of such private foster care. A consequence of this was the formation of the Children's Protection Society, possibly Western Australia's first organised non-government welfare organisation outside of churches. This group, aided by the employment of a full time inspector, advocated for reforms so that a boarding out system would be administered by a Board or Council of twelve independent people who would direct the activities of the government and report to the Colonial Secretary (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 4).

One consequence of this was the drafting of the State Children's Bill which would bring about the establishment of a State Children's Department to be responsible for regulating the care of children and abolish baby farming by transferring the payment of foster parents to the state. The Bill also carried further the idea of separate treatment for juveniles by establishing Children's Courts for offenders under the age of 18. The passing of the Act, amidst much public debate, saw the creation of two departments, the Public Charities Department and the State Children's Department (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 13).

Concern over the treatment of children also prompted the establishment of the pre-school education movement in Western Australia. In 1908 the Children's Protection Society opened a day nursery so that working mothers could place their children in care while they were at work. Not long after this in 1911 the Society established the kindergarten movement. Supported by the Women's Service Guild and the National Council of Women the Kindergarten Union began to provide free education for the children of low-income people in inner city areas of Perth (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 4).

Non-government organisations

This period also saw the establishment of a number of key non-government organisations, particularly in the area of children's services. For example, it was during the early part of the

twentieth century that the Home for Waifs and Strays (later Parkerville Children's Home), Sister Kate's (later Manguri), Clontarf (run by the Christian Brothers) and Fairbridge Farm, financed by the Child Migration Society in London (Proud 2003, p. 2).

In 1919, after more than ten years of administration under the State Children's Act, increased public agitation and recommendations from a state Child Welfare Conference, a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly began an inquiry into the State Children and Charities Department. This was followed by amendments to the State Children's Act which stated that a child guilty of an offence need not have the conviction recorded and which made it an offence to disclose proceedings of a children's court without the permission of the presiding magistrate. In 1927 another amendment was made to the State Children's Act changing the title of the Department to the Child Welfare Department (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 14-15).

The Depression years between the World Wars produced some of the worst conditions of poverty experienced in the still young state. The fledgling welfare system was barely able to provide any relief, particularly to the large numbers of returned service personell and growing numbers of unemployed and homeless who were only offered menial levels of sustenance ('susso'). In response to these needs groups such as the Women's Service Guild and the Ugly Men's Association emerged to offer charity and emergency relief (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 4).

For a considerable amount of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the prevailing view amongst non-Aboriginal people appeared to have been that Aborigines were best separated from others for their survival and the comfort of others. Economic hardship did little to induce any change in this regard. In fact, if anything attitudes hardened so that in 1927 Aborigines began to be banned from walking through city streets. Large numbers of Aboriginal people were rounded up and taken to institutions such as Moore River (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 5).

By the early 1930s, due to pressure from humanitarian quarters, the financial costs of institutionalising large numbers of Aboriginal families and the failure of measures to 'protect' the 1905 Act was amended. After another Royal Commission, headed by H.D. Moseley, the Native Administration Act (1936) was proclaimed (Haebich 2002, p. 234). This Act placed further restrictions upon Aboriginal families and gave considerably more power to the Commissioner for Native Affairs, A.O. Neville, who became the guardian of all Aboriginal people under the age of 21 (Ruth 1988 p. 37). Interestingly the idea of community appears to have been called upon to justify these reforms. In his report Moseley concluded in his assessment, "half-castes were the great problem confronting the community today" (cited in Kinnane 2003, p. 262).

It was also during the early twentieth century that many institutions were established in more isolated parts of the state such as the Kimberley region. A number of church and government missions and settlements were built and began operation. These included, Moola Bulla (near Halls Creek), Broome Convent, Kalumburu (north Kimberley), Lombadina (north of Broome), Warburton Ranges (Western Desert), Derby Leprosarium and Cosmo Newbury (north of the Goldfields) (Haebich 2000, p. 229-230).

Co-operative ventures

One could argue that every attempt to establish a non-Aboriginal settlement in Western Australia involved an attempt at community development. There were certainly examples of cooperative ventures taking place as early as 1859. Consumer, marketing and essential services co-operatives were an important part of Western Australia's economy since the early 1890s with the opening of

some of the Goldfields hospitals, country consumer stores, farming co-operatives and community owned hotels. Arguably Western Australia has been built on a strong co-operative ethos. The Co-operative Federation of WA is the oldest of its kind in the country having been established in 1919. Wesfarmers is the largest co-operative in the Southern Hemisphere. The Fremantle Fisherman's Co-operative is one of the state's largest non-mining exporters (Kenyon 1983, p. 49).

There are also a number of important examples of intentional attempts at establishing communes and alternative communities. In 1902, New Jerusalem, a 'Jewish-Christian' community was formed east of Narrogin in the wheat-belt as an intentional effort to build a new and alternative community. By 1905 this group of utopians had 70 members living on 4000 hectares and had 400 hectares of crops (Metcalf 1995, p. 33-34). They were initially so successful that their work was considered by some government officials to be worthy of support. In 1906 the State Director for Agriculture concluded "they deserve encouragement for the State requires thousands of their class" (cited in Metcalf 1995, p. 34).

In 1920 the Western Australian Government attempted something of an experiment in intentional community living when it set up a 'Group Settlement' Scheme for settlers in the southwest to "form their own communities, self-contained in an aura of mutual assistance ... centred on the English type village ... the migrants would be less prone to homesickness ... with artisans, blacksmiths and carpenters included in each group" (cited in Metcalf 1995, p. 34).

The year 1936 saw another attempt at setting up a communal endeavour in the Kimberley. A London-based organisation called the Freeland League for Jewish Territorial Colonisation, with a Jewish Russian called Isaac Steinberg as its head, proposed to the Western Australian Government that it allow 75,000 Jewish migrants to settle in a series of communal kibbutzim in the Kimberley region. The proposal was accepted after much debate from the State Government but was stopped as a consequence of the outbreak of the Second World War (Metcalf 1995, p. 35).

1939-1971 – Building the Welfare State

The welfare and community services areas expanded considerably during this period in Western Australia. It was during this era that government funding began to shift its focus from organisations to services. It was also during this time that welfare reforms saw a turn towards prevention, rehabilitation, support and deinstitutionalization (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 6).

We can see this occurring from late in the 1920s. In 1929, after the appointment of a Special Magistrate to the Perth Children's Court, for the first time female probation officers were employed by the Department. The role of these new officers involved more counselling and representing the interests of children. In 1947 the Child Welfare Act was proclaimed, replacing the 1906 State Children's Act. This Act was designed to have the Children's Court work much closer with the Child Welfare Department so that children could be kept out of the court system as much as possible, attempting to prevent rather than punish the crimes of children (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 18). The Act also allowed magistrates to dismiss charges where it could be shown that family, social and personal circumstances had contributed to the offence and place children under the supervision of Departmental officers for a period of time (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 18).

In 1947 the Child Migration Scheme was established so that children could be brought to Western Australia from orphanages in the United Kingdom under sponsorship from the Australian and British

governments. This arrangement saw the British government pay 12s 6d per child a week and the Australian government subsidise this with 10s per child per week (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 7).

In 1955 further amendments gave the Children's Court the authority to hear certain offences (particularly sexual offences) against children. In 1959 the Act was yet again amended signaling a substantial shift away from the policy of placing children in Industrial Schools. This amendment had a major impact on the activities of the Department, establishing it as the sole agent responsible for the treatment and management of children convicted of crimes or placed in care. During the same period the care and management of "child migrants" shifted from the State Under-Secretary for Lands and Immigration to the Child Welfare Department (Department for Community Services nd, p. 20).

From 1947 to the mid 1960s there was substantial development in relation to financial assistance to families. By 1947 the Department was responsible for at least five different types of monetary assistance, invalid and old age pensions, widows pensions, non-pension cases, service pensions and unemployment and sickness benefits. In 1961 this was simplified when the Welfare and Assistance Act was passed allowing the Department to offer monetary assistance to those who were caring for children and suffering from financial hardship (Department for Community Services nd, p. 21).

During this period welfare provision grew, governments devolved much service provision and so consequently the non-government sector both grew in size and became more organized. In 1956 the Western Australian Council of Social Services (WACOSS) was established to help provide representation for non-government groups (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 9).

Since its formation WACOSS has weighed into much public debate about social services and public policy. It has long provided a mechanism for the non-government sector to lobby government and also offer government feedback on policies and programs they deliver in communities. Although initially concerned more with welfare provision WACOSS has consistently lobbied for a shift towards community participation in government. Indeed, its current charter reflects a longstanding commitment to community work.

WACOSS and its members aim to improve the quality of life of people disadvantaged by the inequities of our society through:

- improving community services by exchanging ideas, information, skills and resources;
- creating a strong, united and informed voice capable of advocating for the social needs of all Western Australians.
- A continual consultation process with members, their clients, the general public and other professional organisations enables WACOSS to identify and address social inequities within the community (WACOSS 2004).

In the early 1960s the Department began opening offices outside of the Perth central area. In 1963 the Fremantle branch was opened. By 1971 branches had been opened in Victoria Park, Belmont, Midland, Morley Mount Hawthorn and East Perth (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 21-22). It was also during this time that the Child Welfare Department established a number of new institutions for child offenders and others in needs of care. These included Riverbank Reformatory for Boys (1960), Longmore Remand and Assessment Centre (1965), Watson Lodge (1967), Bridgewater Care and Assessment Centre (1969), Nyandi (1970), Canowindra (1970) and the McCall Residential Treatment Centre for Children (1971) (Proud 2003, p. 3). At the same time a range of

churches opened up residential facilities for children in need of care (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 6)

Aboriginal welfare

The Second World War prompted something of a shift in attitudes towards Aboriginal people (Collard and Palmer 1991, p. 82). The need for Aboriginal people to take on a role in the military and the shortage of labour that occurred as a consequence of non-Aboriginal men going to war momentarily prompted a growth in employment for Aboriginal people. It also changed the nature of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service personnel, particularly after people began fighting together in the armed forces where race and culture were less important than the chain of command. In 1944 the Natives (Citizenship Rights) Act legislated limited rights for Aboriginal people so that some could apply for a certificate of citizenship. This gave those who could prove that they had adopted a “civilized life” and no longer associated with other Aboriginal people the right to “citizenship” (Aboriginal Affairs Department nd, p. 2). This legislative change, an early attempt to assimilate some Aboriginal people into the so-called mainstream, institutionalized the estranging of Aboriginal people from their families. In Morgan’s biography of Jack MacPhee he recounts,

It was a good time for me and I enjoyed it, but I still felt torn between the white people and the Mulbas [Aboriginal family members from the Pilbara]. I knew that if I let on to the white people that my heart was really with the Mulbas, I’d be falling out with them. It was very hard to be a Blackman and a whiteman. It seemed like you had to choose one way or the other, no- one would let you be both. The problem was, if you chose to be a Mulba you and your family never had any rights at all and you could kiss your hopes of getting on goodbye. Yet if you chose to a whiteman, you had rights, but you couldn’t mix with everyone. It was very, very hard (Morgan 1989, p. 125).

Against this background the state government undertook yet another inquiry into the conditions and social standards of Aboriginal families. In 1947 Mr F Bateman brought down his findings that despite government policy purporting to protect Aborigines they still lived in deplorable conditions. He recommended the removal of many of the Aboriginal affairs administrative processes of the past in favour of a policy of positive welfare and the assimilation of Aboriginal people into the general community (Collard and Palmer 1991 p. 83). The new decentralized Native Affairs Department was to deal directly with Aboriginal people attempting to encourage them to “attain the same manner of living as other Australians, enjoying the same rights, observing the same customs and being influenced by the same hopes and loyalties” (1951 Native Welfare Ministers Conference cited in Crawford 1989 p. 10).

By 1954 the Native Affairs Department underwent another change, to the Department of Native Welfare. This change saw the revoking of much of the draconian and restrictive legislation and policy of the segregation era (Collard and Palmer 1991, p. 83). However, the practice of removing Aboriginal children from their families was still being applied liberally. Speaking of the consequences of this on Aboriginal families, the late Rob Riley said, “you can see the effects of these sort of policies. I mean kids grow up with an identity crisis and I know I certainly went through an identity crisis” (Riley 1987, p. 66).

In 1963 the Native Welfare Act was amended so that the last of the restrictive provisions allowing for the forcible removal of Aboriginal children from their families were removed (Department for Community Development, 1994, p. 8). During this period the idea of assimilation came under much criticism from Aboriginal groups, social and political activists and academics. As this decade came to

a close a number of campaigns and legislative shifts resulted in Aboriginal people gaining considerable rights. In 1967 a national referendum gave the federal government the power to legislate on issues related to Aboriginal affairs (Collard and Palmer 1991, p. 83). In 1968 the Federal Pastoral Industry Award was amended, theoretically giving Aboriginal workers equal wages for equal work (Aboriginal Affairs Department nd, p. 4).

Alternative community

In 1963 another intentional community was formed in Western Australia. Near Armadale, now a southern suburb of Perth, the Shalam commune was set up as to allow a community of people to live together “self-supporting, raising crops without artificial fertilizers ... conducted under a primitive barter system ... and be based on the principles of the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man and reverence for life.” (cited in Metcalf 1995, p. 36). In the early 1970s the group, now promoting ideas about alien beings coming to earth to work with those committed to “right and just social order”, changed its name to Universal Brotherhood and moved to a large property in Balingup in the southwest (Metcalf 1995, p. 37). In 1964 another religious community came to the southwest to establish themselves in community life. Originally from Russia, but having immigrated to other countries like the US, the Molokans moved to the Bunbury and Augusta areas having been prompted by divine prophecy (Metcalf 1995, p. 38).

The post-war era was also a time for communities to begin to think about the way they related to young people. In 1945, after considerable concern about the state of young men’s fitness for war, work and service the State Government passed a special WA National Fitness Act. This gave the state a mechanism whereby they could administer funds to local voluntary organisations who were interested in maintaining the fitness, education and health of young people. Mostly the Associated Youth Committee that was subsequently established, allocated grants to neighbourhood youth clubs to offer health leisure pursuits and leadership training to young people. This committee drew together many youth groups including church run groups, Junior Farmer’s Federation, police boys clubs, YMCA, YWCA Eureka Youth League, Girl Guides Association, Legacy Club, Boys Scouts, Naturalists’ Club and the Guild of Undergraduates (Hill 1983, p. 19)

1971-1990 – Community welfare

The early 1970s saw the burgeoning of ‘community’ in welfare policy discourse. Welfare was often seen as best carried out by, in and through community services, using community development and in consultation with the community sector. From the late 1960s until the mid 1980s the “community services” industry experienced a huge burst in growth. Partly this reflected a change of emphasis away from the language of welfarism towards community provision. Partly it reflected attempts to manage the increased demands upon the welfare state (McDonald 1991, p. 17). From 1966 to 1986 those identifying themselves as working in the community services industry grew from 486,000 to 1,204,000 workers in the national workforce (Graycar and Jamrozik 1989, p. 160). This reflected an enormous growth in the activities of organizations that became known as the ‘non-government welfare sector (McDonald 1991, p. 17). During this period a number of new peak bodies were established to represent the interests of these groups. Some of these groups included the Council of the Ageing, the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia, the Social Welfare Action Group, the Social Security Union and the Community Services Industry Training Council. In addition, a number of professional associations were formed including the Australian Association for Social Workers and the Australian Social Welfare Union. The formation and consolidation of these groups helped cement the importance of the industry and the need for governments to recognise and consult with the major community organisations. It also helped reinforce a strong sense of identity and shared

interest amongst professionals and others working in this industry (McDonald 1991, p. 18).

An important symbol of this shift towards community provision occurred in 1971 when the Community Welfare Portfolio was created in state government. This was followed in 1972 by the Community Welfare Act which instituted the new Department for Community Welfare. Importantly this occurred at the same time as the repealing of the Native Welfare Act of 1963 and the establishment of the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority ((Department for Community Services, nd, p. 23). This amalgamation and the assumption of the name Community Welfare offered the Department an important opportunity to expand its work in relation to community activities (Proud 2003, p. 4).

Aboriginal Affairs

With the establishment of the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority came a shift away from a single Aborigines department taking care of all government functions in relation to Aboriginal people's lives. Instead housing, health, education, employment and welfare programmes for Aborigines were channeled to the various portfolio areas such as the State Housing Commission and the Public Health Department (Aboriginal Affairs Department nd, p. 4). At the same time statutory mechanisms were put in place to allow Aboriginal people to be involved in government decision making through the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee, the Aboriginal Affairs Council and the Aboriginal Lands Trust (Aboriginal Affairs Department nd, p. 4).

Another effect of these legislative changes was to amalgamate many of the functions of the Child and Native Welfare Departments, signaling a shift towards the development of regionally based services and focused more on the nexus between child protection, offending, the family and community. It also led to an increased number of professionally trained staff, the expanding of services directed at families and the coordination of the activities of non-government (or community) welfare organisations (Department for Community Services, nd, p. 23). Much of the rhetoric had it that the Department's focus would be much more on community needs, community involvement in shaping services and community participation in social welfare provision. Section 10 of the Community Welfare Act 1972, stressed "the importance of promoting and providing services which assist communities, groups, families and individuals achieve their own wellbeing (Dwyer 1987, p. 4). In an attempt to assist in this regard a Community Planning Consultant was appointed.(Department for Community Services, nd, p. 24).

In 1973 the Western Australian Government carried out another Royal Commission into the conditions confronting Aboriginal people. Mr LC Furnell QC who headed the Royal Commission recommended that no new changes be made but affirmed the recent shift towards an emphasis on Aboriginal community responsibility, community consultation and active participation in decision-making. In this same year the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee, the first of a number of national bodies to attempt Aboriginal involvement in federal government business was established. This was followed in 1977 by the National Aboriginal Conference which established the first Aboriginal elected body with direct contact to government (Aboriginal Affairs Department nd, p. 5).

Australian Assistance Plan

Also in 1973 the Whitlam (Federal) Government established the Australian Assistance Plan (AAP). This experiment in regional and community development involved the provision of funding to local governments and community groups so they could undertake various "developmental" projects. Regional Councils of Social Development, made up of representatives of the participating community

groups, were established to represent the interests of local people and provide a mechanism whereby communities could influence decisions at a regional level (Kenny 1999, p. 36). The intention of the architects of the AAP was to provide opportunities to local groups to create new ideas and start up ventures to combat social problems and local needs. It was “essentially a Plan for planning ... providing resources to enable a community to plan and develop social services in a way which reflects community needs and priorities” (Social Welfare Commission 1976, p. 8). A strong component of the Plan was planning at the regional and local level and the importance of ordinary people getting involved (Kenny 1999, p. 36). The aims of the Plan were:

- The bringing together of government, non-government organizations and the community in a new organisation for the purpose of planning for social development;
- The provision of better community welfare services through the planning, co-ordination and integration of services;
- The use of regions as the base for planning;
- Encouraging community/client participation in the planning process and in service provision;
- Utilising government grants to support the administrative costs of the RCSD (Regional Councils for Social Development) to enable this organisation to provide for increased or new services to be available to the residents of the region (Social Welfare Commission 1976, p. 15).

The AAP then was set up to encourage regional groups to plan and coordinate welfare and community services and to stimulate the participation of local people. It represented an attempt by the Federal Labour Government to deal with growing social problems that had emerged as a consequence of previous poor planning and the economic crisis that followed the end of the long boom (Thorpe 1985, p. 20). It was the Australian Assistance Plan which opened up a significant space for much organized community development work in Western Australia. Many of the first people employed with the title of community development worker were funded under the auspice of the AAP. A number of the Regional Councils established during the reign of the AAP continued to exist for many years after the AAP was canned. The AAP also provided a setting for initiatives that had previously been untried and/or under resourced. As the first real national attempt at community development it encouraged discussion and experimentation about how one might involve community in planning and government and how to exercise the energies and interests of those who were not necessarily welfare professionals (Kenny 1999, p. 36).

At the time of its establishment the Labor Government in Western Australia responded enthusiastically, particularly since the new state Community Welfare Act had similar principles to those underlying the AAP (Jayasuriya, 1975, p. 70- 71). Pilot projects were undertaken in the Southwest and Southern Agricultural areas and the Eastern Goldfields District of Western Australia. Projects funded through the Regional Councils for Social Development included Citizens Advisory Services (in Albany and Bunbury), community associations (in Fitzgerald, Nannup, Rocky Gully and Mt Many Peaks), a community resource centre (in Bunbury), various capital and equipment for community groups (Lake King, Bunbury, Manjimup, Katanning, Bridgetown and Kukerin), family support services (in Blackwood, Albany, Gnowangerup and Bridgetown), children’s services (in Borden), youth services (in Mt Barker, Greenbushes, Katanning, Mandurah, Albany, Pinjarra) and aged services (in Mandurah, Greenbushes, Blackwood, Wagin and Lake Grace) (Social Welfare Commission (1976, p. 91-118). One important outcome of the AAP in Western Australia was the formation of a number of groups, including the Bunbury Voluntary Group, which continued to exist for many years (Dwyer 1987, p . 8). As in other parts of the country, AAP initiatives in WA emphasized the importance of “developing community-based structures as a vehicle for community-

made decisions” (Jayasuriya 1975, p. 78). However, there was little evidence of success in relation to broad and local level participation in AAP initiatives in Western Australia. Indeed, according to the first formally mandated evaluation of the AAP in Western Australia, “participation [had been] predominately a middle-class activity which [had] been supportive of the status quo” (Jayasuriya 1975, p. 138).

The AAP experiment was relatively short lived. It was established in May 1973 and axed three years later by the new Fraser Government. Its critics included those from both ends of the political spectrum. Those on the right saw it as a socialist exercise designed to increase opportunities for those keen on challenging authority. Others saw it as a messy programme that bypassed state and local government mechanisms, often setting jurisdictions against each other. Those on the left saw it as little different in practice from traditional social welfare interventions, that is “ a wolf in sheep’s clothing” (Skenridge and Lennie cited in Thorpe 1985, p. 20). Like similar state orchestrated community work initiatives such as the British Community Development Programme and the US War on Poverty and Community Action Programs, the AAP turned its attention to regional inequality rather than class inequality and encouraged participation as a means to have local people improve their lot (Thorpe 1985, p. 20).

Although piecemeal, between 1976 and 1984 the Department for Community Welfare maintained a commitment to its emphasis on community work. In 1976 it introduced the Community Welfare Assistance Grants to provide small grants to community groups keen to build local and self-help initiatives aimed at welfare. At around the same time three community development officers and a community development consultant were appointed by the Department to work in the Fremantle, Balga and Victoria Park Divisional Offices. Most of the work of these people involved community planning and assisting in the building of community organisations and local service groups. In 1976 a Community Work Student Unit was established in the Fremantle Division. This unit, was managed by the Social Work Department of the Western Australian Institute of Technology (Dwyer 1987, p. 9).

Remote and regional community work

The practice of community development took on particular relevance in remote and regional Western Australia during the late seventies and early eighties. Much of this reflects the difficulties experienced by Indigenous communities confronted by “deplorable conditions” and isolated from the basic of resources (Crawford 1987, p. 3). Community development represented an approach that contrasted with earlier policy approaches that saw Indigenous communities excluded from decisions that shaped their lives. It also reflected the cultural and social stress on community autonomy and collective governance in traditional Indigenous lore and custom.

Leading up to the adoption of various community development initiatives in places such as the Kimberley and Pilbara regions, Indigenous communities had undergone enormous social and economic changes. Prior to the late 1960s many Indigenous people had been able to remain on their traditional land, working in the pastoral industry for little or no wages. Provided they submit to the demands of those managing pastoral leases (including work for little or no cash payments), Indigenous people could camp on their country, practice lore and custom, educate their young and manage their culture and language. Through the 1950s and 60s the pastoral industry came under increased scrutiny from the Native Welfare Department, trade unions and a national movement concerned with the rights of Aboriginal people. As a consequence, stations were forced to introduce cash wages and improved conditions for Indigenous workers. In 1969 the Federal Pastoral Award came into operation making it mandatory for Aboriginal workers to be paid an award wage. One effect of this was that Aboriginal groups became increasingly marginalised, fragmented and moved

away from their traditional lands. Many traditional cultural systems were disrupted as Aboriginal male workers gained wages at the exclusion of many women families, young people missed out on their introduction to lore and the elderly were left without any provision (Willis 2003, p. 28). Much of this had brutal effects, particularly in places like Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek, where many Aboriginal people became refugees with almost no material resources and living in overcrowded circumstances with others from very different cultural and geographical backgrounds (Jebb 2002; Crawford 1983, p. 16). Communities who had migrated from their country to towns such as Fitzroy and Wyndham had little time to become accustomed to their new circumstances, little support in resolving conflicts with other groups and few material resources to sustain themselves (Richardson 1993, p. 7).

One can trace the beginning of Indigenous community development in the north of the state to the long-running strike for better wages by Pilbara stock workers from 1946. Don McLeod a local miner and member of the Communist Party, worked with Marngu Aboriginal people so that they could maintain independence from missions, pastoralists, governments and those who maintained a welfare mentality (Tomlinson 1985, p. 144). He supported Aboriginal workers who became known as the “Pindan Mob” by helping them form a company called the Nomads Pty Ltd so that they could manage their own economic and community affairs (Rowse, 2000, p. 32). Although McLeod is better known for involvement in the Pilbara Aboriginal worker’s strike, his interest and commitment went well beyond industrial action. As Bolton (1981, p. 152) says, McLeod,

hoped to set up a series of mixed Aboriginal-white communities sharing their possessions on cooperative lines closer to traditional Aboriginal practice than what he saw as the exploitative methods necessarily pursued by pastoralists in a capitalist economy.

Prompted by a concern with these circumstances a number of different non- Aboriginal organisations with an interest in community development set about trying to assist. In 1973 the Institute of Cultural Affairs, an American Christian organisation that had undertaken community development projects based on endeavours with Afro-American communities in Chicago, began applying their ideas to work with the people of Oombulgurri in Wyndham (McMahon, 1988, p. 125). A little earlier two field officers from the Aboriginal Advancement League in Melbourne, Jan Richardson and Stan Davey, had also begun supporting the needs of people who had moved into Wyndham after the Catholic Church had closed Forrest River Mission (Richardson 1993, p. 10-11). Together with Doug McCauley, they and members of the ICA began applying community development principles in an attempt to support Oombulgurri people to move back to country and establish local infrastructure (McMahon 1988, p. 127). Similar methods were being embraced by others in the Kimberley and Pilbara such as the Catholic Priest Peter Willis who from 1969-1974 was working with Mirriwung people in Kununurra, helping build community organisations and local economic ventures (Willis 2003). In 1971 Richardson and Davey began the process of drawing the state government into this work. Initially both took on jobs with the Native Welfare Department (Richardson working in the Homemaker Programme and Davey as an employment officer). When Native Welfare amalgamated with the Welfare Department to become the Department for Community Welfare, Davey was employed expressly to concentrate on community development programs (Richardson 1993, p. 16). In 1975 both were transferred to Fitzroy Crossing where they worked with people from a range of communities including those from Millijiddee, Quanbun and Noonkanbah Stations (McMahon 1988, p. 13). Keith Maine, the Head of the Department described the role of Richardson and Davey in the following way:

The broad intention of Mr Davey’s location at Fitzroy Crossing is to provide a specialist officer to work in close consultation with the local Aboriginal communities and our own staff so that

we might assist in developing a programme aimed at maximum Aboriginal involvement in their own projects and affairs ... Mr Davey should concentrate on what might be described as community development with the Fitzroy Aboriginal population and not involve himself in other work normally undertaken by the District Officer ... It would be helpful to make use of Mrs Davey's availability so that the Department takes full account of the views of Aboriginal women and we encourage any possible development of this influence in the local communities. Her services as a Welfare Assistant should be continued at this new posting (cited in McMahon 1988, p. 56).

The Homemaker Service

Another important programme shift towards community work occurred in the early 1970s when the Homemaker Service changed its emphasis or approach from a directive, teaching, home-based method of working with Aboriginal families to one of community participation, planning and resource development (Dwyer 1987, p. 10). Initially the Service had been set up under assimilationalist principles by the Department of Native Welfare to 'assist' Aboriginal families living in rural areas who were "making the difficult transition from reserve life to conventional housing" (Ridge 1977, p. 3). When the Native and Child Welfare Departments amalgamated in 1972 the Service became available to non-Aboriginal groups living in the metropolitan area. The Service (later to become known as the Family Resource Unit), embraced more "non-directive" and client driven ways to respond to poverty and family need (Richardson 1993). The Service became a mechanism whereby local women, usually with little formal education and training, could be resourced to set up ways to help other women struggling with financial hardship, education, employment, housing and child-care. Much more of the emphasis of the work was with providing local groups of parents, identified by Departmental Officers as those who might benefit, with support and a connection with local resources. The programme was seen by many as one of the main means by which the Department could demonstrate "its commitment to developing its 'community' and preventive role as well as its statutory child welfare functions, in order to break the present cycle whereby problems are always 'patched up' but very little is done to stem the tide of developing problems (Tevake, 1983, p. 32). Many of these groups grew to reasonably large numbers. For example, by 1975 151 Homemakers (the name of those local people who took on a paid role in supporting others in their area) were employed by the Department (Bodeker 1975, p. 5). From August 1976 to September 1977 the Ridley Way Family Centre in Kwinana (one of the Homemaker groups) had over 100 women involved in regular events (Tevake, 1983, p. 34). As a consequence of successful attempts to set up programmes such as occasional care and playgroup activities for pre-school children the Kwinana Family Activity Group was set up in Ridley Way in 1978 (Bayman, 1989a, p. 6).

The Homemaker Service as well as an international movement towards local neighbourhood work and learning in community acted as something of a catalyst for other community-based initiatives including Community Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres. These non-profit organisations emerged around 1978 to try and deal with the educational and social needs of people from backgrounds that precluded them from having good access to education and training. Mostly these organisations catered to the needs and interest of women, offering a range of adult education programmes and confronting the social isolation experienced by many women. Most of the early centres were managed and maintained by volunteers, had limited funding and did not offer extensive educational options. A state association (called Learning Centre Link - LINK) of these centres was formed in 1981. Although each of the centres were unique all embraced a community work approach, or what one review described a "a common ethos of community development through self help, communication and common interest and all offer support and encouragement to members of the local community" (Ducie 1994, p. 7).

Most of these organisations, some neighbourhood houses, community houses or community centres involved themselves in many activities including offering child care, educational courses, training workshops, family support, counseling, career advice and referral to other services (Learning Centre Link Annual Report 1992/93, p. 23). They were designed to be managed by a local community committee of volunteers so that, in keeping with an ethos of community control and local connection, they could be particularly 'accountable to the community' (Goodrick 1984, p. 8).

From the mid 1970s many of these neighbourhood based family and education centres tried to put into practice community development concepts and ideas pioneered in Australia by groups such as the Brotherhood of St Lawrence. Previously many of those involved in neighbourhood work saw it as an extension of welfare service provision and the personal improvement of the culturally and financially impoverished. Spurred on by such organizations as the Family Action Centre in Melbourne, those involved in the neighbourhood centre movement turned to ways to "give people power over resources, information, decision making and relationships" (Grimoldby 1984, p. 14). This was prompted by the belief that "people have the right and the capacity to take control over their lives if they have access to and power over information, resources, relationships and decision-making" (de Meyere 1984, p. 35). This style of local community work in neighbourhood settings pitched itself as standing in contrast to "band-aid" and individual focused educational work that implied blame be attributed to those with little resources. Instead an emphasis was placed on the impact of structural factors such as poverty, unemployment, poor housing, low wages and conditions and inadequate educational provision. Part of the answer to local people's problems in this regard was offering them a chance to take more control over their lives, get involved in locally based initiatives to try and change structural conditions, participate in government (particularly of local organizations) and improving their access to formal education (Kenny 1999, p. 36)

The Carter Review

In 1984 the state government held an inquiry into welfare services in Western Australia. One of the features of the Carter Review, as it became known, was the centrality of 'community' in the review process. The review, called *The Wellbeing of the People*, was concerned with "welfare and community services". Public hearings took the form of community consultations. Submissions were encouraged from community groups. Representatives from the community sector were invited to be a part of specialist committees. The report was produced more as an exercise in community participation than an expert driven review (Carter, 1984). The review prompted a number of changes to government policy in relation to welfare. The first was the increasing importance of separating welfare from justice administration. It also hastened the closure of several state government institutions. It recommended more consumer and community involvement in welfare provision. It highlighted the importance of local government involvement in community services. It set in place mechanisms to increase the number of child-care places available in the state. It also prompted a series of changes in substitute care arrangements aiming to minimise the number of children entering care and maximise the reuniting of families (Department for Community Development (1994, p. 6). Importantly the Carter review noted the Department's lack of commitment to community development as an approach and confirmed its importance in welfare provision. Specifically the report recommended:

- That there should be a substantial increase in community development within the Department, principally in community organisation and service extension, community development and social planning.
- That, to assist community development becoming an integral and planned part of Departmental services, the duty statements of generic field officers be amended to

incorporate community-focused interventions and a localised planning system be established.

- That a community development resource unit be established to make available to field staff support and specialised information and advice, to arrange appropriate training, to engage in research and planning in community development and to undertake other tasks.
- That a degree of specialisation in community at field level be implemented, that a policy be adopted of appointing one community development officer to each metropolitan division and country district and that within divisions a senior community development officer be appointed.
- That community development officers and senior community development officers be classified, taking account of qualifications and experience, within the classifications in use for base grade and senior staff ... (Carter 1984, p. 488).

Influenced by this emphasis on community work in May 1985 the Executive of the Department for Community Services (as it came to be renamed) endorsed a “community-focused approach” for the Department. It recommended the appointment of a Community Development Training Consultant to “provide training and support for those officers using/or who will use a community approach as a strategy in their work” (Dwyer 1987, p. 3). Another outcome of the Carter Review was the establishment of community houses to be under the auspice of the Department. The Report of the Review recommended the building of six houses as “the cornerstone of welfare service delivery ... managed by a community based committee containing a proportion of consumers” (Bayman, 1989b, p. 3). In 1985-86 the six houses were built in Beechboro, Langford, Mirrabooka, Kalgoorlie, Port Hedland and Bunbury. These houses were to provide a physical location at which a range of community services could be delivered to all ages in a local area. They were,

Multi-functional, with linkages and networks into the community, flexible in nature and responsive to community needs, with a facilitating function. Their prime function [was to] provide family and child support to and in community ... For other than funding responsibilities, accountability will be to the community (The Working Party on Community Houses 1984, p. 2- 3).

After the Carter review there was also some significant change in the way that government approached youth service provision. Prior to 1984 the Community Welfare Department had not taken on a large role with young people unless they were offenders or under the care or guardianship of the state (Northern Metropolitan Regional Office 1993, p. 3).

Youth, employment and enterprise

Although this was a period following various youth counter culture movements there had been little direct interest by governments in the lives of young people. Most of the work that existed before 1985 was either church based or concerned with recreation and fitness. In 1972 the State Government effectively amalgamated the National Fitness Council and the Youth Council to form the Community Recreation Council to better connect recreation programmes to local communities (Hill 1983, p. 20). From 1972 the Department for Community Welfare had employed Youth Organiser to help run camps and offer recreational events.

However, young people’s broader needs and interests came onto the public agenda much more powerfully with the arrival in 1985 of the United Nations Year of Youth and the emergence, for the first time, of middle class youth unemployment and its associated problems. Governments and community groups responded by increasing the provision of formal programmes, particularly those

designed to 'keep young people off the street' and deal with their past escalating social problems. In 1985 the Department for Community Services began funding a number of community groups to work with local young people who were considered to be 'at risk', 'unattached' or 'on the street'. The new Drop-in Programme was prompted in part by a series of media stories on young men acting as prostitutes in the Supreme Court Gardens, the aim of this programme was to, "alleviate problems associated with young people frequenting the inner city streets of Perth and to provide links to the network of services required to prevent the potential cycle of homelessness, criminal activity and social isolation". By 1987 twenty five projects, most of which were situated in local neighbourhoods or regional towns, had been funded. Almost all of the work undertaken under the auspice of this programme was managed by local community-based management committees who were encouraged to "work developmentally with young people and their communities" (cited in Department for Community Services 1987, p. 1).

The Department for Community Welfare was not the only Western Australian state government department experimenting with community development. The State Employment Department has also experimented with community-based initiatives. This interest was prompted in part by work undertaken the late 1970s by Fremantle residents keen to explore creative responses to unemployment. Having undertaken a study on how local people might like to respond to the local shortage of jobs, a group of residents, with help from the council and the Fremantle Education Centre, set up two local employment initiatives – a recycling project and an orthopaedic shoe making business. A number of local ventures, such as APACE in North Fremantle, continue to exist and have their roots in this work (Kenyon 1983, p. 50-53).

During the early 1980s the Western Australian Department of Employment and Training fostered considerable involvement in local enterprise development, mainly through its Community Employment Initiatives Branch (CEIB). Based on experience in places like Ireland, Spain, France, Canada and in the eastern states, the CEIB set about establishing enterprise organisations of local government, employers, trade unions, service clubs, community organisations and local educational institutions to nurture local area economic development. These developments sought to build co-operative business ventures aimed "at the twin objectives of job creation and more socially relevant work structures" (Kenyon 1983, p. 1). Out of this work emerged varied programmes many of which continued for considerable years. Some of these initiatives included the 'Bridging the Gap' programme (which brought together employers and service clubs to assist the unemployed), the Job Placement and Training Scheme (which assisted with skills training for new employees), the 'Head Start in Business' Programme (to help the unemployed establish new small businesses) and the Westrek Programme (to offer opportunities for the young unemployed to get involved in community conservation projects). The Unit also helped to set up a state network of regional development groups, such as the South West Development Commission, to coordinate and plan economic development at the regional level (Kenyon 1985).

Commonwealth involvement

The realigning of welfare policy towards community in part reflected new developments at the Commonwealth level. In 1972 the Commonwealth assumed the key responsibility for child-care with the introduction of the Child Care Act. This opened the way for neighbourhood and community groups to access funds to run not-for-profit child care services. Following the Carter Review, the state government entered into cost-sharing arrangements with the Commonwealth, increasing the number of community child-care centres. This in turn shifted the emphasis in child-care provision away from welfare to community service (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 8; O'Reilly 1988).

Other Commonwealth initiatives emphasised community and targeted the provision of community groups. After the election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972 a wide range of Commonwealth programmes were established to encourage Aboriginal community self-determination. In particular the Commonwealth offered specific community development grants to support the national Homeland Movement (particularly active in regions such as the Kimberley, Pilbara and Eastern Goldfields), Aboriginal resource agencies, interpreter services, economic enterprise and Aboriginal involvement in broadcasting and television (Coleman 1983, p. 11). From the late 1970s, after the proclamation of the Aboriginal Communities Act, Aboriginal community organisations were increasingly supported to provide support services and undertake community enterprises (see Willis 2003). The Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) began operating in 1977 when it was established in response to the demand from remote Aboriginal communities for alternatives to 'sit down money' or unemployment benefits. This programme involved local communities deciding to forego receiving unemployment benefits in exchange for wages to be earned by people becoming involved in community managed and controlled enterprise and activities. This programme gave Aboriginal communities in Western Australia the choice to place into a fund of commons, or a community resource pool, all the payments otherwise paid to the unemployed. In return unemployed residents of this community do what the community deems to be worthwhile work. Since its inception in 1989 the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission has been responsible for the administration of this programme (Rowse 2002, p. 65).

During the 1980s the Commonwealth also put considerable energy into delivering labour market programs through community based organisations. The idea at the time was that 'community' was an advantageous place to be able to situate employment and training provision, particularly as it maximised the chance to be flexible and sensitive to local needs and markets. According to the Chair of the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs,

the community's potential to help with labour market problems has not been tapped to anywhere near the extent possible. We believe that community based programs are in the best position to assist many of the people most disadvantaged in the labour market, and that by increasing spending in these efforts the Commonwealth will further stimulate the community's efforts (Kirby 1985, p. 163).

The Community Youth Support Service (CYSS) emerged in 1976 as a mechanism for supporting community-based responses to the problems of youth unemployment. Its mandate was "to encourage communities to assist local unemployed young people to develop their capacity to obtain and retain employment and to become self-reliant during periods of unemployment" (cited in Kirby 1985, p. 172). Its budget allocation grew from \$0.57 million in 1976-77 to \$16.3 million in 1982-83 (Freeland, 1985, p. 165). No individual CYSS project was identical. Rather, within the general guidelines of providing support that is "positively oriented towards employment", services various provided, drop-in facilities, information, advice and referral, social and emotional support, training in job-related skills, help with life skills, income generation, work preparation, social action, leisure and recreation activities and voluntary community service (Kirby 1985, p. 172).

In 1983 the Commonwealth introduced the Community Employment Program (CEP), a national employment programme designed to help local community groups create jobs for people who had been out of work for more than a year. The aim of this programme was to encourage community groups to build projects that had some long term and community benefit and employ those who had been out of work for a considerable time. By 1985 more than 13,800 projects, ranging from the building of community meeting places, health care provision, sporting complexes and environmental improvements, had been created employing almost 80,000 people in the process (Department of

Employment and Industrial Relations 1985, p. 5-10).

In keeping with this emphasis on community labour market provision the Commonwealth also offered other grants based programmes such as the Community Youth Special Projects (to fund innovative community based projects for youth), the Volunteer Youth Program (to test the use of voluntary community service for young people) and the Work Preparation Program (for people with disabilities to improve their access to work) (Kirby 1985, p. 164-165). In 1988 CYSS was broadened and became the Skillshare Network, offering similar community-based training programmes for long-term unemployed adults as well as young people (Department of Employment, Education and Training (1989, p. 1).

Migrant community groups

The Commonwealth Government began drawing on various migrant communities for their support in assisting immigrants settle and deal with their social needs in 1950. It was then that Good Neighbourhood Councils gained Commonwealth sponsorship to undertake a number of functions including welfare, information provision and home tutoring. However, this kind of work had little direct participation by 'ethnic' communities (Galbally 1982, p. 171). By the 1960s it had become apparent that many migrants had found it very difficult to simply 'assimilate' into Australian community life. Many, particularly those escaping from poverty and strife in their country of origin received little help with settlement, housing and personal and financial assistance. In 1968 the Commonwealth established a Grant-in-Aid Scheme to help finance local voluntary groups offer welfare services to migrants (Galbally 1982, p. 174). Also in response a number of local organisations, 'ethnic' groups and government programmes were set up to help with welfare, language education, housing and employment.

The development of a national policy of multiculturalism after the election of Whitlam led to further growth in this regard, particularly heralding the birth of community organisations specifically for and made up of migrants. Indeed one of the key foci of the AAP was responding to the social and educational disadvantage of immigrants (Castles et al 1998, p. 104). In 1973 Al Grassby, the new Minister for Immigration established Migrant Task Forces to canvas for reforms in migrant social policy. These groups proposed programmes to extend community relations, offer interpreter services, build ethnic community groups and deliver migrant education. Also proposed was that staff of the Department of Immigration commit to taking on "a community development orientation" (Jakubowicz et al 1984, p. 59). In 1973 the Department's welfare services was dramatically increased with the number of welfare officers reaching 48, including four in Western Australia. The approach these officers were to take on reflected a strong emphasis on community work. This had its origins in the role played by Italian community members in the settlement of the Sicilian earthquake victims into Australia in the late 1960s (Jakubowicz et al 1984, p. 60). At about the same time umbrella organisations, such as the Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia, formed to represent the interests of migrant groups.

In 1978 the Galbally Report of the Evaluation of Post-Arrival Programs and Services took this emphasis on community work a little further and recommended that 'ethnic' community organisations should have a strong role in the provision of services to 'new arrivals' (Castles et al 1998, p. 104). An important proposal included in the report was that the Commonwealth provide funds for community organisations to form migrant resource centres. These centres were to, "provide a base from which ethnic groups could work locally and provide such services as multilingual welfare counselling, facilities for meetings of ethnic groups, English language classes and cultural activities; general information and referral; co-ordination of services in the area; and

assistance to emerging local groups". It was considered particularly important that these centres encouraged community participation in their running and management (Galbally 1982, p. 191). A number of these centres were established in Western Australia including the Fremantle Migrant Resource Centre and the North Perth Migrant Resource Centre.

Supported accommodation

Prior to 1982 a range of State and Commonwealth existed to help offer accommodation and housing support to homeless people. These included a number of separate and often disparate programmes to assist with youth and children's accommodation, youth support homeless people, family accommodation, children's support and women's refuges and emergency relief.

In 1985 after a review of Commonwealth and State programs for homeless people the Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program (SAAP) was established to provide funding for community based and other non-government organisations to offer accommodation services to women, youth and other homeless people (Department for Community Development 1994, p. 9).

In 1985 State and Commonwealth Governments agreed to jointly fund the Home and Community Care Program. Previously there had been a relatively long period when state government offered a range of residential care programmes for the frail aged and disabled young people through the National Welfare Fund Act. The HAC Program provided funds for church and community organizations to provide a comprehensive range of home and community based care for the aged and disabled. Reflecting a trend towards the deinstitutionalisation of care, this program was designed to help families and the community to support the disabled and aging, thus avoiding institutionalization in hospitals, hostels and nursing homes (Harris 1987, p. 8-10).

Intentional communities and education

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a range of (often younger) people inspired by a global alternative lifestyle movement. During the period from the late 1960s to the early 1980s this movement prompted a range of communities, local cooperatives, intentional governments, alternative schools and shared land arrangements in Western Australia. Many of these attempts at establishing a different form of community lasted for only a short time. However, many had some success and influenced the community development movement that gained some momentum in subsequent years. For example, in 1973-74 a Link- Up Community, with connections to similar enterprises in other eastern states, was set up in Fremantle. This community centre for alternative seekers acted as a "resource point, drop-in centre, learning exchange and information service" (cited in Cock 1979, p. 40-41).

At the same time, and in part because of the shift towards alternative community life, schools and education came under close scrutiny. Experimentation in education became a mark of the advocates for new and alternative communities. As in so many other areas of public policy the Whitlam Government introduced a series of plans to reform schools. The Commonwealth Schools Commission was set up in 1972 in an attempt to offer more to communities previously not served well by educational institutions (Bambach 1979, p. 1). This was precisely at the time when the community schools movement was gaining some momentum in Western Australia. Two schools in particular came into being at this time, the Lance Holt School and the Community School. Both schools were based in Fremantle, started operations in 1972 and ran in an attempt to offer a space for children and community members to take part in the educational process and decision making (Burke 1990; Figures 2002).

Community Art and Cultural Development

During the 1970s there also came into being a national movement recognising the importance of cultural and artistic expression in community life. This movement (initially called community arts but more recently community cultural development) was partly prompted by the assessment that the cultural expressions of Aborigines, migrants, women, the poor and workers were rarely appreciated and poorly resourced (Kirby 1991). This was not the first time the art and culture of non-elites had been recognized. Indeed the Australian trade union movement had a long-standing history of funding and encouraging cultural expression amongst its constituency. For example, the production of union banners, film, cultural expression through worker's education, music, poetry and the use of creative and carnivalesque techniques in industrial campaigns have a long tradition in Western Australia (McCracken 1997, p. 4).

The movement gained great momentum after the election of the Whitlam Government and their subsequent establishment of the Community Arts and Development Committee of the Australia Council. As a consequence community arts initiatives proliferated emphasizing 'artworkers' as opposed to 'artists' working with non-elites to help increase broader participation in arts and cultural production, encourage community expressions of culture and promote cultural democracy (Kirby 1991, p. 19). Access and participation were two of the most formative of ideas and characteristics of community arts. The Whitlam Government argued that "access to art and culture were democratic rights and active and equal participation in them was an indicator of a just society" (Hawkins 1993, p. 31). Although more often used than clearly defined, community arts practice came to stand for work that was at least as interested in the process of arts production as the product itself. Not surprisingly important to this process was the forming of relationships between artworkers and communities, particularly communities such as prisoners, Aborigines, the poor and workers, who had previously been neglected by artists. Also important was the involvement of community skills in choosing both the artistic medium, the subject matter and the rationale for cultural production (Marginson 1993, p. 255).

During this time many community arts initiatives grew and a number of community arts officers gained employment in Western Australia. The Trades and Labour Council of Western Australia had employed an Arts Officer for some time before the Australia Council introduced its new program. In the late 1970s Fremantle Council received a grant from the Australia Council to carry out a Children's Festival. At approximately the same time the Perth City Council and Kalamunda Shire had each appointed a Community Arts Officer (Summer 2002, p. 2). In 1982 a Community Arts Officer was appointed by the Gosnells Council (McAtee 2002, p. 1). Soon after a state network of community artists was formed (Beahan 2002, p. 4). By 1985 the Community Arts Network of Western Australia (CANWA) had become incorporated, established to support the varied range of community arts initiatives carried out in local government, trade unions, schools and community groups.

In 1982 the Art and Working Life program was established as part of the Australia Council's broader commitment to community art. This program sought to "encourage art practice and policy which is informed by the concerns and issues affecting workers' own lives and acknowledges working class cultural traditions and the multicultural nature of these traditions" (cited in Muir 1992, p. 2). From 1982 until its demise in 1996 when the Howard Government was elected, the Art and Working Life program provided employment for over 1000 community artists as well as allowing unions to commit more funds for artists to create with workers such things as banners, plays, songs, graphics, photographs, videos, posters and various artistic installations. In Western Australia the Trades and Labour Council utilised this program to support work by its Arts Officer to sponsor a series of projects where workers produced works of art or culture to reinterpret union traditions and celebrate the

lives of workers. Examples of these projects included the bringing together of young painters and fabric artists with unions such as the Australian Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers' Union, to produce union banners, the FUFU Workers' Marching Band, an AIDS Quilt Project involving fabric and visual artists and members of the WA Branch of the Nurses Federation, dance pieces directed by dances and choreographers and performed by members of Public Sector Union (McCracken 1997).

This general period also saw a number of groups form specifically to undertake social action, advance the interest of 'community' and advocate for social policy changes and human rights. Much of this reflects the burgeoning of radicalism in Universities and increased activity in the Labor Movement and New Social Movements such as the women's, peace, environmental, Aboriginal rights and anti-Vietnam movements. Some of it also reflected the widespread growth of community-based political activism, a "push for alternative lifestyles based on a rejection of materialist society" (Hawkins 1993, p. 38-39) and ideas about the liberation of people who had otherwise been made marginal.

Women's organisations and social action groups

Amongst the most influential of movements in relation to community work in Western Australia has been the women's movement. Some tend to simply associate the women's movement with a radical critique of the status quo. However, the women's movement has also played an important role in forcing many to confront the violence committed against women in community. It has also challenged the subordinate role played by women and the expectation that women carry out the majority of community work. Finally many Western Australian women have been at the forefront of the forming of important alliances between communities of women. Community work during the 1970s and 80s was rich in the practical contribution women offered, particularly in setting up organisations for migrants, Aboriginal family work, campaigning against employment discrimination, being involved in alliances between community groups and trade unions and legislation for women's right to control reproduction. For example, the Women's Electoral Lobby was established in 1972 in an attempt to influence the way public policy was being formulated (Dowse 1983, p. 202). It was particularly active in 1974 when it protested attempts by the Commonwealth Government to renege on the election promise of a new childcare programme. As a consequence of this action the Government set aside \$74 million in the budget for child care and established an Interim Committee to a Children's Commission with the mandate to set up and administer an 'integrated' program of child care and education (Dowse 1983, p. 207).

Another feature of the women's movement has been its stress upon the connection between politics and the personal struggles and difficulties of women. In particular, many involved in the women's movement emphasised the importance of carrying out campaigns for change at the same time as finding ways to directly support women in need of care. Indeed many women involved in community work spent considerable time and energy running community-based women's health centres (such as the Fremantle Migrant Women's Health Centre), managing women's refuges (such as Warrawee Women's Refuge) and rape crisis centres (like the Sexual Assault Referral Centre) (Burgmann 1993, p. 95).

Western Australian women have also had an important role to play in various related community political campaigns. In 1984, 300 women set up a peace camp at Cockburn Sound to demonstrate against the presence of American nuclear ships at HMAS Stirling, the navy's western base near Fremantle. The intention of this campaign was to not only draw attention to the brutal consequence of military action but also to link this to the particular effects this had on women in the community through rape, prostitution and economic exploitation (Pringle and Watson 1990, p. 242). It was a number of Western Australian Aboriginal women who were instrumental in the setting of various

Inquiries into the conditions confronting Aboriginal people. Many of these women take inspiration from earlier Western Australian women such as Bessie Rischbieth who in the 1920s and 30s campaigned broadly for social reform and the status of women but particularly for Aboriginal women's rights (Haebich 2000, p. 338). In the late 1980s Helen Corbett, an Aboriginal woman from Western Australia, successfully rallied the National Committee to Defend Black Rights to organise a campaign calling for a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Mickler 1998, p. 174)

During this general period there was also considerable activism occurring around the issue of Aboriginal rights. In 1978 the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) was established to actively organise in campaigns to prevent mining and develop activity destroying or compromising traditional Aboriginal land and rights, the eviction of Aboriginal people from land, damage to cultural heritage and, more recently the claims of Aboriginal people to Native Title. Not only has the KLC organised campaigns for land but they have also involved themselves in community development initiatives and lobbied for improved social and economic conditions for local people. From 1978 to 1981 it organised a massive campaign to have the State Government stop prospecting and drilling at Noonkanbah. This campaign involved gaining the support of a range of unions, churches and community groups. When the State Labor Government was elected in 1983 the KLC presented them with a log of claims for Aboriginal people in the Kimberley. A number of its key figures, such as Pat Dodson, Peter Yu, Daryl Kickett and Johnny Watson have taken on leadership roles in community development (Horton 1994, p. 547).

In 1977 a number of Western Australian social workers activated the Western Australian Branch of the Australian Social Welfare Union (ASWU). The Western Australian's who formed this group had been urged on by a few members of an informal action oriented group called the Social Action Lobby, activism in the eastern states and the low priority that seemed to be given to social action. Members of the new union saw it as an opportunity to give social issues and social reform a bigger profile amongst welfare workers and agitate for improved conditions. These people were also highly active in community work and the formation of other welfare rights groups such as the Social Security Union (SSU) (McDonald 1991, p. 21-22).

In 1979 a number of members were motivated to form an alliance after hearing a speaker from the Social Security Union who had given an address at a conference of the Australian Association of Social Workers. The speaker, Jenny Martin, challenged professionals to start pressing for the rights of their clients. Subsequently the Social Welfare Action Group (SWAG) was formed to campaign for welfare rights through the media and making representations to government. Partly this group was formed as an alliance between social workers committed to social action and partly as a means of protecting government workers who could not speak out publicly in relation to issues in their area of coverage (Social Work Action Group nd). The group met every month from 1979 to 1983 taking on considerable social action tasks including:

- Writing 'Letters to the Editor' in relation to welfare issues;
- Preparing submissions to government commissions and inquiries (including the Inquiry into Local Government and Welfare, Law Reform Commission's investigation of privacy laws);
- Organising campaigns (including changes to the health insurance system and invalid pensions);
- Preparing submissions to Ministers on various issues (including the DSS Review and the provision of state housing);
- Helping set up a welfare "watch-dog"; and

- Helping set up other groups (such as the National Association of Community Based Child Care) (Social Welfare Action Group 1983).

1990-2000 – Rationalising the economy

Following the popularity of community development in the 1970s and 1980s there appears to have been a decline in support during the late 80s and into the 1990s. A number of Commonwealth and State programmes that had been established to support community development were defunded. Many local organisations ceased to function. Some workers burnt out and some training institutions changed their focus. According to people such as Pusey (1991), Dixon, Hoatson and Weeks (2003, p. 1) and Bessant (1997) this was at least partly a consequence of the growth in popularity amongst public officials of economic rationalism.

Economic rationalism emerged as a popular set of policy ideas, or what Foucault calls political rationalities, in an attempt to deal with the following conditions emerging at the end of the long boom in western economies:

- OPEC oil crisis
- Long lasting instability in all the major economies
- Financiers and manufactures restructuring the labour force and looking for new markets
- Shift towards the internationalisation of economic relations following the creation of trans-national corporations
- This sees the power of nation states diminish, deregulation of national economies and power shift to large corporate managers
- Shift from standardised mass production (Fordism) to flexible specialisation (post-Fordism)
- These conditions put pressure on governments to reduced expenditure, limit wages and conditions (Bessant 1997, Kenny 1999, p. 128).

Increasingly governments and public institutions responded by reducing expenditure and the size of the public sector, attempting to deliver budget balances or surpluses, selling of public assets, deregulating the financial and labour markets, introducing business practices into the management of public service organisations, contracting out of government services and shifting from needs to outcomes based welfare and service provision (Bessant 1997, p. 35- 36). This had a huge effect on the practices of those committed to community development and community service provision. It fundamentally changed the political and discursive terrain so that there was little room for public and community participation and a shift towards a reliance on economic theory as a way of understanding the needs of community. It also saw a significant reduction in government spending on welfare, particularly that which had been provided by community groups. Where funding continued community groups were forced to enter into market relations and compete with private providers (Bessant 1997, p. 38).

Having observed that community development seems to have waned in popularity after the mid 1980s there remained some indication that community was important in the provision of welfare services. In 1986/87 the Child Welfare (Care Centres) Regulations were reviewed. This reflected a policy shift towards the notion that children's services ought not simply be offered to disadvantaged or 'welfare' families rather, they were a basic community service available to everyone and provided by community based or private institutions.

One effect of a shift towards economic rationalism was the increased emphasis upon government instrumentalities responding to the needs of consumers. Perhaps this ironically led to an increase in calls for access to records through freedom of information legislation and prompted the department to establish systems to make available information, records and documents to the community (Proud 2003, p. 6).

In 1993, partly as a response to the Carter Review's recommendation that a distinction be made between the welfare and justice aspects of State Government responsibility, the Department handed over part of its functions to the Ministry of Justice. This also prompted another name change to the Department for Community Development (Proud 2003, p. 6).

Although from 1993-1995 it retained its name as the Department for Community Development there were indications that it was moving away from having an interest in community. Indeed in 1994 it substantially changed the way it allocated resources to the non-government sector, developing a funding for services model, competitive tendering, contracts for services, industrial reform and benchmarking. The effect of these changes was devastating for many small community organisations, pushing them out of the 'market' in favour of larger and more economically competitive and business-like organisations (Mendes 2003, p. 39). Indeed in 1995 the move away from an interest in community was made explicit when the Department changed its name to the Department of Family and Children's Services (Proud 2003, p. 7).

The period between 1990 to 2000 also saw changes in the work of local government in Western Australia. Until the mid 1980s most Western Australian local authorities lagged behind their eastern states equivalents and were primarily concerned with that group of services dealing with what we might term the 'three Rs' : "roads, rates and rubbish" (Saggers, Carter, Boyd, Cooper, & Sonn, 2003, p. 23). Since this time a number of key trends in reform have impacted upon most local authorities. Important among these shifts has been structural and process reforms that have seen some redrawing of boundaries, the reorganisation of functions, changes in management models and the introduction of more rigorous reporting and accountability systems (Caulfield, 2003, p. 14).

At the same time, there was a move away from property-based services to people based or human services as Western Australian local governments are increasingly called upon to take responsibility for services once delivered by other levels of government. More specifically, local governments have increased activity in relation to housing provision, recreation and culture, social and community services and community amenities (Johnson, 2003). This has meant that in the community development arena, Western Australian local government functions have increased and expanded to include social policy development, planning, social research, the support of outside services, coordination of local services, assistance with planning new initiatives, and acting as a catalyst for much local action (Hall, 1993, p.175).

In 1989 the Local Government Community Services Association of Western Australia (LGCSA) was established. The formation of this professional association reflected the need of a growing number of staff who were being employed in local government for staff development and the chance to meet with others endeavouring to work with communities in this new setting. Since then the LGCSA has grown in size and scope, producing newsletters, organising regular conferences attended by over two hundred and fifty people working in local government community work in such fields as broad as:

- Community Services Management
- Senior Services

- Community Development
- Children Services
- Social Planning
- Youth Services
- Recreation and Leisure
- Aboriginal Affairs
- Community Participation
- Personal and Financial Counselling
- Cultural Development
- Ethnic Affairs
- Family Services
- Disability Services
- Economic Development (LGCSA 2004).

2000-2004 – Building community capacity

Over the past four to five years talk about community and community development practice have re-emerged with enthusiasm in Western Australia.

In July 2001, after a change from a Conservative to Labor Government the Department underwent a substantial restructure and shift in emphasis. The renaming of the Department occurred after a recommendation from the ‘Machinery of Government Taskforce’ initiated by Premier Gallop. This group recommended the creation of “ an over-arching community development portfolio to take care of the social well-being of individuals, families and communities. The new Department of Community Development took in the functions of the old Department as well as those previously taken on by the Offices of Family and Children, Youth Affairs, Women’s Policy and Senior’s Interest. Although promoted as novel, the new Department’s mandate reaffirmed previous ideas about the importance of building on community capacity and encouraging community to shape their own destiny (Proud 2003, p. 9). The new Department’s vision statement rehearses its old commitment to community and community building in the following way:

The Department for Community Development’s vision is improved social wellbeing for all individuals, families and communities in Western Australia. This is achieved by working together to:

- *Strengthen communities so that individuals and families are able to meet their needs, achieve self-reliance, and contribute to their own solutions;*
- *Promote a just and equitable community enriched by diversity and increased social participation;*
- *Support families and communities to provide for the care and safety of their members (Department for Community Development 2004).*

However, notable has been a slight change in emphasis towards the notion of capacity building. In commenting on this new emphasis on community development in its recent submission to the Gordon Inquiry into Aboriginal Child Abuse, the Department states that:

This vision will see the portfolio move from a predominant focus on the provision of welfare and safety net services in response to problems, towards a greater emphasis on building the

capacities and strengths of individuals, families and communities (cited in Gordon 2003, p. 130)

Much of the recent re-embracing of community development is not new. However, it does appear that there has been a marginal change in language and a slight shift in practice. The first feature of recent discourse on community development is that it is not simply being taken on by those involved in welfare and social services. Indeed many of those most energetic about community development include people working in local government, property development, Indigenous governance, mining, environmental protection and sustainability, training, tertiary education, tourism, economic development and banking (Dixon 2003, p. 19). Another feature of recent talk about community development is an increased emphasis on private sector funding and the importance of “partnerships” between corporate citizens and local groups. Much of the discourse is taken from the language of auditing. Ideas such as asset building community development, capacity building, auditing social inclusion, social entrepreneurialism, social capital, partnering and community enterprise have their pedigree in market economics, marketing, commerce and managerialism (Watson 2003, p. 2). Another feature of more recent turns towards community development is that governments appear much more captivated than they perhaps have been in the past. Community seems to be a useful target of government responsibility but also increasingly a preferred way to do government. As Dixon (2003, p. 20) observes, governments are more and more seeing community as an administrative unit and platform for carrying out state policies (including such things as risk management plans, social and economic development and capacity building).

This is at least in part a feature of the global popularity of Third Way politics, which has celebrated the spread of effective communities, people’s attachment to voluntary and civic associations, the achieving of greater social solidarity and social cohesion and the replenishing of the community’s stock of social capital (Bennett 2002, p. 49). According to Rose (1999), third way politics (in part inspired by communitarian ideals) depends enormously on a certain treatment of community, not only as subject to or the responsibility of government but, more importantly, as a kind of technology of government. In other words, increasingly governments are seeing community not so much as something they need to serve but as something to be programmed. Describing what he calls government through community Rose (1999, p. 176), says that in this way a new sector or field of activity is being brought into existence where community becomes not so much a descriptor for a particular set of people as a novel set of programmes and techniques that government can use to do its work.

CONCLUSION

It is often assumed that in 'days gone by' community was a natural part of life. A popular claim is that in the Western Australia of the past people had tight knit connections and healthy bonds. However, many assert that slowly but surely all this has been breaking down. Western Australians are increasingly finding community is on the decline and out of reach.

Predictably many are advocating the need to use new and innovative methods to re-engage this lost sense of community by building people's capacity and adding to their resilience. As old and natural processes for community building have been lost the prescription is for fresh and creative solutions, a sea change in philosophy and method (see Muirhead 2002; McKnight and Kretzmann 1993; Edgar 2001).

In response to this, talk about community development is on the rise, proliferating in the language and rhetoric of government and surging in popularity among state agencies, non-government organisations and the business sector. This 'community speak' includes talk about 'assets-based community development', 'community capacity building', 'social capital formation', 'government-community partnerships', 'community and neighbourhood renewal', 'place management' and 'community enterprise' (Mowbray 2004, p. 11).

However, many of the claims made about the newness or innovation of this policy turn are at best erroneous, at worst dishonest. Chasing better community and instituting community development initiatives have a considerable history. For some time many of those seeking to influence social policy and the welfare of Western Australians have called up community development as the means to achieve their goals. Particularly during the period from 1971 to the early 1990s many were attempting community development initiatives. Again it seems we are fancying the idea that building community is the best and most productive way of governing.

However, it is worth at least some caution before becoming seduced by evangelists for community development and its associated rhetorical and policy cousins such as capacity building, community participation, deliberative democracy and community engagement. Bauman (2001, p. 5) maintains that to be human is to be torn between the desire for security and the desire for freedom. Wisely he has observed that over the past two hundred years interest in community building has waxed and waned, sinking in and out of popularity and enjoying regular revivals. If he is right then to be human is to be ambivalent about community, regularly seeing it pass from popularity, only to be called back at some later time. Armed with this realization we can at least do one useful thing; "take stock of the chances and the dangers which solutions proposed and tried (for community) have in store." This may help us be in a stronger position to avoid repeating past blunders and atrocities in the name of community.

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