

When did welfare become a 4 letter word?

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Rethinking the idea of welfare

- When did change happen?
 - What informs the change?
 - What's different about welfare?
 - How/why is it popular?
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Changing welfare debate:

- 1999: Australian welfare reform agenda
- Australia: Preceded by labour market, economic and social reforms commenced by Hawke/Keating governments in 1980s
- Twenty years - theme in international debate
- Dependency & concerns that welfare contributes to passivity among recipients

Where do ideas about dependency come from?....

2 Interconnected influences

- The idea that welfare contributes to dependency (and that dependency is negative)
 - Changing ideas about welfare, the welfare state, the role of government and of citizens
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Keywords

- *DEPENDENCY & PASSIVE WELFARE*
- *PARTICIPATION, RECIPROCITY, MUTUAL OBLIGATION*
- *NO RIGHTS WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY*
- *POLITICS OF ENVY*

Perhaps

- ❖ *RECOGNITION & SOCIAL JUSTICE ?*
 - ❖ *REDISTRIBUTION?*
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Is dependency a new idea?

- Unpacking ideas about dependency
 - 18th & 19th C – individual civil & political rights. Independence achieved/defined by owning property, civil & political rights followed status
 - Morality of dependence
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Dependency theories.....

- Charles Murray

welfare provision, social irresponsibility & moral sloth

- Lawrence Mead

Welfare recipients 'dutiful but defeated' so 'help and hassle'

Post-WWII social consensus

- Post WWII welfare state - social citizenship
 - Social democratic aims
 - Old social consensus - social justice & rights agenda promote fairness, and *a fair go*
 - Promoting citizens active engagement in work, society, policy making active citizens: equity,
 - Australian social welfare: limited, targeted.
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What's different?

- Active citizen to morally questionable dependent
 - Supervision & monitoring
 - Surveillance
 - Responsibility rather than equity
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How are discourses of Dependency maintained

- Politics of community
 - Downwards envy
 - Taken for granted assumptions about independence and *dependency*
 - 18th/19th C understandings of Independence, civil & political rights
 - ... *dependency* became linked with morality, as a negative character trait
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Shaping the Future:

Challenging *dependency vs welfare dualism*

- Rights –
 - Of people receiving ‘welfare’ to engage in labour market but also policy making and service delivery
 - Rights (social, human, individual) agenda to tackle poverty

Responsibilities of all citizens and stakeholders

- To contribute
 - To *recognise difference*;
 - To promote redistribution (via income/service) to address poverty
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Rights, Responsibility & Redistribution

Responsibilities of all citizens and stakeholders

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