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PROJECT 17233:

Intellectual disability (Compulsory Care) legislation

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of
Master in Philosophy
in Sociology at
Massey University

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1999

Abstract

This study presents an exploration of the history of people who have an intellectual disability and the proposed Compulsory Care legislation that is currently before Parliament. The hypothesis posed is that the legislation is the result of a moral panic. An analysis of the components of a moral panic were identified and examined.

The history of the 'eugenics' era is outlined. This era involved the systematic marginalisation of intellectually disabled people on the basis that they posed a 'serious' threat to Western society. This period of history spanning the years 1880 to 1930 is examined for evidence of a moral panic. The 1950's to the present day are briefly reviewed for evidence of a continuation of eugenic thinking.

The process and progress of the Compulsory Care legislation is documented and analysed. The findings show there is some evidence to support the hypothesis but that it is insufficient to confirm the view that the legislation resulted from a moral panic.

Acknowledgements

This research has been completed with the help of many people, support that has been given in both practical and emotional terms.

To Cathy Diggins who proof read this with enthusiasm and care.

To my supervisor, Dr Peter Beatson, I owe a debt of gratitude. There were times I am sure he despaired of my ever viewing the research from an academic perspective rather than through an emotive, combative stance.

I wish to thank members of the Ministry of Health who provided comment on two chapters, this was useful. I wish to especially thank Ingrid Ward whose support helped me to gain access to the information relating to the legislation and who provided a comfortable environment for me to carry out the research.

I wish to thank my work colleagues for their understanding, patience, and moral support. These include Heather, Maureen, Gensina and particularly Asta.

To my family and friends who have put up with the highs, lows, frustrations, joys and confusions I am grateful that they have been there to support me. To Wendy who has walked this journey with me, experienced all the trials and tribulations that writing a thesis brings, saying thank you is not enough, but it is all I am going to say here.

I need to acknowledge that this thesis would not have been attempted without my being made acutely conscious through association with people who have intellectual disability who have

been stigmatised and marginalised that their difficulties are primarily a consequence of what others have done to them. They have suffered and continue to suffer the results of poor service provision.

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