

what to do with it. The central aim now is economic growth but economic growth only reaches or benefits the top 60% of income earners. For the rest the other great economic principle applies — 25% of the people cannot afford to use anything much and privatisation is taking away much of what they can afford to use.

Lionel Murphy would never have believed that within less than a decade of his death economic rationalism would have become so powerful. And economic rationalism is not just a way of thinking. It is a way of living. It is the rule of inhumane values and alienation. It is not just the impact of some law or authority on individuals or groups of individuals. It is not something that can be much dealt with by libertarians. It is a total social condition, a collective of government authorities and capitalist institutions. It is an impersonal authoritarian system which reaches everyone.

I think George Venturini deserves much of the credit for producing *Five Voices of Lionel*. There have been few books apart from his own capable of opening the reader to a more productive response to Lionel Murphy's ideas. In his lecture, George Venturini shows the libertarian and egalitarian quality of the Republic (not nationalism as it is for so many other Republicans), which made Lionel Murphy a Republican. The Republic, in the sense of cutting ties with Britain and the Crown, will change things very little. No one in Canberra is likely to be more libertarian and egalitarian than those in London. Constitutional changes in Australia must go much further than installing a Republic. But how far and in what form? Is representative government of any kind really government by the people? And apart from direct action like the Vietnam moratorium, or to save a swimming pool, a secondary school, an Albert Park, or a market how can we have government by the people?

The 'social problem' looks as if it becomes more intense every day, and society does not know what to do about it. However important are Lionel Murphy's principles, I conclude by reminding the reader that Teilhard de Chardin wrote that what we are involved in is nothing less than an 'organic crisis; an organic crisis in evolution'. Human beings have always solved their organic crises in evolution.

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Zoos and Animal Rights. The Ethics of Keeping Animals

by *Stephen St C. Bostock*; Routledge 1993, distributed by *Thomas Nelson*; \$32.95.

Why should we be interested in the way animals are treated in zoos? Having been a vegetarian for the past 15 years as well as a member of *Friends of the Zoos* for the past four years, I have often wondered how we can reconcile the pleasure we derive from contact with animals with the likelihood that such animals would be better off not having contact with humans. Let's face it, zoos must be pretty mind-numbing places for some animals. I hoped Bostock would provide me with some useful insights into how such issues might be dealt with. While I found *Zoos and Animal Rights* an interesting book, several important issues such as the regulation of private zoos deserved more detailed consideration.

Bostock, an education officer for Glasgow Zoo, seems to have been writing for several audiences with this book. Some sections of the book are accessible and informative while others have a much more philosophical, theoretical flavour. I found the chapter on the history of animal keeping and the two chapters on conservation to be the most interesting and useful.

Chapter 2 of the book outlines the history of animal keeping from Egyptian and Mesopotamian times, through the relatively enlightened practices of the Ancient Greeks, to the astounding brutality of Roman times. Thousands of animals, mainly lions and leopards, were slaughtered each year from the second century BC until the first century AD as part of a range of activities for the pleasure of the citizens. In the book's introduction, Bostock relates an incident in Versailles in 1792 where the menagerie founded by Louis XIV was now the property of the fledgling French republic. A group of Jacobin sympathisers demanded 'the liberty of beings intended by their Creator for freedom but detained by the pride and pomp of tyrants'. The director of the park in which the menagerie was housed agreed but must have been worried that the liberators would be eaten by the liberated and so offered the Jacobins the keys. At this stage it was decided to leave the beasts provisionally where they were.

Bostock devotes considerable attention to conservation issues. He views conservational captive breeding as the most important role and most proper justification for the continuing existence of zoos. This is especially so in the context of the growing number of endangered species. He also deals effectively with the issue of reintroducing captive bred animals to the wild as well as the taking of an animal from the wild, a practice which 'is considerably more difficult to justify than keeping it in a zoo'.

Several important issues which would have provided fertile ground for argument are dealt with only briefly in *Zoos and Animal Rights*. Amongst these are the following.

- The tension caused by zoos giving humans a false sense of security in relation to the continuing existence of endangered animals by having them displayed in easily accessible places. On the other hand, zoos act as 'honey pots' helping to divert a large proportion of visitors from visiting and most likely damaging endangered habitats.
- The importance of preserving habitats and ecosystems. It must be acknowledged that there is little value in keeping species alive in zoos in unsustainable small numbers while doing little or nothing to preserve their habitat.
- The way in which zoos decide which species they will work with and expend their resources on. Generally, it is the cuddly, big and rare which receive the attention, leading to the suggestion that zoos could better be called 'selected charismatic megavertebrate conservation centres'.
- The difficult issue regarding the relationship between conservation objectives and hunting in situations where the recreational hunting lobby is actively working to 'preserve' remnant or pressured habitats for the purpose of their 'sport'. Bostock states 'Hunters appreciate, as laymen don't, that there is no contradiction between conservation and hunting. Historically, hunting provided the motivation for wildlife conservation.' If such an argument can be

sustained in current times, in my view this can only occur in situations where the animal involved is present in significant numbers and can be killed in a humane manner.

In the more philosophical parts of the book, I felt that too much time was spent on theoretical justifications of the current practices of zoos in situations where they do not provide particularly stimulating environments for their animals. There were also many instances where the reader was being asked to discount the inhumane practices of zoos in the past on the basis that 'things have changed' but insufficient attention was paid to outlining just how the situation

has changed. The book might also have benefited from a greater animal focus. That might sound strange for a book on zoos and animal rights but much of the discussion of animals dealt with them in terms of their value to humans rather than their more intrinsic worth as part of the diversity of life.

Overall, *Zoos and Animal Rights* is a book worth reading for those of us with a strong interest in our fellow creatures. The book also provides an excellent bibliography for anyone interested in thinking further about these issues.

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The Ethics and Politics of Human Experimentation

by Paul M. McNeill; Cambridge University Press; 315 pp; \$49.95 hard cover.

By far the majority of experimentation that is carried out on human beings today will do no harm to its subjects and will further advance our knowledge of medicine. However, recent examples of large scale unethical and/or negligent medical research are not hard to find.

From 1966 through to the mid-1970s the National Women's Hospital in Auckland approved a study in which women diagnosed with cervical cancer were left untreated in order to observe whether or not their condition would develop into invasive cancer. The women were never told of their condition nor that they were subjects of medical research.

Many of these women were repeatedly brought back to the hospital for observation during the course of the experiment. The subsequent spread of the cancer killed many of them. Perhaps surprisingly, this experiment was not the work of some 'mad doctor' or rogue department, but was overseen and approved by the National Women's Hospital Ethical Committee. How can any ethical review committee approve such a study? Why did it take so long for the experiment to be halted? Could it happen again?

In *The Ethics and Politics of Human Experimentation*, Dr McNeill argues that ethical research depends on the adequacy of review by committee. The book draws examples of unethical experimentation from history (including German and Japanese war crimes) and more recent incidents, to show that ethical review committees, as currently constituted are inadequately prepared to

protect the interests of the subjects of human experimentation. He further urges that committees will not find an equitable balance between the interests of medical researchers and the interests of the subjects until there is greater representation of the subjects on committees.

Dr McNeill proposes a new model for committee review in which there are 'at least as many subject representatives as representatives of science'. Whilst few ethical review committees work this way, he points out that occupational health and safety committees have used this model across a broad range of industries in many countries including the United States, Canada, Britain and Australia.

Dr McNeill also examines the attitude of the law to the notion of consent and to the difference between treatment and experimentation and finds that there is a need to reconcile the apparent conflict between the law and medical practice. He suggests that there is a role for legislation in securing the rights of both subjects and committee members.

This book will be read by members of ethical review committees, medical professionals, lawyers, community health workers and increasingly, using Dr McNeill's model, people such as myself who merely have an interest in the role of ethics in society and may one day be asked to represent human subjects of medical experimentation.

DAMIEN HOGAN

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Developments in Australian Politics

Edited by Judith Brett, James Gillespie and Murray Goot; Macmillan Education Australia Pty Ltd, 1994; 446 pp; \$36.95, soft-cover.

A good politics text provides its reader with detail, depth, analysis and a survey of the subject in context. The editors of *Developments in Australian Politics* have achieved this standard with a book which is intended not only as a text for politics and public policy students but also 'to be of interest to a variety of non-student readers'.

Developments in Australian Politics is a collection of essays aimed at providing a contemporary perspective on Australia's political institutions, public policies, political ideas and values. Integral to this survey is a discussion of Australia's political transformation during the 1980s which saw, among other things, an inward-looking and protected economy transform into a cosmopolitan society facing the challenges of international competition. For many people this transformation has been exciting and has led to increased opportunities, but for others it has brought unemployment and fear that traditional Australian social values have been lost forever.

To provide a comprehensive examination of this transformation the editors have included essays which examine Australia's political structures, organisations, parties, social and economic policy. Accordingly, *Developments in Australian Politics* is structured in two parts. Part one focuses on Australia's political foundations, forms and structures. From a legal view point, it contains the most interesting and important contribution to this volume.

The essay by Professor Anthony Blackshield examines the concepts of parliamentary sovereignty, appropriate and proportionate laws, judicial power and implied rights in the context of recent High Court decisions. In particular, Blackshield focuses on the way the High Court has transformed itself from a bastion of conservatism to an instigator of fundamental change. This transformation is explained with particular reference to the Court's judgments in *Mabo*, *Nationwide News* and *Australian Capital Television*.