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The following selection of books on family-related topics are recent additions to the Institute's Family Information Centre. They are available through libraries, or through the Family Information Centre via the inter-library loan system, or for purchase from good book shops. Prices are given as and when supplied.



***Young Aboriginal Fathers Project: Research report*, by Craig Hammond, Richard Fletcher, John Lester and Sue Pascoe, University of Newcastle, Callaghan, 2003. Price: \$27.50.**

This publication is part of the Family Action Centre's, *Engaging Fathers Project*. The aim of the report was to survey indigenous and non-indigenous organisations which provided services to young Aboriginal fathers, and to interview a sample of young Aboriginal fathers. Findings from the survey of service providers found that while many organisations offered family-related services, less than 20 per cent of the users of services directly related to parent education and support were men. Services were also concerned about the lack of support available to young, indigenous fathers. The young men themselves felt uncertain of their roles as fathers, and suggested practical ways of improving support. Overall the report recommends that it is important for services to recognise the importance of indigenous fathers for the wellbeing of their children, and to develop programs, services and resources relevant to these young men. This report would make vital reading to anyone in the human services field working with young, indigenous families.



***The sociology of gender: An introduction to theory and research*, by Amy S. Wharton, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, 2004.**

This introductory text covers the following topics: the gendered person; gender in interactions and institutions; work and family; gender, childhood and family life; employment and gender; and gender differences and inequalities. Each chapter begins with a list of chapter objectives, and ends with a short list of books for further reading. This book would make important reading for students of sociology, gender studies and related disciplines.



***Family policy matters: Responding to family change in Europe*, by Linda Hantrais, Policy Press, Bristol, 2004. Price: UK 23.99.**

Changing family living arrangements have created debate about socio-economic trends, family wellbeing and government policy. This book examines these issues from a European perspective. Taking a cross-national approach, the book examines the following

areas: the changing family; population decline and ageing; family diversification; family-employment balance; welfare needs; the impact of policy on family life; and responses to socio-economic change. While the book focuses exclusively on the European situation, many of the issues discussed do have relevance for Australia. Because of this, the book would make valuable reading for anyone interested not only in changing family dynamics, but also the impact this has on government policy.



***Communication among grandmothers, mothers and adult daughters: A qualitative study of maternal relationships*, by Michelle A. Miller-Day, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, 2004. Price: US 29.95.**

This work builds on the author's previous research (which looked at the mother-daughter relationship) to include grandmothers, thus giving a three-generational approach. The basis of the research was detailed interviews and observations of six sets of middle-income, Caucasian grandmothers, mothers and daughters. Initial chapters examine differing theoretical perspectives of the mother-daughter relationship, and the methodological approach used by the author in her research. Detailed descriptions of the participants in the study are also given. Remaining chapters examine the interaction of the three generations in detail. In Chapter Six, the author discusses her theory of "necessary convergence"

which she has developed to explain the ways in which women in enmeshed maternal relationships communicate with each other. This comprehensive study would be of interest to anyone interested in communication within families, or who works with families on an intergenerational level.



Attitudes to flexible working and family life, by Diane M. Houston and Julie A. Waumsley, Policy Press, Bristol, 2003. Price: UK 14.95.

This report focuses on work-life balance in the United Kingdom. Responses from over 1,500 members of a large manufacturing union, plus 50 union officials, were collated to gain an overview of attitudes to, and take-up of, flexible working practices. Key issues addressed were: differences in take-up of flexible work benefits by gender; differing attitudes related to occupational level and caring responsibilities; the effect of workplace culture; and perceived career implications of flexible working. The findings of this study would make for important reading for those working in human resource management as well as policymakers.



Family investments in children's potential: Resources and parenting behaviours that promote success, Edited by Ariel Kalil and Thomas DeLeire, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, 2004.

Is it what parents have or what they do that matter for children? This collection of papers examines parents'



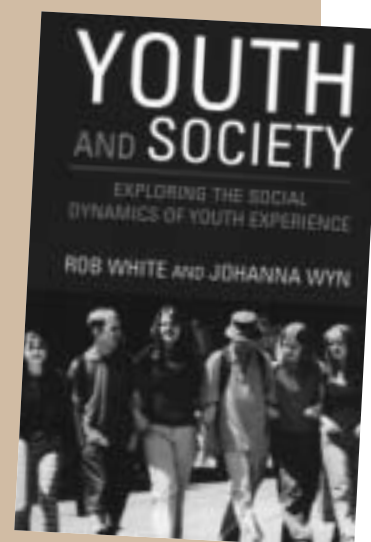
Well and good: How we feel and why it matters, by Richard Eckersley, Text Publishing, Melbourne, 2004. Price: \$32.00.

"Is life getting better or worse?," this is the answer that the author attempts to answer. Taking a broad brush approach, Eckersley examines how we (in western society) live now, and what makes us happy and gives meaning to our lives. He looks at a variety of issues such as health, youth issues, influence of the media, quality of life and what people mean by "happiness". The author concludes that using measures of the human condition such as population, life expectancy and income, more people are living better lives – however, he argues, "quality of life" is not the same as "standard of living". Using various quality of life criteria, such as degradation of the natural environment, inequality, and people's notion of the "meaning of life", he argues that these have to be weighed up against the gains made.

Youth and society: Exploring the social dynamics of youth experience,

by Rob White and Johanna Wyn, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2004. Price: \$44.95.

This Australian textbook provides a comprehensive overview of young people's lives in contemporary society. The authors aim to provide an understanding of the effects of social structure on young people, and the ways in which young people's identities are shaped. Part One, Social Divisions, examines class inequality and community resources; gender, sexuality and social difference; race and ethnicity; and young people in rural communities. Part Two, focusing on Social Institutions, discusses issues surrounding government policy, the family, education and juvenile justice are discussed. The final section, Social Identities, looks at young people and the economy, culture, health and



wellbeing. Written and presented in a clear, easy to understand format, and including a detailed list of references for further reading, this book would be a valuable resource for youth studies students and workers in the field.

abilities and choices regarding investments, both economic and psychological, in their children. Written from a variety of perspectives (including economic, biological, and developmental psychological theory), contributors examine the following issues: the role of genetics in family investment and child and adolescent adjustment; family influences on children's verbal ability; the impact of parental organisation and efficiency; and family investments in response to children with disabilities. Immigrant families, differing

family investments in sons and daughters, expenditure decisions in single-parent households and parent versus child-based intervention strategies are also examined. The final chapter gives a cross-national perspective on policies used to promote investments in children. This collection would make valuable reading for those involved in policy making with regard to children's services, as well as workers in the field.

Carole Jean is the Reference Librarian in the Institute's Family Information Centre.