

Expanding the Gaze: LGBTI People, Discrimination and Disadvantage in Australia

Jed Horner

Introduction

The Sackville Report provided an extensive overview of poverty in Australia and the issues associated not only with procedural, but also substantive, injustice.¹ It nominated, on the basis of evidence available at the time, a range of groups vulnerable to poverty, noting, for example, the unique needs of migrants and other population groups. Critically, it served as a springboard to galvanise political will to address these issues.

In 2017, unsurprisingly, Australia is a markedly demographically diverse nation. Often this is attributed to migration, as well as to an ageing population. Yet, it is equally attributable to evolving understandings and public expressions of sexual orientation, gender identity and bodily diversity, as well as associated population movement(s). In inner city Sydney, for example, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and arguably intersex (LGBTI) people, cumulatively constitute a significant population group. The latest census data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) indicates that 41 per cent of Australia's male same-sex couples and 34 per cent of the country's female same-sex couples live in New South Wales.² Whilst the term LGBTI, referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people, is used in everyday language, the use of this umbrella terminology actually speaks to *sexual orientation*, *gender identity* and *intersex status*. Each of these terms, anchored in international human rights jurisprudence, speaks to interrelated issues and experiences.^{3,4}

1 Australian Government Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, Second Main Report, *Law and Poverty in Australia* (AGPS, 1975) (the Sackville Report).

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Same-Sex Couples' (2013) <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features10July+2013#live>>.

3 International Commission of Jurists, *The Yogyakarta Principles: Principles on the Application of Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* <www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/principles_en.htm>.

4 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Discriminatory Laws and Practices and Acts of Violence against Individuals Based on Their Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (A/HRC/19/41)' (2011) *Geneva: Human Rights Council*.

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