

**Keynote Address to the Social Educators Association of  
Australia**

***Making a Difference: Multidimensional Citizenship in a  
Changing World***

**Presented by: Sharon Grierson Federal Member for  
Newcastle**

**Topic:**

***The changing concept of citizenship throughout Australia's  
political history – with particular consideration of:***

- ***the impact of the Howard years on Australia's  
understanding of its national and international  
identity and the responsibilities and obligations of  
citizenship, and***
- ***how the concept of multi dimensional citizenship may  
figure in the policies and actions of a new Rudd  
government.***

**I welcome the opportunity to address your conference  
today, before this audience of social educators who face  
the challenge of shaping the concept and application of**

**“citizenship” amongst your peers and students in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

**I understand that some of you may be disappointed that Tim Costello, Chief Executive of World Vision Australia, who was originally to speak, is not addressing you today. Tim is a modest man, but a giant when it comes to demonstrating a Christian love of his fellow man. He operates as a global citizen and has been a driver of the campaign to make poverty history. His work in Sri Lanka during the aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami typifies his determined commitment to making a difference for those in need, wherever they live.**

**Tim is a frequent visitor to Newcastle and has told me of his appreciation of the strength of the community ethos he has witnessed here. So Tim would tell you that this is a good place to consider the multidimensional concept of citizenship.**

In his book *"Tips from a travelling soul searcher"* (Allen & Unwin 1999) he talks about the many forms and reasons for soul searching, stating that *"perhaps it is some small part of a national odyssey in which we are reaching for a more collective soul for our country."* He urges us all to *"take the time to reconsider some principles and values which we can agree to hold sacred."*

So let's do that here – soul-search together for those principles and values that have and should shape Citizenship in this country and contemplate our participation in that quest.

Given the political context of my address, comparisons with another Costello can't be avoided. Whilst Tim Costello is in every way "inclusive" when it comes to citizenship, the same can not be said for his brother, Peter. As Treasurer in 2006 in his quest to assert his leadership credentials, Peter Costello recounted to the Sydney Institute, his experience at a citizenship ceremony in his

electorate. He spoke of listening to a speech from a local State MP which "*extolled the virtues of multiculturalism.*"

According to Peter, this was "*confused mushi misguided multiculturalism*". Peter's soul-searching about citizenship led him to list what he saw as Australian values. These included economic opportunity from hard work, security, democracy, personal & individual freedom, an acceptable physical environment and strong physical and social infrastructure. Whilst espousing "*the rule of law*" as "*at the heart of the Australian compact*" he then singled out Muslim Australians for special attention in relationship to the concept of "*one law*" in Australia while simultaneously declaring that Australia "*is a secular state*" which "*can protect the freedom of all religions.*" He concluded by listing another set of "*values of Australia and its citizens*" ... "*Loyalty, democracy, tolerance, the rule of law.*"

If you, like I do, sense some confusion there and absence of clarity in defining Australian values, then perhaps Peter Costello's speech is quite revealing in exposing the values

drift of the Howard years. Whilst the intentions of combining physical infrastructure with tolerance and the rule of law in a set of Australian values may represent some personal vision, perhaps they also reveal some inherent difficulty within the Howard government in defining a morals or values hierarchy as a basis for Australian citizenship.

For this address I've chosen to consider the political approach to "citizenship" within the context of two particular groups of citizens – indigenous Australians and migrant Australians to see what they reveal about our contemporary attitudes to citizenship and how they may impact on the approach of the new Rudd government.

In order to look more closely at the impact of the Howard years on Australian citizenship and contemplate the Rudd influence on our future, it is important to revisit citizenship since the white settlement of Australia. After all, Cogan and Derricott (*Citizenship for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An International Perspective on Education* 1998) tell us

**that when dealing with contemporary challenges, a citizen must be mindful of both the past and the future.**

**I would assert that many of the past approaches to citizenship have their legacy in the major moral dilemmas facing our nation today.**

**When we start at the beginning and consider indigenous Australians - the original citizens of this land after white settlement or invasion, we see the beginnings of songlines of inequity, disadvantage and isolation that continue into the political landscape playing out in the Northern Territory today. We see too the absence of functional citizenship for too many indigenous Australians.**

**Political cartoons from the 1800s, represent a theme of displacement- a sense of indigenous Australians “not belonging” in their native land. In spite of almost 2 centuries of political awareness and intervention, the 1820 depiction of aboriginal intoxication is an image that**

confronts us in the Northern Territory intervention begun by John Howard in June of 2007.

Historically, policies of extermination of non-citizen indigenous Australians characterised the early period of colonisation and continued into the 1870's. After federation in 1901, the struggle focused on gaining equal rights for Indigenous Australians to full citizens' status and civil equality with non-indigenous Australians. But it wasn't until the 1960's that government legislation began to reflect these demands, culminating in the 1967 referendum, when 90.77% of Australians agreed to delete section 127 of the Constitution, thus empowering the Commonwealth to make laws for Indigenous Australians. The referendum is often seen as the beginning of indigenous citizenship and the forerunner to the indigenous rights era which saw indigenous Australians campaigning for special recognition and support for the protection and maintaining of their unique culture.

The 1970's saw the creation of the tent embassy on the lawns of parliament house in 1972, the election of the first Aboriginal Senator, Neville Bonner, who advocated for due entitlement for dispossession *"so that we may recapture our dignity and our pride as human beings."*, and the establishment of the Aboriginal treaty Commission in 1979. But according to Dr William Jonas, Social Justice Commissioner Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission in his 2002 *paper "Reflections on the history of Indigenous people's struggle for human rights in Australia – what role could a treaty play?"* fundamental change regarding indigenous citizenship began in the 1990's – *"From.. the creation of the reconciliation movement, the release of the Royal commission report into aboriginal deaths in custody, the creation of ATSIC, to Mabo, the rejection of terra nullius and recognition of the ongoing connections of Indigenous cultures to land, to the Native Title Act, Indigenous Land Fund and Social Justice package proposals, to the Bringing them home Report, the foundational myths of settlement and the reality of the history of Indigenous – non-indigenous relations have*

*been exposed and recognised once and for all..... We have now reached a point where there is no turning back."*

But Bill Jonas, an alumni and councillor of this University, also began in this article to caution about a new emerging influence coinciding with the Howard years. The excision of the operation of Aboriginal heritage protection laws to allow development of Hindmarsh island, the failure to insist on state and territories repealing the racially discriminatory mandatory detention laws, the failure to implement the recommendations of the *Bringing them Home* report, the diminishing of the Native Title Act, the introduction of practical reconciliation and the eradication of ATSIC all stand as the legacy of the Howard years to Indigenous citizenship. As do the social indicators of that period that show no improvement in statistics of lower life expectancy, higher rates of infant mortality, placement of children into care and incarceration within the general aboriginal population.

Significant to our discussion, in June 2007, Mal Brough the then Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Prime Minister John Howard announced a state of emergency regarding sexual abuse of children in the Northern Territory following the earlier release of a report "Little Children are Sacred" to the NT government. This intervention virtually suspended citizen rights for those living in specific remote communities. This sudden discovery of the social problems besetting some remote indigenous communities five months before a national election, reeked of a political attempt to wedge the Opposition and present them as soft on Aboriginal child abuse.

But to perhaps the disappointment of the Howard government, the outcome was that both the Australian public and the federal opposition focussed on the expectation of real solutions from the intervention rather than political, cultural or social division. Perhaps the other significant outcome was the electoral defeat of both Mal Brough and John Howard in the November 2007 election.

As a member of parliament, I had the great privilege of being invited to the remote Yuendumu community in the Territory with the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit during a 2005 inquiry into access to legal services by indigenous Australians. After discussions with the combined community the male committee members talked further with the men and as the only female parliamentarian I met with the women in their safe house. There I learnt from the women that although Yuendumu was considered a "dry community" that meant that grog was dropped off some kilometres out of town, with inevitably some of the men returning to threaten and abuse the women and children. They stressed the importance of the safe house complete with 2m fence topped with barbed wire, and the women's night patrol to their safety and security. My questions about sexual abuse were met with averted eyes and a prolonged silence. Reunited with my male parliamentary colleagues on the flight out, I was amazed as they represented the community to me as one with no problems of alcohol and abuse! When it comes to political ideology, ignorance can

be bliss! I note however, that in recent times, the people of Yuendumu have publicly acknowledged their social problems and resolved to seek improved social harmony.

It will be interesting to track the progress of this community and measure their outcomes against the differing ideas of citizenship – theirs, the media, government and its agencies.

So will indigenous citizenship look different under a Rudd government? Many of you will know that one of the first commitments of this Government has been an official apology to the stolen generation – an apology absent throughout the term of the Howard government. Although three days before announcing the 2007 election date, John Howard committed to a symbolic act of reconciliation within 18 months of being re-elected. A retraction of any notion of saying sorry followed quickly thereafter and now we will never know what symbolic act may have taken place.

**Consultation between indigenous leaders and the new government is underway to get it right.**

**Before the introduction by the Howard government of the Northern Territory intervention, on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1967 referendum, Kevin Rudd committed the nation under a Labor government to the following goals:**

- to eliminate the 17 year gap in life expectancy between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians within a generation;**
- to at least halve the rate of indigenous mortality among babies within a decade:**
- to at least halve the mortality rate of indigenous children aged under five within a decade; and**
- to at least halve the difference in the rate of indigenous students at years 3, 5 and 7 who fail to meet reading, writing and numeracy benchmarks within ten years.**

To achieve these goals – the entitlements of any basic citizenship - will be the real test of the Rudd government's commitment to indigenous citizenship. In fact Kevin Rudd said at the time "The test of our sincerity, will be whether we turn words into deeds; whether we turn good intentions into consistent action; and whether we embrace a new spirit of reciprocal partnership with Indigenous Australians for the future."

Jenny Macklin, Rudd's Indigenous Affairs Minister, met with the Northern Territory intervention taskforce in the past week and stated that "*if children are to be safe in their own homes and their own communities, that they really need to have strong, viable communities, communities that have employment and economic development opportunities, communities that have services that other Australian communities expect and enjoy.*", emphasising that she was not interested in ideology but in what works.

**So the new Rudd government is demonstrating many of the competencies Cogan and Derricott tell us citizens today must possess: working cooperatively, taking responsibility, thinking in critical and systematic ways, resolving conflict in a non violent manner, respecting and defending human rights and participating in public life at all levels of civil discourse. If this modus operandi replaces the paternal benevolence adopted by the Howard government, then a better model will exist for all Australian citizens.**

**As social educators, using the Cogan Derricott model of multidimensional citizenship - the personal, social, spatial and temporal dimensions - there is much to understand about personal capacities, social interactions, overlapping communities, and the influence of the past on the future of indigenous Australians in remote communities if educators are to be a part of the development of autonomous multidimensional citizenship within our most disadvantaged communities. It would seem evident that self-worth is damaged, social order is diminished, sense of**

**community is limited and that the influence of history is a continuing constraint on indigenous participation.**

**As social educators you have a responsibility to ensure that your students have an appropriate understanding of our political history and its consequences on indigenous Australians, so they can understand the very short period where indigenous citizenship has had any real consideration and attention. But remind them that over 90% of Australians in the 1967 referendum wanted indigenous and non indigenous Australians to have a shared identity, and remind them that in the year 2000, 250,000 Australians walked for reconciliation in a spirit of brotherhood.**

**Who can actually become an Australian citizen has never been politically simple. Our first white settlers were failed British citizens, the refugees from political and economic persecution at a time when dissent, rebellion and crime were the poor man's tools of survival in a repressive Britain. In the 1800's, British migrants were actively**

sought to populate the new south land, but from the earliest times of white settlement others advocated the temporary importing of Asian and Polynesian migrants to end the labour shortage and help the expansion of agriculture. In the late 1840's several thousand Chinese, more akin to slaves and sold by brokers to overseas employers, arrived each year. With the Gold Rush more were sent and by 1857, there were 40 000 Chinese men in Victoria. Threatened by success of the Chinese, all the colonies passed legislation to control non-european migration.

Typical of the attitude of the day was an article in the Ballarat Star on August 20 1866 which said:

*"If these heathens who came here to pollute our blood and debauch our young children are not put under severe regulations we may reckon an epidemic sooner or later that may be as deadly as leprosy."*

After federation the federal government took over the control of immigration, deporting Queensland's kanaka

slaves and introducing a "dictation test" to exclude any migrant who could not pass a dictation test of 50 words in any European language.

Prime Minister Edmund Barton said when introducing the Bill to parliament on August 7 1901,

*"We are guarding the last part of the world in which the higher races can live and increase freely for the higher civilisation. I place before the house a measure of definite and high policy."*

The White Australia Policy restricted non-white immigration from 1901 all the way through to 1973 with eventually, the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 put into effect by the new Labor government. World Wars, trade alliances and nation state disputes continued to influence our immigration and refugee policies throughout the 1900s.

But let's move forward to the Howard years. The first term after election in 1996 coincided with the rise of One

**Nation and the influence of Pauline Hanson on the Australian psyche. Although rejecting her candidacy for the Liberal party, Howard's indecisiveness in condemning Hanson's racial comments on Asian immigration and what she dubbed the "Aboriginal Industry" fanned the flames of racism and the view that too much assistance was given to aborigines and that the high level of Asian immigration was threatening our way of life, became commonplace. Our relationship with Asia was strained by the Hanson influence , and Australia's foreign policy became more insular. With increasing tensions in the middle east and Afghanistan, the primacy of our relationship with America resurfaced.**

**In 1999 John Howard launched his National Multicultural Advisory Board stating that *"we respect and understand the fact that you were born in another country, you retain a special place in your heart for that country, and there is nothing in my view that diminishes the wholeness of the Australian nation in that being fully recognised."* However, Hugh McKay in the Mackay Report, *Mind and Mood (2003)***

noted some turning of the tide on multiculturalism and suggested a link to that ship that sailed over the horizon in the lead up to the 2001 election.

McKay suggests that *"One impediment to progress towards greater acceptance of our ethnic and cultural diversity has been the community's continuing irritation and impatience with asylum seekers, egged on by what some saw as explicit permission from the federal government to dehumanise "illegals" ". (P149)*

It was the infamous Tampa episode, when a Danish sea captain rescued refugees from a sinking fishing boat, was refused permission to continue with them into Australian waters and the Australian Navy offloaded them and took them to Nauru, that led to John Howard's memorable and some would say characteristic remarks "We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come." These words resonated with many Australians, and the government was returned in the 2001 Tampa election.

Interestingly, it was in the 2001 election that I entered parliament. Confident of retaining the seat of Newcastle, the only electorate in Australia held by Labor since Federation, I will never forget the influence of 2 jets flying into the New York trade centre and one ship exercising its duty to save life at sea, on the election polls in Newcastle – a largely white Anglo Saxon city. In spite of a decline in the vote I won the seat, and that Norwegian captain of the Tampa, he was awarded a UN humanitarian commendation for his actions as a global citizen.

Mandatory detention, the invasion of Iraq and the introduction of Anti-terrorism legislation dominated my first term in the opposition to the Howard government and in the absence of a convincing alternative national vision, the Howard government was returned at the 2004 election.

As an aside – in the aftermath of the 2004 election, the mismatch of the response by the Australian public and the

then Leader of the federal opposition, to the devastation of the Indian ocean Tsunami on people in Indonesia, Thailand and Sri Lanka, undoubtedly contributed to the resignation of Mark Latham. The amazing generosity of the Australian people in some way stands as a contradiction to the distrust of refugees, self-interest and protectionism attributed to the Australian psyche at that time.

Waves of asylum seekers and refugees continued to arrive on our shores and eventually the citizenship of Muslim Australians came under special scrutiny.

According to Michael Humphrey in *"Culturalising the Subject Islam, Law and Moral panic in the West."*

(Australian Journal of Social Issues: Autumn 2007 p12)

*"Islam became visible in Australia with the arrival of Lebanese Muslim war refugees (in the 1970's) and it is their settlement experience which has strongly shaped Australian public perception of Islam, despite the considerable ethnic diversity of Muslim immigrant*

*communities in Australia... They suffered chronically high levels of unemployment, the second generation became identified with crime and after September 11 they became suspected as potential Islamic terrorists."*

Perceptions that Islam as a religion was holding back Lebanese Australians from sufficiently assuming the Australian "identity" boiled over on the beach at Cronulla in December of 2005. Radio broadcaster Alan Jones was found by the Australian Communications and Media Authority to have "*encouraged violence or brutality*" and "*vilify people of Lebanese background and of Middle eastern background.*" One of his strongest defenders at the time was John Howard , who publicly stated "*I don't think he's a person who encourages prejudice in the Australian community, not for one moment but he is a person who articulates what a lot of people think.*"

Not too long after the Cronulla riots, I received an early morning phone call on my unlisted phone in Canberra from the producer of the Alan Jones radio program telling me

**Alan wanted to interview me in his morning show about a speech I'd made that week in parliament about Sudanese settlement programs. With a great deal of trepidation I agreed.**

**In the speech I had criticised the tendering of the delivery of the humanitarian settlement program to commercial entities. The new tender in NSW in practice meant that local communities and particularly their Migrant Resource Centres were unable to tender for the program, thereby drastically reducing community participation in the settlement process. The new commercial approach in Newcastle had emerged as a 9-5 telephone service with an interpreter available in Sydney! Some new Sudanese families had been found in the streets lost, starving and feeling isolated and abandoned. I had highlighted just how difficult it would be for traumatised Sudanese to integrate into their new communities and emphasised that maximum local resourcing was needed and that community organisations not commercial entities should undertake the program. Alan Jones surprisingly agreed.**

Sudanese citizens came in for some special attention in the 2007 election year. The city of Tamworth rejected taking on Sudanese refugees and in the lead up to the election, Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews after a young Sudanese man was murdered commented that they were having difficulty integrating, and that no more would be admitted during the current financial year. He went on to compound his unsubstantiated comments with mention of race-based gangs, altercations and disagreements amongst prominent community organisations and tension within families. Police in Victoria responded by saying that the Ministers' comments were "*exaggerated and not helpful*".

The week of the Andrews controversy, five young Sudanese men presented at my electorate office to talk to their MP. They expressed their disappointment that a Minister of the Crown could make such disrespectful comments about them. They told me of their individual backgrounds – backgrounds of separation from their

family, being “lost boys”, living in refugee camps and coming to Australia with limited English, education or support. Each was studying at Newcastle University in courses ranging from Medicine to Economics. They told of the youth group they had organised and were running for younger Sudanese boys. One young man had married an Australian girl and was a proud father, others were saving to try to bring their family members to Australia. All had experienced overt racism and they stressed that although they always moved around together, that didn’t mean they were a violent gang. They told me how much they had supported up to that time John Howard, because he had allowed them to come to Australia, and spoke of their sense of disillusionment and rejection because of Minister Andrews comments. We planned together the response they felt they needed to undertake because of the anxiety Minister Andrews’ comments had caused each of them.

A meeting with the local press was facilitated and their story told to Newcastle. A subsequent meeting of Sudanese elders, students and women was organised for

them to share the wider community views with me and present a letter in email form to be forwarded to Minister Andrews and the Prime Minister on their behalf. For me, it was a wonderful experience to watch this new citizen group of Australians exercise their citizenship rights and responsibilities. To me they exemplified “integration” in spite of extreme adversity. They taught me how important citizenship is in this country and how it has mutual obligations and responsibilities for government, its representatives and the Australian citizenry.

I think Cogan and Derricott would have approved of the multi dimensional approach and the competencies they displayed -responding from their personal beliefs and experiences and applying them to the public realm. Their recognition that as citizens they must be able to interact with other people in a variety of social contexts and their understanding that they must operate locally and nationally as citizens.

Introduced in October of 2007, the citizenship test - a 20 question quiz on Australian history, values and way of life requiring also adequate competence in the English language was the final contribution of the Howard government to our citizenship regime.

A recent example of the citizenship test in action was raised recently in the Newcastle Herald - a Scottish couple who had been in Australia for almost 20 years, one of whom failed the citizenship test after he got one of the "mandatory" questions wrong. While one can sit the test as many times as needed, this gentleman said he felt "*too embarrassed, nervous and angry*" to immediately sit the test again. Critics have argued that the test is too focussed on Australian history - and indeed this couple suggested that many of their Australian friends didn't know the answers to many of the questions.

It is an interesting exercise to compare the competencies displayed by those five young Sudanese men and the competencies required to pass the Citizenship Test. I

understand this afternoon you will be having a presentation from the coordinator of the new national citizenship test for schools and I hope you will provide critical analysis and feedback.

Interestingly the 2007 election was almost silent on immigration – the citizenship test hardly raised a yawn and during the election an arrival of a boat of 16 people gained little reaction from the Australian public. However, there was one incident that perhaps gave hope that the Australian value of the “Fair Go” can still triumph over blatant racism.

I draw to your attention the ignominious defeat of the candidate for Lindsay in Western Sydney at the 2007 election, Karen Chijoff after her husband and the husband of the previous Liberal member, Jackie Kelly, were exposed circulating deliberately racist fear-mongering material which purported to be from an Islamic group which supported labor. Of course, the group didn't exist, and while Jackie Kelly thought it was all a “chaser-style”

**prank, the people of Lindsay certainly didn't appear to be laughing. They delivered a 9.7% swing against the Liberal Party the largest swing of any seat that changed hands in NSW.**

**So where does a Rudd government sit in the area of immigration and refugees? Well it will review the citizenship test in light of statistics which showed one in five of those sitting the test failed. We are also committed to teaching English, not just testing it, and to helping new migrants build pathways to employment. Our policy will provide:**

- Traineeships in English and Work Readiness, allowing new entrants to continue their English language tuition while developing knowledge, skills and experience in the workplace.**
- Teaching Language skills at Work, by designing an Adult Migrant English program with more emphasis on Vocational English.**
- Requiring a relationship between the Australian Migrant English Program and the Job Network,**

further assisting new arrivals to find pathways to employment; and

- Establishing an Employment Pathways Program, through which extra english language tuition hours will be able to be allocated to those students most in need. We have committed \$40 million to setting up this program.

But more importantly, Kevin Rudd went to the last election on fresh ideas for Australia's future. In the 2007 election the big issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century took centre stage: climate change, high speed broad band, regional security, an education revolution to skill and prepare Australians for a changing world. All policies with a global focus.

John Cogan and Ray Derricott (1998) identified some particular challenges, issues and problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that they thought essential to address if we are to develop a realistic and effective approach to citizenship.

**Some interesting parallels emerge with the emphasis of the new Rudd government.**

**They encourage adjustment to citizenship education to reflect the new historical realities and acknowledge the following factors as major influences on citizenship:**

- **Economic globalisation and disparities of wealth**
- **Deterioration in the global environment**
- **Inequitable access to information technologies**
- **Increasing government regulation and intervention into the lives of their citizens**
- **Increasing consumerism**
- **Regional and national conflicts based on race, religion and ethnicity**
- **Migration of massive numbers of people due to these conflicts**
- **The loss of political efficacy; and**
- **A decline in moral and political leadership.**

**Consider against these factors just some of the policies of a new Rudd government,**

- **Commitment to overseas aid and adopting the millennium development goals**
- **Plans to help pacific neighbours stabilise democracies and enrich the lives of their peoples**
- **Reinstitution of multi-lateralism and the importance of the United Nations.**
- **Becoming a signatory to the Kyoto protocol on climate change**
- **Withdrawing troops from Iraq**
- **Attempting to fix the health system nationally in cooperation with the States.**
- **Removing gag clauses in non-government organisation contracts**
- **Reviewing the operation of Freedom of Information (FOI) laws.**
- **Personal computer access at school for every senior secondary student**
- **A social inclusion portfolio in the capable hands of Deputy PM, Julia Gillard – a very special individual who advocates “hard heads and soft hearts.”**

The complete list is too long for our discussion here. But I will digress and talk briefly about an aspect of citizenship which is particularly important for young people today. That is, the rise and rise of online social networking tools such as MySpace and Facebook.

These sites are beginning to nurture a more complex notion of citizenship. People can log onto their account and see the latest uploaded photos of their friends in London or South America.

They can update their 'status' daily, so that their friends will know where they are and how they are feeling at any particular time of the day or the week.

They can also belong to networks inside cyberspace. Many people will be part of an Australian network whilst living overseas – in a way this online tool allows them an immediate dual citizenship. Of course, they can also belong to groups within those groups: the *Addicted to the West Wing group*, or the *Fans of the Princess Bride*.

**And we need to recognise that these are legitimate ways of interacting for many young people.**

**The online engagement of young people in a globalised digital world in this way gives a new dimension to their identity and gives us much to be confident about in the development of the multi-dimensional citizenship Cogan and Derricott would encourage.**

**Returning to the approach of the new Rudd Government, there is a more basic, simple reason why I am confident multi dimensional citizenship will be both modelled and nurtured by the new Rudd government. It goes to the diverse local, national and global experiences that have shaped Kevin Rudd, and to the personal nature of our nation's new leader. I quote Laurie Oakes (Bulletin Dec 4 2007 Page 14.):**

***"Australia's new Prime Minister has strong principles. Christian principles. He believes in good works, and he***

*practices what he preaches. During the campaign when he might have been expected to be focused on winning the election, Rudd also made quiet visits to (homeless) shelters in Brisbane and Sydney.... Rudd gave a campaign commitment to provide \$150m for emergency housing, but he did not make a big thing of it..... his conscience will compel him to use some of the (federal coffers) to help those who have no voice and no political clout..... Rudd is certainly, as he claims, an economic conservative, but he nevertheless has more in common with Tim Costello than with Peter.*

**I rest my case!**

**Well not quite! Yes, Australia has a new leader of a new government with a new vision – but in politics and life, the best laid plans of mice and men in a global world of disparity and uncertainty, often go awry.**

**That's where you, the social educators of this nation, have an important part to play. Understand and acknowledge**

**our history, know the challenges of the present, and help to equip all your students for the multidimensional citizenship the complex and changing future world will demand.**

**I commend the University staff for pulling this program together and hope that for all participants it will inform and inspire.**

**Thank you for your attention today.**