On dignity

Social inclusion and the politics of recognition

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Introduction

This paper discusses the role that a politics of recognition can play in strengthening the philosophical foundations of social inclusion thinking, and creating a better understanding of social inclusion in conceptualisation, policy and practice overall. 'Recognition' refers to a reciprocal respect for both the unique and equal status of all others (Honneth 2001, p.45). Taylor (1994) and Honneth (2001) have described how recognition is fundamental to our sense of self, our wellbeing, and our ability to function with freedom and at full capacity within society. More recently, Nancy Fraser (2000) has re-conceptualised recognition, differentiating it from Taylor and Honneth's focus at the level of the individual psyche, to make it a matter of status and participatory parity. While interconnected, these two approaches to recognition can be distinguished as 'inter-subjective' recognition (Honneth and Taylor) and 'institutional' recognition (Fraser) (Macdonald & Merrill 2002). Both are fundamental to social inclusion. Yet, while aspects of 'institutional recognition' have begun to receive more attention in writing on social inclusion, such as through the concepts 'participation' and 'social citizenship' (see for example Lister 2004; Buckmaster &Thomas 2009), the significance of 'inter-subjective recognition' remains relatively unacknowledged. In this article I argue that the concept of 'inter-subjective recognition' is an essential part of any successful socially inclusive agenda, because it can play a 'gate-keeping' role to the achievement of 'institutional' recognition, economic inclusion, and social inclusion and social justice overall.

The concept of recognition has received little attention in social inclusion scholarship and social policy more generally, despite being the subject of lively and prolific debate in political theory and philosophical quarters. As *Acta Sociologica* (2004) states, in mainstream welfare research the 'recognition turn has gone virtually unnoticed'. However, the philosophies of recognition are part of perhaps the most important debate in social thinking in recent decades, on the relationship between the social and the economic, between socioeconomic justice and cultural justice, between the politics of recognition and the politics of redistribution, or, at its most basic, between the material and non-material. As Zurn (2005, p.89) writes, 'much of the most productive work done in recent social theory has revolved around … the relationship between the politics of recognition and the politics of redistribution'. This is a relationship of particular salience to the concept social inclusion, because social inclusion promises to be a new, 'multidimensional' approach to the problems of poverty, disadvantage, and social polarisation, an approach that takes both the economic and social into account, and focuses on processes as well as outcomes. As Social Inclusion Minister Julia Gillard (2008, p.12) expressed it when launching the Australian Social Inclusion agenda, 'national economic and social policies will no longer be working at cross purposes'. Through the concept of recognition, this paper is particularly focused on how to conceptualise those social aspects of social inclusion, and how they interconnect with the economic.

As well as drawing on theories of recognition, the paper uses theoretical work on the cultural and economic aspects of social justice more broadly. The term 'social justice' is often seen these days as either a relic of the 1970s, or a catch-all used by conservatives and progressives alike (Craig, Burchardt & Gordon 2008). Yet social inclusion/exclusion agendas have provided the means for progressive governments in recent years to discuss

and attempt to address core social justice concerns. Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard talked about how, 'for too many Australians, access to experience and opportunities that are fundamental to their well-being and dignity are simply not available', and how a social inclusion agenda entails addressing 'poverty alongside plenty' (2008, p.12). At its best, then, social inclusion discourse and policy aspire to address social justice issues, so it is both fair and helpful to inform this political concept and policy agenda with these philosophies. Indeed, as Craig, Burchardt and Gordon (2008) point out, there are too few connections made between political philosophy and social problems, connections this article explicitly makes.

Furthermore, the concept of social inclusion still lacks a coherent theoretical core (Buckmaster & Thomas 2009). Smyth (2009) states that when social inclusion thinking in Australia does have a philosophical foundation, it has been Sen's (1985, 2005) capabilities approach, with its focus on capacity and freedom to choose and to act. But a capabilities approach is criticised for focusing too much on individual agency rather than the broader structure it takes place within (Lister 2004), with Townsend (1993), for instance, stating that it represents 'a sophisticated adaptation of the individualism which is rooted in neo-classical economics' (p.136, in Lister 2004). Indeed, some have argued that a capabilities approach has resulted in public policy, particularly in policy manifestations of the 'third way' that focus on reducing inequalities in 'capabilities' rather than reducing monetary inequalities (a 'hand up' rather than a 'hand out'), supplanting rather than complementing resource-based notions of poverty and inequality (Lister 2004). Also, despite its emphasis on 'dignity' (Nussbaum 2000), others have argued that a capabilities approach does not encompass either Honneth's inter-subjective or Fraser's institutional ideas of recognition (see Dean 2009). So it is both timely and useful to explore other philosophical foundations for social inclusion thinking, and specifically in relation to matters of recognition.

Existing scholarship explicitly connecting the theories of recognition to social inclusion is limited (Lister 2004, 2008; Morrison 2003a, 2003b). But work that more generally connects ideas associated with recognition to social inclusion is vast, and encompasses topics as diverse as new democratic practices, the sociology of class, and social inclusion policy critique along gender, ethnicity and disability lines. Rather than provide an exhaustive review of these different bodies of work, this paper instead draws on them to articulate different aspects of recognition and what these mean for the social and cultural aspects of social inclusion, how these aspects relate to the economic dimensions of social inclusion, and their significance to social inclusion, and specific social inclusion policy examples.

I begin with a brief discussion about the non-material aspects of poverty and social inclusion, then turn to theories of social justice examining the interconnection of recognition and redistribution, particularly the work of Nancy Fraser and Iris Marion Young. While reviewing work that sees a politics of recognition detracting from a politics of redistribution, I take the view that both of these (recognition and redistribution) are important to the achievement of the other, transcending the either/or approach of earlier culture vs economy debates. I then focus more closely on the idea of recognition, distinguishing between the concepts 'institutional recognition' and 'inter-subjective' recognition (Macdonald and Merrill 2002). After this conceptual work, I relate these theoretical ideas to social inclusion policy. Beginning with a brief overview of how these issues of redistribution and recognition have been touched on in social inclusion

scholarship to date, I look at three policy areas: neighbourhood renewal and participatory projects, participation in the paid work-force and 'jobless families', and homelessness and domestic violence, drawing on policy examples from both Australia and the United Kingdom. My main argument in this short overview of some key social inclusion policy areas is that inter-subjective recognition issues must be given due attention if social inclusion policy is to adequately respond to all relevant issues, and ultimately succeed.

Poverty, social inclusion, and the non-material

In his latest book, *The life you can save: acting now to end world poverty* (2009), ethicist Peter Singer draws on a World Bank study that 'asked researchers to listen to what the poor are saying'. They documented the experience of 60,000 poor men and women in 73 countries who said that poverty meant: you are short of food for all or part of the year; you can't save money; you can't afford an education for your children; you live in an unstable house; and you have no nearby safe source of drinking water. Singer goes on to make the following point:

> But extreme poverty is not only a condition of unsatisfied material needs. It is often accompanied by a degrading state of powerlessness. Even in countries that are democracies and relatively well governed, respondents to the World Bank survey described a range of situations in which they had to accept humiliation without protest. If someone takes what little you have, and you complain to the police, they may not listen to you. Nor will the law necessarily protect you from rape or sexual harassment. You have a pervading sense of shame and failure because you cannot provide for your children. Your poverty traps you and you lose hope of ever escaping from a life of hard work for which, at the end, you will have nothing to show beyond bare survival (2009, p.6)

While these are complex issues (for instance if one begins to consider matters of resistance as well as powerlessness, and the great diversity of experience among 'the poor') this basic point remains, and is well known: as well as being about the material, poverty is also about the lived experience of being treated as less-than, of experiencing layer upon layer of small and large indignities and disrespects, in everyday life, that illustrate over and over that one's dignity, worth and particularity are not recognised, which is wounding, and has serious consequences for life trajectory. Singer's point is, quintessentially, about 'recognition'.

Axel Honneth (2001) states that the recognition of human dignity is central to a principle of social justice: 'policy and programs that provide minimal economic safeguarding are not enough'. Honneth argues that recognition has always played a central role in moral philosophy in one form or other; but, with the exception of Hegel, none of the classical thinkers placed the principle of recognition at the core of their ethics. Indeed, Honneth argues that whatever the significance the concept may have been accorded, it has remained in the shadow of other determinations considered more fundamental, such as redistribution. Young (1990) argues that our contemporary theories about social justice have in fact been dominated by the idea of redistribution, and this has 'tended to restrict the meaning of social justice to the morally proper distribution of benefits and burdens to society's members' (p.15). At its most basic, redistribution is concerned with the division of a stock of goods between people, and a comparison of the portions. It focuses on the possession of

resources, income and wealth, and the distribution of social positions, especially jobs. By this way of thinking, injustice and oppression are viewed as ultimately rooted in economic inequality, and public discussions about social justice revolve around inequalities of wealth and income, and the extent to which the state can or should, through wealth and income, mitigate the suffering of the poor.

In the quote above, Singer pointed out those aspects of poverty that go beyond 'unsatisfied material need': powerlessness, 'the acceptance of humiliation without protest', a 'pervading sense of shame and failure', a 'loss of hope', and so on. Such 'recognition' issues are usually understood as simply a consequence of a lack of material resources. That is, the relationship between what we might term 'recognition' issues and 'redistribution' issues is seen as a relatively straightforward one of causation: a lack of material resources leads to misrecognition. From this perspective, matters of 'recognition' are often viewed as 'side' issues, or even irrelevant to the main issue, namely the redistribution of resources. Indeed, as already mentioned, this has been a familiar lament in parts of progressive politics in recent decades, that cultural struggles and claims for the recognition of difference are divisive and secondary in importance ('it's the economy, stupid'). But feminism, multiculturalism and other social movements have persistently called for greater attention to the unjust social and cultural processes that, as well as creating injustices on their own, are integral to the unjust distribution of material resources. Many have argued that it is a mistake to reduce injustice to the idea of redistribution alone. For example, Young (1990) argued that a sole focus on redistribution means that attention remained primarily drawn to end-state patterns (comparing and hopefully changing the portions), rather than the social structures, the institutional contexts, and the cultural underpinnings that helped create those unjust results in the first place. To address injustice fully, the social and cultural processes that create the unequal distribution of material resources must be understood, along with other fundamental forms of human harm. And to create social justice, individuals or social groups must also be accepted and respected in their differences.

As already stated, the concept 'social inclusion' is a multidimensional conceptualisation of poverty and disadvantage that promises to take both social and economic dimensions into account, and to focus not only on unequal outcomes, but on the processes that created them. For example, as Prime Minister Tony Blair put it when launching the UK Social Inclusion Unit in 2007, social exclusion is:

> about income but … about more. It is about prospects and networks and life-chances. It's a very modern problem, and one that is more harmful to the individual, more damaging to self-esteem, more corrosive to society as a whole, more likely to be passed down from generation to generation than material poverty.

Definitions of social inclusion capture this multidimensionality. For example, the Australian Government states that to be socially included requires opportunities to: secure a job, access services, connect with others in life through family, friends, work, personal interests and local community; deal with personal crises such as ill health, bereavement or the loss of a job; be heard (Gillard 2008). Definitions also reflect the extent to which the concept focuses on the processes that create exclusion and inclusion, rather than only outcomes. For example, the EU definition of social inclusion refers to it as a 'dynamic process', while Levitas et al. (2007) refer to social inclusion as a combination of 'complex and multi-dimensional processes' involving 'the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods

and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of people in society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas'. So this connection between the social and the economic is important to social inclusion thinking, and I want to look at it more closely, firstly at a theoretical level.

The interconnection of recognition and redistribution

Nancy Fraser's work (1995, 1996) articulated a vision of how economic and cultural elements create injustice together, and how creating social justice for different groups in society needs to involve both 'cultural justice' (a politics of recognition) and 'economic justice' (a politics of redistribution). For example, if one considers the injustices associated with gender in our society, they can be seen to have both cultural and economic dimensions. In relation to the cultural dimensions, gender is pervasive in our patterns of interpretation and evaluation, and social norms privilege traits associated with masculinity and devalue and disparage things coded as feminine. As a result, women, but also all low-status groups, 'risk being feminized, and thereby demeaned' (Fraser 1996, p.12). For example, there are demeaning stereotypical depictions in the media, there is harassment and disparagement in everyday life, there is sexual assault and domestic violence, and there is exclusion or marginalisation in public spheres and deliberative bodies. As Fraser put it, these represent 'cultural injustices' or 'injustices of recognition' (ibid., p.17). Similarly, in relation to race: the entrenchment of racist and Eurocentric norms privileges traits associated with 'whiteness', while stigmatizing everything coded as 'black', 'brown', and 'yellow'. Members of racialised groups endure police assault, discrimination in housing, employment and health care, media stereotyping, and the devaluation of their cultural production, In relation to the economic dimensions, gender structures the fundamental division between paid 'productive' labour and unpaid 'reproductive labour', assigning women primary responsibility for the latter. Gender also structures the division within paid labour between high-paid, male-dominated manufacturing and professional occupations, and lower-paid, female-dominated, 'pink collar' and domestic service occupations. The result is an economic structure that generates gender-specific forms of distributive injustice. Similarly, Fraser identified how 'race' organises divisions between menial and non-menial jobs, and between exploitable and surplus labour power. Members of racialised groups suffer disproportionately high rates of unemployment and poverty and over-representation in low-paid menial work (Fraser 1995). In these ways, the cultural and the economic work together to create injustice, and social exclusion. As Fraser concluded:

> Even the most material economic institutions have a constitutive, irreducible cultural dimension; they are shot through with significations and norms. Conversely, even the most discursive cultural practices have a constitutive, irreducible cultural dimension; they are under-pinned by material supports' (1995, p.72).

Therefore, 'justice today requires both redistribution and recognition' (Fraser 1995, p.69).

What Fraser was most interested in, however, was how a politics of redistribution and a politics of recognition could be conceptualised in ways that reinforced rather than interfered with one another, because she was concerned that a politics of recognition was supplanting a politics of redistribution. Her conceptual analysis diagnosed a 'clash' between the two, which we do not have the space to fully enter into here, but can be

summarised thus: if misrecognition is addressed by a politics of recognition that involves affirming difference, this clashes with a politics of redistribution which needs the categories of gender and race to be seen as irrelevant ('put out of business'), so that woman and people of colour are not differentiated (in negative ways) within the economy and culture. Given this diagnosis, she went on to recommend the political remedies to injustice of 'deconstruction' in culture and 'transformation' (socialism) in the economy.

However, others disagree with Fraser's diagnosis of a clash of remedies to recognition and redistribution (see Young 1997; Phillips 1997; Butler 1998). Young argues that it is simply a result of Fraser's form of analysis, based on false dualisms, rather than reflecting any reality on the ground. Young contends that rather than acting counter to redistribution, a politics of recognition is usually the means to the 'economic and social equality and freedom Fraser calls redistribution' (Young 1997). She illustrates this with an example from the US context, the celebration of African-American solidarity, on the grounds that such solidarity and self-organisation in predominantly African-American neighbourhoods will not only improve a sense of self and group identity, but will also improve the material lives of those who live there by providing services and jobs. To use an Australian example, Hunter (2008) argues along similar lines in relation to Indigenous cultural identity and socioeconomic inclusion. Drawing on research which shows that Indigenous youth who speak an Indigenous language are significantly more likely to attend school (Hunter 2007), he concludes that the so-called 'trade-off' between Indigenous rights and socioeconomic status for Indigenous Australians is actually 'over-stated' and in fact 'not an issue' . Thus, rather than a politics of recognition being a distraction from, or in competition with a politics of redistribution, it can be seen as a complementary and even necessary part of its success.

Perhaps the case for this can be made most clearly in relation to social groups for which cultural issues are obviously related to their overall experience of social exclusion and injustice, such as Indigenous people, ethnic minorities, homosexuals and women. Yet it can also be argued that recognition issues are relevant to injustices associated purely with socioeconomic disadvantage. Researchers and theorists interested in the sociology of class have long argued that socioeconomic class is itself a 'culturally relevant marker', along with gender, race, sexuality and so on. This work has conceptualised how, beyond and within relations of economic production, socioeconomic difference is also made through 'cultural values, premised on morality, embodied in personhood, and realized as a property value of symbolic exchange' (Skeggs 2005, p.969). Cultural attitudes demean poor people, and certain ideologies of poverty suggest that the poor deserve what they get. Levitas (1998) and Fairclough (2000) found an increased use of 'underclass' discourse to reproduce the historical division of respectable and abject within the working class in the UK (Skeggs 2005, p.972). This led even Fraser to conclude that:

> Today the misrecognition dimensions of class may be sufficiently autonomous in their operation to require independent remedies of recognition. Left unattended, moreover, class misrecognition may impede the capacity to mobilize against maldistribution (Fraser 1996, p.19).

Thus, the politics of poverty needs a 'politics of recognition', too:

> They may need, that is, to build class communities and cultures in order to neutralize the hidden injuries of class and forge the confidence to stand up for

themselves … A politics of class recognition may be needed both in itself and to get a politics of redistribution off the ground' (Fraser 1996, p.20).

So if we are to conclude that recognition is necessary both within itself, and for a politics of redistribution, what form should such a politics of recognition take?

Institutional recognition

Recognition can be broadly conceptualised in two distinct ways. On the one hand, Honneth and Taylor's notion of recognition focuses at the level of the individual psyche, and involves issues of identity and sense of self. Borrowing Macdonald and Merrill's (2002) terms, I will refer to this as 'inter-subjective' recognition. On the other hand, Fraser has defined recognition as more a matter of social status, participation, and participatory parity. I will refer to as 'institutional recognition', and will discuss this conceptualisation first.

Fraser (2002) defined recognition as a 'status injury' rather than as 'wounded identity'. She explained:

> To be misrecognised is not only to be thought ill of, looked down upon or devalued in people's attitudes, beliefs or representation. It is being denied the status of full partner in social interaction, as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of cultural value that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect or esteem. (p.56)

This sort of misrecognition occurs in institutionalised patterns of cultural value, which portray some actors as less than full members of society and prevent them from participating as peers. As Fraser said, 'The result is that some members of society are denied the status of full partners in social interaction, capable of participating on par with the rest'. For instance, in relation to the participation of women in the labour force, Fraser pointed out that modern societies have institutionalised a status hierarchy between men and women in which there are norms that value traits associated with 'men' or 'masculinity' above traits associated with 'women' or femininity', and this affects their parity of participation in the labour market, political life, and civil society:

> Because these norms are not just in people's heads but actually institutionalized in social arrangements, the result is that women are impeded or blocked from full participation on the same terms with men … Women cannot today participate in the labour market on the same terms with men because of care responsibility: whether it's child care or older care or other forms of household responsibilities. That is a result of a norm—that this is somehow feminine, that it is women's work that would emasculate a man to do. So that is an institutionalized norm that has a real material effect that blocks women's capacity to participate fully on equal terms with men in the labour market, in political life, and in civil society. (Fraser & Liakova 2008, p.2)

Fraser developed this notion of recognition in critical engagement with Honneth and Taylor's work, suggesting that recognition should instead be seen in relation to institutions and participatory parity. She was concerned that the psychological emphasis in the inter-subjective notion of recognition displaced an emphasis on redistributive concerns. As she said in an interview:

> I was saying in effect, look, what is really important here is not the demand for recognition of a group's specific identity, but the demand for recognition of people's standing as full partners in social interaction, able to participate as peers with others in social life (Fraser, in Dahl et al. 2004, p.377).

It can be argued, however, that Fraser dismisses too readily inter-subjective recognition issues and their salience to redistribution. Institutional and inter-subjective recognition are interconnected, and ultimately I am going to argue that inter-subjective recognition needs to play a greater positive role in social inclusion policy. To begin, let us focus on the notion of inter-subjective recognition itself.

Inter-subjective recognition

Honneth (2001) argues that we become an individual by being recognised by others—this is essential to the development of our sense of self—and that we owe our integrity as people to receiving the approval or recognition of others. So when we are insulted or degraded in some way, we are denied recognition, and our positive understandings of ourselves are impaired. When we are denied recognition, or misrecognised, we suffer an injury in relation to our identity, and we develop a distortion in relation to our sense of self. Taylor (1994) argues that such misrecognition or nonrecognition is a form of oppression because it imprisons someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being. People who are members of stigmatised groups in society, and who experience this stigmatisation repeatedly, internalise negative self-images. Beyond being simply insulting, this can actually inflict a 'grievous wound', saddling people with crippling self-hatred. Thus, 'due recognition is not just a courtesy, but a vital human need'.

From this perspective, a politics of recognition aims to repair the 'internal self-dislocation' by contesting the dominant culture's demeaning picture of oppressed groups. Members of misrecognised groups reject such dominant images in favour of new self-representations of their own making, jettisoning internalised, negative identities and joining to produce a self-affirming culture of their own which, publicly asserted, will gain the respect and esteem of society at large (this is of course just one of the forms a politics of recognition might take). The result, when successful, is recognition: an undistorted relation to oneself.

As already discussed, Fraser critiqued this notion of recognition, suggesting that recognition should instead be seen in relation to institutions and participatory parity. Yet it can be argued that inter-subjective recognition issues are not only important to the achievement of institutional recognition, they are also important to the achievement of redistribution. To demonstrate, let us first look at Macdonald and Merrill's work (2002) on the politics of institutional and inter-subjective recognition, through their analysis of advocacy efforts to increase the pay of childcare workers.

Increasing the wages of poorly paid childcare workers is an issue which, at first glance, would surely seem to be about redistribution. Yet institutional recognition issues are also relevant here. Childcare workers are mostly women, often from minority ethnic groups, and their work is frequently devalued: research finds that jobs are evaluated based on gendered images that support male dominance, painting much of the work that women conventionally do as unskilled, 'natural' and/or easy. Thus, 'their contributions to the

greater good are demeaned and misrecognised because their work is defined as unskilled, as work that would (and perhaps should) be limited to the private sphere, and because it is customarily performed by members of marginalized groups' (Macdonald & Merrill 2002, p.73). Therefore: 'any attempt to revalue care work must involve not only appeals to redistributive justice, but also to overcoming institutional misrecognition'.

Macdonald and Merrill (2002) also point out the significance of inter-subjective recognition to this issue. In interviews they found that childcare workers experienced significant personal disrespect in relation to their work, a fact which many of them 'mourned'. Also, the aspects of their work that these childcare workers most valued, such as their emotional attachment to the children in their care, were also demeaned and ignored. Parents, for example, diminished the significance of their child's attachment to the care-worker, many simply not considering that the care-worker was an important part of their child's life. Secondly, 'institutional misrecognition' could not account for how misrecognised parties 'internalized' such harms, and this could prevent them from acting in their own 'best interests'. For example, childcare pay advocates found that they needed first to prove to workers that low wages were driving turnover, and that turnover affected the quality of childcare (and so was bad for children), before childcare workers would agree to advocate for better pay:

> The field itself was not ready to say 'we deserve better' until high turnover was connected with poor quality care … People who take care of kids put the kids' needs over their own. What we've tried to do is say they are one and the same: that basically if you don't take care of yourself, you can't take care of the kids. Either you won't stay or you'll be so burnt out that you won't be there for the kids. Or you won't invest in training and education (Whitebok, Howes & Philips, in Macdonald & Merrill 2002, p.74).

In this way, unless these 'inter-subjective misrecognition' issues were addressed, they kept members of this marginalised group from 'considering the pursuit of social parity'. Thus, inter-subjective recognition became a 'gate-keeping' issue, preventing the pursuit of institutional recognition, redistribution, and social inclusion overall.

This example also highlights a specific feature of inter-subjective recognition relating to diversity and values, people's different ways or versions of 'being and doing in the world'. People who are misrecognised tend to be devalued not only in relation to who they are, and what they do, but also in relation to 'the values they most cherish' (Macdonald & Merrill 2002, p.75). For example, to return to the childcare workers mentioned above, those interviewed were found to hold deeply the value of putting the needs of children ahead of their own needs. In fact, this value was a critical aspect of their identity as childcare workers. So when an advocacy campaign simply called for higher childcare wages with no regard to its effects on children, these childcare workers were unlikely to support it (even if it resulted in better pay). Indeed the campaign could even perpetuate the misrecognition of these workers by not valuing what was important to them, what partly 'defined' them and the work that they did. Macdonald and Merrill (2002) argue that recognition as 'altruistic carers' and 'valued contributors to the social good' was a 'necessary step towards advocating for equal status as workers'. Thus, inter-subjective recognition is again highlighted as a 'necessary precursor' to broader social inclusion and social justice claims.

I now want to look at how these issues of institutional recognition and inter-subjective recognition relate directly to the concept and policies of social inclusion, and in particular, to the following social inclusion policy examples—participatory projects and neighbourhood renewal, work force participation and 'jobless families' with children, and homelessness and domestic violence—drawn from both the Australian and the UK government social inclusion agendas. Before doing this, I give a brief overview of how these matters have been raised in social inclusion scholarship to date.

The concept of social inclusion and redistribution and recognition

When it comes to how the concepts redistribution and recognition relate to social inclusion policy and conceptualisation, discussion to date has focused mostly on redistribution, and in particular, the extent to which social inclusion/exclusion agendas represent a departure from the traditional progressive redistributive, anti-poverty agenda. Partly, this is because social inclusion has been seen to effectively supplant poverty as the primary conceptualisation of disadvantage. For example, in Australia, some have argued that social inclusion is not a 'new' concept because some understandings of poverty already took a multidimensional approach, while others have argued that social inclusion/exclusion indeed represents a more evolved construct than poverty (Saunders 2003). In the UK context, Fairclough (2000) argued that Blair's definition of social exclusion shifted from being about 'more than income' to something that was contrasted with poverty—in other words, to something that was not about income at all; and others discuss how the first efforts of the UK Social Exclusion Unit in 1997 made clear that income poverty was not part of its brief. Cuts to the benefits received by lone parents in that same year reinforced the impression that participation in the paid work-force was the only economic solution being considered when it came to poverty. Lister (2001), for example, remembers how before the 1997 UK Labour Party conference, 54 professors of social policy and sociology wrote to the *Financial Times* welcoming the establishment of the SEU, but expressed concern that its agenda did not include the adequacy of benefit levels, and that by ignoring the need for income redistribution, the government was trying to tackle social exclusion with 'one hand tied behind its back'. And while others have noted the 'redistribution by stealth' tactics of New Labour such as significant tax credits for the 'working poor', and the ambitious targets to end child poverty (though the interim targets have not been reached, as Hirsch (2008) reports), ultimately, as Lister (2001) puts it:

> Where redistribution has taken place, it has been clearly and often explicitly limited to improving the situation of those at the bottom relative to the middle, with the position of those at the top not considered (p.23).

Equality was redefined as equality of opportunity, a conceptualisation that 'appeals to middle Britain', but not necessarily one that ensures social justice. In these ways, and others, the relationship of redistribution to social inclusion has had a contested but substantial narrative when it comes to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of social inclusion policy agendas.

By contrast, little explicit attention has been paid to social inclusion and a politics of recognition to date, despite the fact that one of the defining features of social

inclusion/exclusion as a concept (particularly when it is compared with poverty) has been its emphasis on participation (Room 1995). Notions of participation are particularly found in the promotion of economic participation, and community participation (such as in social inclusion policy focused on neighbourhoods and neighbourhood renewal). Yet while recognition has received scant explicit attention in social inclusion scholarship (although see Lister 2004, 2008; Morrison 2003a, 2003b), I would argue that issues related to recognition are integral to much of this work. For example, at an institutional recognition level, there is a large body of work on the involvement of socially excluded people in their community and local area (see Barnes, Newman & Sullivan 2007). Also, issues of recognition have been raised in work that considers the extent to which social inclusion discourse and policies do or do not reflect the concerns of certain social groups, such as women (Jackson 1999; Lister 2006), minority ethnic groups (Loftman 2001; Clyne 2008), and people with a disability (e.g. Edwards 2001, 2009). In regard to inter-subjective recognition, Levitas's well-known work (1998) on social exclusion discussed the ways certain social inclusion discourses could stigmatise particular people and behaviours, creating notions of the 'other', and also an idea or vision of the 'centre'—who and what is included (and implicitly valued). Rather than an extensive review of this work, I instead draw upon it in the discussion below, which explores the roles of inter-subjective and institutional recognition in three social inclusion policy areas.

Institutional recognition, inter-subjective recognition and social inclusion policy

Participation and neighbourhood renewal

Lister's work (2004, 2008) looks explicitly at the recognition issues relevant to political participation and democracy, arguing that these issues are emblematic of the notion of social inclusion, which has extended the material discourses associated with poverty to the non-material matters of 'human citizenship rights, democracy, inclusion and respect'. She is particularly interested in how the cultural and political capital of those who live in poverty can be strengthened to enable participation in 'decision making that affects their lives'. Drawing on the work of Diane Coole (1996) as well as Nancy Fraser (1995), Lister discusses how poverty 'robs' groups of people of the economic and cultural capital needed for political participation, and how these economic and cultural injustices reinforce one another, with economic disadvantage impeding equal participation in the making of culture in the public sphere and everyday life. Lister has looked at ways to build the capacities of people who experience poverty to be able to participate directly in relevant decision-making (rather than have their views filtered through the 'poverty lobby', comprising mainly 'middle class professionals'). She details several projects to show how this can work. For example, the All Together in Dignity Fourth World movement (http://www.atd-quartmonde.org) works in partnership with 'the fourth world'—people who 'due to their poverty are unable to make their voices heard or to maximize their potential'—to facilitate their involvement in exchanging views and ideas with policy makers and community services at different levels of government. It runs a Public Debate Project, which consists of a series of policy forums that provide the space to explore policy issues arising from people's experiences, and it conducts intensive residential training seminars to help people relate these experiences to

how society is run, both nationally and internationally, and participation in these projects provide the basis for participation in policy forums with bureaucrats and politicians.

New forms of democratic practice and ideas of deliberative democracy have been emphasised in a wide range of developments in recent public policy (see Barnes, Newman & Sullivan 2007), and are not of course limited to the social inclusion realm. In relation to recognition and social inclusion, however, Lister's work on ways to strengthen the cultural and political capital of those in poverty, in order to enable participation in decision-making that affects their lives, seems a clear issue of 'institutional recognition', relating to parity of participation and status in society's institution. Yet Lister also acknowledges the relevance of inter-subjective recognition to political participation. For example, she discusses how participants in the various projects found 'the experience of being listened to and taken seriously unusual' (Lister 2004). They were often treated with disrespect—'I just wish people would give us a chance and treat us with some respect', as one participant put it— and they were not usually treated by people with political and social power as 'human beings with the *rights and capacities* to participate in public debate' (Holman 1998, p.16, in Lister 2004, her emphasis). I want to argue that further analysis suggests that inter-subjective recognition issues are not only relevant but indeed crucial to the socially inclusive potential of such social inclusion projects addressing institutional recognition.

Lister doesn't comment on what sort of people with experience of poverty took part in the ATD Fourth World and the other projects that she details. However, people who repeatedly experience misrecognition often exclude themselves from political participation or self-advocacy, because they have internalised the misrecognition, because their complex and frequently difficult lives don't leave room for such activities, and/or because the particular project—and the broader systems it gestures to—does not recognise, respect or reflect their own values or ways of being. Lister (2004, 2008) argues that the message of participation has been most significant in relation to place-based social inclusion policy at the local neighbourhood level.

Morrison's (2003a, 2003b) research on a UK social inclusion neighbourhood renewal project, which had the core aim of ensuring the participation of local people in neighbourhood regeneration and building community capacity, found that the small number of local residents involved were in fact those individuals who were usually involved in community initiatives and representative capacities on the estate. Indeed, the bureaucrats administering the project expressed dismay in interviews that project meetings and events were only ever attended by 'the usual [local] suspects'; they yearned to reach the 'real socially excluded'.

On closer examination, however, specific policy mechanisms mitigated against greater and more diverse local involvement. For instance, the developing project bids, and participating in project meetings, required a 'certain expertise at speaking that language', as one community worker put it; or as a local resident said: 'I stood up at the first meeting and said, "I don't know what you are talking about … it's a different language … and I'm not comfortable with that, because I don't speak that language and a lot of people don't" '. And where bureaucratic language didn't hinder all participation (for example, this resident eventually learnt to communicate in a way that facilitated some level of participation, and arguably this was a useful skill to acquire)—this exclusive language, and the policy

constructs it expressed ('strategic priorities', 'quantifiable milestones') shaped the content of meetings, and the nature and scope of policy action. Thus, while there was a theoretical thirst for local participation, and a devolution of power to local hands, local people's voices and priorities were actually subordinated in this policy process. For example, one bureaucrat described how involving local people required 'a lot of hand-holding … there's been a lot of time spent sort of guiding them along the right lines … it's been a bit frustrating at times'.

Clearly, this policy example relates to 'institutional recognition'—it aimed to facilitate participation in broader social, political and economic life. Yet these problems with the policy relate to 'inter-subjective' recognition issues—to do with respect, values, and whose versions of 'doing and being in the world' are valued. Indeed, as Lister (2007, p.118) states, 'respect lies at the heart of the challenge to social justice posed by the principles of recognition and voice'. Furthermore, respect within this project was also linked to issues of redistribution. While the bureaucrats were obviously paid, the locals were expected to volunteer their time, despite the fact that their involvement was essential to the project's output. Some of them felt their involvement was so extensive, it was like a job, they just didn't get paid for it (indeed, when one local volunteer gave up her role, she noted that the position she had been doing was then advertised in a paid capacity).

Levitas (1998) argued that the concepts of social inclusion/exclusion create a binary construction of society, simplifying social and cultural and economic difference into two seemingly homogeneous groups, the included, and the excluded. The regeneration project mentioned above sat within the broader policy framework, 'Bringing Britain Together: A National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal', and in the foreword introducing the policy, the Prime Minister wrote:

> We all know the problems of our poorest neighbours … decaying housing, unemployment, street crime and drugs … People who can, move out. Nightmare neighbours move in … the gap between these worst estates and the rest of society has grown … this has left us with a situation no civilized society should tolerate … this shames us as a nation, wastes lives, and we all have to pay the costs. (Blair 1998, pp.1–2)

We can see that this text contains a basic 'us' and 'them' typology. It makes clear that the audience being addressed is not 'the socially excluded' themselves—the 'we' and 'us' referred to here are not the 'nightmare neighbours' living in the 'worst estates' (whose lives are a 'waste', who 'shame us' as a nation). In fact 'the excluded' are who 'we' are not, and in this discourse, they are constructed outside this portrayal of knowledge about them, which is not written for them. Perhaps this could be dismissed as simply colourful political rhetoric. Yet such language has ramifications. As one person quoted by Lister (2004) stated: 'We hear how the media and some politicians speak about us and it hurts'. Furthermore, such attitudes of course colour the way bureaucrats, service deliverers (teachers, police), and the broader community interact with such people and places. Indeed, one could say such language forms part of a 'continuum' of cultural injustice and misrecognition, similar to the way negative stereotypes and degrading imagery of women are understood to form part of a 'continuum of violence' against women, with rape and domestic violence at the more extreme end (Osborne 2002), or derogatory and stigmatising remarks about particular ethnic minorities (such as asylum seekers) are linked to racial

violence in the community (Bowling 1993). When interviewed about the use of such language, a bureaucrat in the UK's then Social Exclusion Unit suggested that it was used in order to make social exclusion an issue 'everyone cares about'. There is a 'political imperative', he said, to 'keep an alliance between the poor and the middle class' by showing how 'interdependent' they are. Crime stereotypes, particularly the kind of 'they'll nick your car', was said to be 'the one that's played up most—because it's the one that resonates most'. But of course such language is ultimately counterproductive, and its use raises a broader political question about who social inclusion/exclusion agendas are actually for: the larger, broader, base of (swinging) middle-class voters, or the 'excluded' recipients of the policy?

Social inclusion, workforce participation and 'jobless families'

As well as creating an 'other', social inclusion discourse also creates an idea or vision of 'the centre'—who and what is included and valued, and who and what is not. Levitas (1998) argues that the implication is that the included individual must cross some sort of dividing line to become included. Benn (2000) argues that this means that 'whether in relation to education, housing, community or work, on closer scrutiny many of the underlying positions require a great deal more of the powerless than the powerful', and leaves structural inequalities unaddressed.

One of the most prominent aspects of social inclusion agendas, particularly in Australia, has been an equating of social inclusion with workforce participation—'workforce participation is the foundation of social inclusion' (Gillard and Wong 2007)—with some arguing that workforce participation has been elevated to 'the prime citizenship obligation' (Lister 2006). Following from Levitas's analysis, the implications of this for social inclusion policy can be, as Buckmaster and Thomas (2008, p.10) summarise, that 'all that matters [for social inclusion] is workforce participation', leaving questions about low pay, poor working conditions, institutional supports (such as child care), and unemployment benefits levels relatively unaddressed.

But the route to social inclusion through workforce participation is complex and not necessarily guaranteed for certain social groups. In-work poverty and insecure employment can all detach social inclusion from employment, as can the experience of harassment and exploitation within the workplace. And these experiences are more common for certain social groups. For example, in Australia, women are concentrated in part-time and casual labour, which has impacts on both pay and entitlements, so that they are overrepresented among low-wage earners and the working poor. Indeed at all levels of the occupational hierarchy they are located at the lower end of the wages spectrum. Women are also more likely to experience sexual and physical harassment or rape within the work-place (AHRC 2008). Other culturally relevant markers, including race, refugee status, and disability, all mean that people in these social groups can fare relatively worse than others when in the paid work force, and are more likely to be in jobs that institutionalise servitude and subordination to more privileged professionals. From this perspective, an emphasis on paid work puts at 'the centre' a mode of participation in which the most powerful are already the greatest beneficiaries. This raises doubts about the extent to which paid work, by itself, can ensure social inclusion for such social groups.

For example, research on the quality of life of single mothers in Australia making a mandatory transition from welfare to work has found that their quality of life was significantly lower than the general population in all respects, despite the fact that the aims of this policy included not only higher incomes, but also better social participation and improved wellbeing (Cook, Davis, Smyth & McKenzie, forthcoming). Instead of presuming participation in paid work could ensure all this, the researchers argued that, 'Centrelink programs should focus on improving these mothers' life circumstances before expecting a successful return to work'. Specifically, through improving the mothers' financial position, ensuring the availability of child care or increasing the recognition of caregiving work, ensuring adequate health care, and better identifying women at risk of violence and abuse. This would 'not only lead to improvements in women's well-being', but also improve their chances of finding 'meaningful, secure employment'. In this way, placing work-force participation at the centre of a vision of social inclusion can mask the need for due consideration of the many other factors needed to ensure social inclusion overall.

Work is clearly an 'institutional recognition' issue: culturally relevant markers such as gender, ethnicity, and disability all impede parity of participation in the work force. Yet work is also an 'inter-subjective' recognition issue, not only in relation to how individuals are treated by others in the workplace, but also because prioritising work, and presuming that the relationship between work and social inclusion is straightforward, indeed presuming paid work gives positive 'meaning to life' (Gillard & Wong 2007) for all, arguably relates more to the values and experiences—the ways of doing and being in the world—of the more privileged professional, than the disadvantaged. It can also disrupt or devalue the 'meaning' people may gain, and the contribution they may make, through other aspects of life, including caring for others (children, the elderly) on an unpaid basis. This relates to inter-subjective recognition issues of meaning and value. As Honneth (2001) puts it:

> We can expect a growing number of struggles for recognition directed at the institutionalized definitions and measures of social esteem that govern which activities and abilities may achieve symbolic or material recognition. Without a radical extension of the meaning of 'labour', and what can sensibly and justifiably be included within that, this approaching struggle for recognition cannot readily be resolved (pp.54–5).

The terms 'jobless families', or 'jobless households', has particular emphasis in the Australian social inclusion policy agenda, perhaps because Australia has one of the highest levels of 'joblessness' among families with children of all rich countries. Indeed, the wellbeing of children is an important part of the 'jobless families' policy agenda, with analysis on this topic suggesting that through addressing such 'joblessness', Australia's child poverty rate could be significantly improved. For example, Whiteford and Adema (2008) state that, at current wage levels, 'lone parent families could fairly easily escape poverty … through additional work in Australia'.

Such rhetoric runs the risk of not adequately recognising the full range of factors that contribute to children's equality, wellbeing, and social inclusion. Certainly, the analysis of 'jobless families' in relation to social inclusion, including that for the Social Inclusion Unit, has been performed by economists who, on their own admission, concentrate 'on the financial aspects of child poverty' (Whiteford & Adema 2008). This means that complex

issues such as what sort of mix of waged work and caring in the home works best for different families, and for different children at different ages, and how this is best expressed and facilitated through policy, remain relatively unexplored. At the most basic level, lifting a family out of income poverty through paid work entails a decrease in parental time spent caring for children, particularly for lone parents; and there is a high and increasingly unmet demand for child care in Australia—lack of available places due to current services being booked out was the main reason for unmet demand in 2005, and unmet childcare demand has doubled since 1999 (AIHW 2008). Clearly, any plans to reduce family joblessness will need to involve a greater investment in quality childcare infrastructure.

Yet OECD research suggests that, for a variety of complex reasons, full commodification of caring work is not possible (Giullari & Lewis 2005). What this means, then, for getting 'jobless parents' into the labour force, particularly mothers who still currently perform the overwhelming majority of caring and domestic tasks, is not yet articulated in this agenda. If waged work results in dramatically decreased time for parents to invest in other socially necessary activities, then better outcomes for children are not ensured. Even in those cases where parental time spent with children does not always contribute to their wellbeing, and may even be detrimental, work force participation of such parents is not the only or necessarily best solution—other supports are clearly required. Australian children already report weaker family relationships than the best international results (although the results for Indigenous children on this measure compare well with the Australian average: a slightly greater percentage of Australian Indigenous children report that parents spend time 'just talking to them' than do non-Indigenous children (ARACY 2008)). Flexible waged work arrangements for parents that actively value and support the other activities both mothers and fathers can do will need to be part of the solution.

This policy issue relates to 'inter-subjective' recognition issues, because it speaks to broader social questions about how and what activities are recognised in policy, and which are valued as contributions to society. It relates to institutional recognition issues, because caring work is feminised (see above), and many single-parent 'jobless families' are headed by women. Lastly, these issues are linked to redistribution, because while Australia's actual level of investment in these areas (e.g. children's services) is well targeted, it is still below average (AIHW 2008), and while many Australian Government initiatives in this area are promising, they involve a much smaller investment per capita than comparable programs in the UK (Scutella & Smyth 2005). Thus, for this area of social inclusion policy to be most effective, it is fair to argue that these complex recognition issues must be integrated with the more conventional economic analysis.

Homelessness and domestic violence

Finally, the relevance of inter-subjective recognition issues to social inclusion policy effectiveness can also be seen when it comes to addressing the homelessness of women who have experienced domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Homelessness is a paradigmatic social inclusion issue, taken up as one of the first priorities in the social inclusion agendas of the Australian, South Australian and UK governments, and family violence is now recognised as the largest single cause of homelessness in Australia (FaCSIA 2008). However, different experiences of domestic violence create different

needs when it comes to creating homelessness policy solutions. Women and children who are homeless due to recent domestic violence are likely to be able to re-establish their lives relatively quickly after escaping the violence, whereas women who have experienced violence throughout their lives usually require longer term, intensive, and diverse supports from a range of services in order to not remain homeless (Chung et al. 2001). For this latter group, the prospect of addressing homelessness through establishing stable, long-term accommodation can be fraught with difficulty. Nuisance complaints might follow them from tenancy to tenancy, there might be rent arrears, evictions, a failure to adequately maintain the property, and so on. Overall, for many of these women a situation of stable accommodation is experienced as threatening, because they may not have had the experience of a stable, safe housing situation before, and they may not know what to expect, or even think they 'deserve' such a thing (Jacobs 2004).

Jacobs (2004) ties these issues directly to issues of sense of self and identity, that is, inter-subjective recognition:

> We view this as a direct result of the training these women received from childhood from the perpetrators of abuse. For a lot of these women moving or fleeing a situation is the only way they have of dealing with conflict' (p.4).

Thus, for stable long-term housing to be achieved for this sub-group of the homeless population, the effects of a lifetime experience of violence and the related complex mental health issues must be acknowledged and receive concerted and explicit policy attention, as part of homelessness solutions. Some argue service delivery is required that is both 'trauma informed' and 'trauma specific' (see Morrison 2008, 2009), a mode of delivery argued to represent a 'vital paradigm shift' needed in the homelessness sector (Hodas 2006), given the prevalence of the co-experience of violence and homelessness, particularly for women and children.

In social justice terms, intimate violence is usually viewed as a purely social and cultural issue (for example, see Young 1990), and certainly one could say that forms of inter-personal violence, such as rape and child abuse, are ultimate forms of non-recognition of the other. And the recognition issues relevant to the above social inclusion policy example are clear. There are the effects of the violence itself on the identity and sense of self of the homeless women (inter-subjective recognition), creating practical problems with maintaining housing. There is the fact that, when homelessness policy does not adequately recognise the effects of domestic violence on housing experiences, this is felt most by women and children, because they experience the highest rates of violence (thus a policy that does not fully recognise and provide adequate services to deal with such effects is gender-biased, which is an institutional recognition issue). However, this example also shows that violence is deeply interconnected with the material, economic issue of the provision of long-term housing. That is, addressing the inter-subjective and institutional recognition issues created by interpersonal violence are inherently tied to the success of housing solutions. In this way, again, the inter-subjective recognition issues associated with the experience of violence play a 'gate-keeping' role to the success of long-term housing solutions.

Conclusion: On dignity

The concept of social inclusion and a social inclusion policy agenda promises to achieve an integration of the social and the economic in policy that addresses fundamental social issues—poverty, inequality and disadvantage. This paper has argued that the concept of recognition can further understandings of the social and cultural aspects of social inclusion, their connection to the economic, and the effectiveness of the concept and policy agenda overall. Rather than acting counter to the economic dimensions of social inclusion, recognition has been argued to work in concert with the economic to create social justice and inclusion. Inter-subjective aspects of recognition have been particularly highlighted in this paper, because of the lack of attention to these issues in social inclusion scholarship to date, and because of their role as an important precursor to achieving other aspects of social inclusion, and social inclusion overall. Inter-subjective recognition refers to the way people are viewed in relation to who they are and what they do, and it also relates to their fundamental values, their ways of 'being and doing' in the world. Attention to inter-subjective recognition shows that a social inclusion agenda prescribes not only a suite of policy solutions affecting various groups and their activities, but also prescribes a particular version of 'doing and being' in the world, that is not necessarily representative of different social groups, including those who are the most disadvantaged. Given that both social and economic dimensions are recognised as constitutive of social inclusion, both recognition and redistribution must be part of a genuine social inclusion agenda, and this paper has articulated some ways to think about and strengthen the recognition part of that process. Overall, it has argued that recognition needs to be part of the philosophical foundations underpinning social inclusion thinking. If we are to truly appreciate the Other, through recognising their uniqueness, their worth, and their ways of being in the world, we cannot justify or tolerate their suffering from a lack of economic inequality. Human dignity requires both due recognition, and adequate redistribution, and social inclusion requires nothing less and, perhaps, nothing more.

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