> It would be far better even for children of nine years of age to be in a factory than to be fighting and scrambling in the streets, picking pockets, or taking away everything they can lay their hands on.[1]

> In a State where material prosperity is as widespread as in New South Wales, no child should be allowed to work in factory surroundings before the age of 16...no necessity exists, even in case of poverty, for the premature entering into the confinement, strain, and occupation risks of factory life for any child under 16.[2]

In New South Wales, in the period between 1860 and 1916, children constituted a significant part of the labour force. They worked in both the paid, and unpaid, labour forces. They also did an increasing amount of schoolwork. Schoolwork, posited as another form of work for children, increasingly absorbed children's labour power.

Extant sources indicate that children moved into paid employment to meet demand, particularly for unskilled work. This responsive movement suited the uneven demand of the colonial, and early twentieth century, economy. Fluctuations in demand for rural labour particularly, influenced the degree of participation by children in the rural workforce. Demand could be of a diurnal or seasonal nature. It could be prompted

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[1] Malcolm M'Intyre Campbell, tweed manufacturer, in the Progress Report from the Select Committee on the State of Manufactures and Agriculture in the Colony, NSWLAVP 1862 Vol 5 p 1058

[2] Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Hours and General Conditions of Employment of Female and Juvenile Labour in Factories and Shops, and the effect on such Employees. NSWPP Vol 2 Pt 2 1911-12 pp 1137-1256, p xxxvii

by economic undulations or extreme climatic conditions. The urban labour market was also responsive to shifting demand, particularly in industries which were closely linked to rural circumstances, and made irregular calls on children's labour.

The work performed by children throughout the period may be described as multifarious and ubiquitious. The presence of children was significant in the primary, secondary and service sectors of the workforce. The evidence presented shows that if a task could be performed by a child then it was. Children milked cows, washed crockery, minded younger children and babies, made bricks, washed bottles, sorted tobacco, drove engines, drove bullocks, and sold newspapers. They taught lessons, worked in shops, minded sheep, shunted trucks, drove carts, washed clothes, collected wood, scrubbed floors, drove lifts, sewed on machines, planted crops and harvested crops.

When children were engaged in formal situations of employment, they worked for significantly less than the corresponding adult wage. This pattern of remuneration, it may be concluded, was in accord with the hierarchial division of labour at the time. No attempt has been made to calculate exact relative values or demand for child labour. Given the fluctuations of labour demand, in combination with the chronology and geographic span of the subject, such a calculation would, of necessity, be very broad. The narrative has, rather, stressed the prior point that the relative cheapness and availability of child labour made it attractive. It was attractive to employers as cheap labour, and to children's own families, and their foster families, as unpaid

labour. This attraction was accentuated in instances of labour shortage. In a familial situation, particularly for those in pressing economic circumstances, children could meet labour demands on a daily basis. One feature of children's labour over the period, especially obvious in the rural sector, but also evident in urban areas, was its 'reserve army' nature. Children's labour power was more heavily tapped in times of demand. In the depression, their employment answered demands for comparatively cheap labour.

Children's labour was not without its internal divisions. Overall, formal apprentices experienced higher rates of payment and more assured terms of employment. This is best understood if apprenticeship is regarded as a segment of skilled labour, which was the most highly compensated level of labour. Such was the demand for skilled apprenticeship placements that, on occasion, parents would allow children to work an initial apprenticeship period for free. Less frequently, they would buy a place for their child. Both practices, along with the general demand for apprenticeships, demonstrate the belief that the completion of an apprenticeship secured a firmer and better paid situation in the labour force.

The type, and quantity, of work children performed was influenced by their location, age, class, gender and race. These influences interwove to slot different children into different work patterns. However, the character of labour demands placed on children in times of necessity worked to loosen the strictures supported by these constructs. Thus,

when required, and in exception to common patterns, boys could undertake domestic work and higher class children could be assigned work at the homesite or farmsite.

In the period under consideration, the patterns, and degree, of children's participation in the workforce gradually changed. It has been argued that the gradual change was closely related to the spread of the school system and the subsequent uptake of mass schooling. In the 1860s and 1870s a 'de facto' transition occurred. At this time, although there was no legal compulsion to do so, significant numbers of children combined periods of schooling and work. The number of children receiving schooling increased with the spread of the school system throughout the colony, demonstrating that there was considerable acceptance of state sponsored education.

In New South Wales the 'de facto' transition was succeeded by a 'de jure' transition, which commenced under the compulsory terms of the 1880 Public Instruction Act. The looseness of this Act, which set only minimum attendance specifications that were easy to avoid and difficult to enforce, has been interpreted as legislative pragmatism. As well as making a certain amount of schooling legitimate, the 1880 Act in effect made a matching period of children's work illegitimate. This interpretation of the New South Wales Act differs from Dianne Snow's explanation. Snow views the Act as an indication of the state's desire to enforce dependent childhood and, at the same time, ease the transition to industrial capitalism by ensuring some supply of child labour. The demonstration of a formal transition period in New South

Wales, where children were able to juggle intervals of school and work, closely accords with work on the effects of initial compulsory education legislation in Victoria. It is also in keeping with findings concerning the South Australian experience.

The 1916 Public Instruction Amendment Act concluded the transition to modern practice. The forceful terms of the 1916 Act supported the model of full-time, all day schooling which educational officials had called for since the beginning of the period. The 1916 Act may also be viewed as pragmatic, in that it made full-time school compulsory at a time when such an Act could expect effective adherence. The Act capitalised on the general acceptance of mass schooling and dependent childhood, and also the antagonism to children's full-time employment, especially in the formally organised, industrial sector. It was a measure of the strength of the ideology concerning children and school that the State Labor Government fell sufficiently confident to move the Truancy Act, as it was also known, at a time when the nation was at war and affected by social distress.

The 1916 Act enforced what was, by then, was common practice in New South Wales. The modern practice of school saw schooling as a daily affair, to be conducted by professional teachers. Schooling had become the paramount duty, and form of work, for children. It was accepted by most families and thus, the employment of children on a full-time basis was circumscribed as well as proscribed.

The narrative of this thesis complements the views offered by leading historical demographers in Australia such as Ruzicka and Caldwell, who hypothesised that the advent of mass schooling was the main reason behind the demographic transition of the late nineteenth century. One major effect of mass schooling was the withdrawal of children from full-time and industrial employment. In this respect, the thesis evidences Ruzicka and Caldwell's premise that limitation of family size occurred when mass schooling spread and children's labour power was no longer a straightforward economic asset.

Although the extent of children's paid employment decreased drastically over the period, children were still a significant part of the labour force in 1917. What had changed markedly by the close of the period was not so much the significance of child labour, but the forms and permutations of this labour. Child labour, continued to be important to households and, in an indirect fashion, to employers. It remained particularly useful in the daily reproduction of the labour force. Children's labour also continued in rural areas, where it was still accepted and needed. However, between 1860 and 1916, in both rural and urban areas the balance between paid employment and unpaid work shifted. Unpaid work became, by far, the more common and accepted practice. Schoolwork, which represents as another form of unpaid work, assumed a far more extensive place in the children's work equation.

The transformation in the nature of children's work was accompanied by a changing, and increasingly pervasive, concept of childhood. Childhood became a longer, more dependent

condition, spent between the home and the schoolroom, away from the perceived physical and moral dangers of the workplace and the street. Throughout this idealised childhood children were to work at their homes and homesites. But work was to be limited. Children were to do enough to prepare for their adult roles, but not so much that it would detract from schoolwork or 'healthy' development.

This concept of childhood mutually complemented the rapidly expanding education system. Primary education was based on a model of dependent childhood, while dependent childhood was shored up by primary education. First put in place under liberal ideas, but eventually given more precedence and force under a Labor State government, the education system assumed paramount importance in the reallocation of children's time and labour. However, at least at first, working people responded to the availability of schooling for children on their own terms. Many chose to blend their children's schoolwork and workloads.

The increase in the provision of education assisted the construction of children's employment as a problem in two ways. Citizens and trade unionists as well as bureaucrats and politicians, expressed concern over the lack of education suffered by employed children. In considering schooling a full-time activity, Public Instruction officials constantly opposed anything that interfered with schooling, including employment before, after or during school hours. Over the period the state's legislators moved closer to the educational model of ideal schooling.

Secondly, the existence of a widespread school system placed children's work in a new context. In practical terms, it meant that children withdrawn from the workplace had somewhere to be. The schoolroom became the accepted place for children, schoolwork their accepted labour. No longer was the factory somewhere useful to take children off the streets. The perceived moral and physical dangers of the streets were extended to formal employment in factories and elsewhere. School was the place for children. The 1916 Act embodied the eventual solution to the problems so constructed.

Meanwhile, except on farms, the increasing separation of the homesite from the worksite over this period lessened the likelihood of children being simultaneously at home and at work with their parents. In the city, as manufacturing became more centralised, particularly in manufacturing, employment was made more public and accessible to scrutiny. The increasing regulation of the labour market, by both the state and organised labour, further contributed to the limitation and exclusion of children from the paid employment. State regulation, and the stance of organised labour, worked to exclude children from industrial employment via the Factory Acts from the 1890s.

A marked change in attitude to children's capacity to work underpinned the new regulation. Children, as their performance throughout the period showed, had coped with daily, heavy, mechanical and repetitious work, and with late and long hours. But over the period children were increasingly deemed as unsuitable and inappropriate for this kind of work,

especially in paid employment. This change was evident in the shifting attitudes displayed by different state enquiries.

It is significant that work per se was not taken away from children. Indeed schoolwork, and a moderate amount of work at home, were constructed as desirable. In this respect, the analysis accords with Zelizer's narrative. Such work was desirable for the good of society, supposedly training its future citizens and keeping them healthy in mind and body. A similar rationale underpinned the Boarding Out scheme and the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Scheme. Children were best located between a supportive, 'desirable' home and the schoolroom, but if this were not the case, then the state would place them elsewhere to learn how to work, under state supervision.

In this respect, the experience of working children in New South Wales from 1860 to 1916 accords well with recent historical sociology, in particular Donzelot's account on the transformation of family form from the late nineteenth century onward. Donzelot's conception of the contract/tutelage spectrum is useful in explaining both state and family action. Family acceptance of state action, such as mass education, involved the family in contract with the state. The compliant family received the benefits of mass education, but in doing so opened itself to the state's gaze. The compliance of families with state education allowed the state, through the attitude and example of such families, to enforce and construct familial norms. The modern family, through its acceptance of mass education, allowed the state the primary role in the education of children. Families who did not accept

the patterns required by the state became subject to tutelage. It was those families who most strongly resisted mass education, and who continued to allow their children to accept paid employment, which were subject to the scrutiny and force of tutelage. Families who would not, or could not, allow the satisfactory appropriation of their children's labour power to the schoolroom, became subject to state surveillance, intervention and possibly force. The 'policing' of these families was predicated on the compliant and co-operative response of other families. They lived, and displayed, and so effected the 'norms' the state enforced elsewhere. The withdrawal of children from daily employment, or work, followed by placement in daily schooling was one important dynamic in the multi-facted transformation of the family.

In constrast to the 1860s, by 1916 children's work in New South Wales was regulated and confined to specific places. Children's employment opportunities were greatly restricted, while their employment invited opprobrium. School, and then the home, assumed precedence in the allocation of children's labour power. The ubiquitous and multifarious character of children's work had been restrained and reshaped. The 'economically useful' child became the educated child.