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PROJECT 17233:

Intellectual disability (Compulsory Care) legislation

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
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Abstract

This study presents an exploration of the history of people who have an intellectual disability and the proposed Compulsory Care legislation that is currently before Parliament. The hypothesis posed is that the legislation is the result of a moral panic. An analysis of the components of a moral panic were identified and examined.

The history of the 'eugenics' era is outlined. This era involved the systematic marginalisation of intellectually disabled people on the basis that they posed a 'serious' threat to Western society. This period of history spanning the years 1880 to 1930 is examined for evidence of a moral panic. The 1950's to the present day are briefly reviewed for evidence of a continuation of eugenic thinking.

The process and progress of the Compulsory Care legislation is documented and analysed. The findings show there is some evidence to support the hypothesis but that it is insufficient to confirm the view that the legislation resulted from a moral panic.

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been stigmatised and marginalised that their difficulties are primarily a consequence of what others have done to them. They have suffered and continue to suffer the results of poor service provision.

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