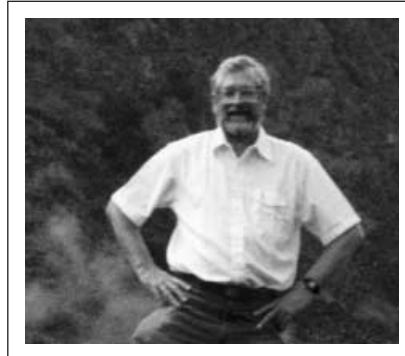


Obituary

Jack Duloy, 1932–2005



Jack Duloy, one of Australia's more distinguished agricultural economists, has died, aged 73. While having a notable early career in Australia, Jack's most significant work was undertaken in the World Bank. Consequently, he is relatively unsung in his native country.

On leaving North Sydney Boys high school, Jack started a law degree only to decide that he and it were not compatible. Following a sojourn in the United Kingdom, he enrolled in agricultural science at the University of Sydney.

In the third year of his degree, Jack had his professional epiphany; he discovered agricultural economics. This was to transform his academic performance. In 1958, Jack graduated with first class honours, specialising in agricultural economics, economics and statistics. He then enrolled for a PhD under the supervision of Keith Campbell. Before completing that degree, he was appointed in 1961 to a Lectureship in Agricultural Economics at the University of New England (UNE). In 1963, reflecting a developing emphasis on econometrics, Jack transferred to the Department of Economic Statistics, which had been hived off from the Department of Agricultural Economics.

He was awarded his PhD in 1964. The subject of his thesis was resource allocation in the Australian sheep industry.

In 1968, after two restless years in Rome with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Jack became Professor of Economic Statistics at UNE. Two years later, in 1970, he effectively disappeared from the lives of most of his Australian friends and colleagues, when he resigned from the University and went to Washington as an Economist with the Development Research Centre (DRC) of the World Bank.

In his 10 years at UNE, Jack produced 16 publications discussing methodological issues, the results of research and a number of major policy matters. Apart from his enthusiastic teaching and research supervision, the most notable achievement of his time at UNE was his productive collaboration with Ross Parish in studies of proposals for a reserve price (buffer stock) scheme for the Australian wool industry. Their joint monograph on the topic could have been an extremely valuable contribution to public policy, and Australian woolgrowers.¹ Typical of both Jack and Ross Parish, their work was not just a powerful theoretical and empirical critique; it displayed prescient understanding of the realpolitik of agricultural policy making in Australia and elsewhere, noting that 'because of the limited achievements of a conservative scheme, the supporters of a floor-price scheme are likely to demand a more radical reserve price. There is thus the risk that because of errors of judgement on the part of the authority, or because of pressure from dissatisfied groups of growers, a conservative scheme would escalate into a radical one.'

In 1974, Jack became Director of the DRC and remained in that position till the Center was dismantled. The task of the DRC was to design and implement a research programme that responded to the challenge set out in Robert McNamara's famous 1973 Nairobi speech, of reducing poverty in developing countries. Most have only admiration for the way in which Jack took up the challenge, which was carefully set out in a closely managed set of essays, published in 1974 under the title *Redistribution with Growth*.² It made a strong case for economic growth as necessary but not sufficient to reduce poverty in poor countries in the medium term. Poverty reduction strategies could not, therefore, be indifferent to distributional concerns.

While many welcomed the central thesis of *Redistribution with Growth*, or RwG, as it became known, there were others who saw it as creeping socialism. Neither Jack Duloy, nor his beloved DRC, was to survive the loss of his mentor's protection following McNamara's retirement in 1981. The newly installed Reagan administration had its own ideas as to what the World Bank should be about – they were focused mainly on the third world debt to which many US banks were critically exposed at the time – and they arrived with a very different conception of the role of a research group within an international organisation.

Some contemporary authors refer to the 1980s as 'the lost decade' in development economics. But the ideas and tools of analysis that were fashioned in the DRC have all survived and can be seen to be alive and well in a recent World Bank publication *The Impact of Economic Policies on Poverty*

¹ J.H. Duloy and R.M. Parish, *An Appraisal of a Floor-Price Scheme for Wool*, New England Marketing Studies no. 1, University of New England, 1965.

² Hollis Chenery, Montek S. Ahluwalia, CLG Bell, John H. Duloy and Richard Jolly *Redistribution with Growth* OUP (1974).

and *Income Distribution* (2003).³ Jack shepherded the people and the projects that fashioned these tools. He was a brilliantly constructive critic of the flood of ideas that crossed his desk, and he cared deeply about the issues.

The six years as leader of the DRC were probably the most fulfilling of his career, particularly as he was focused on one of the major preoccupations of his life: how to alleviate the suffering of the poor in the developing world. What was more, he was in an institution which was sympathetic to what he was doing and which had not only a capacity but also a duty to apply the recommendations arising from it. The loss of that role, and his struggles with the new management of the Bank, were bruising experiences for him.

Jack returned to Australia in 1985. While he did not renew his links with the Australian profession, he still actively read the relevant literature, and, each year, till 1992, undertook a major consultancy for the Bank – work which, financially, he did not need to do, but which enabled him to continue travelling the rocky road to his light on the hill.

Jack Duloy was a man of driven ambition – an ambition, not to attain power or the accoutrements of the good life, much as these might have been cheerfully accepted, but to contribute to the amelioration of one of the running sores of the contemporary world: the widespread incidence of poverty and its associated traumas in the developing world.

Jack Duloy's ambition was of considerable greatness, and, because of his abilities he was able to achieve it, at least to an extent. As Jack Lewis⁴ said in a message to him, shortly before he died, 'I hope they realise at Mona Vale [Hospital] that they are nursing someone very special'. All who knew Duloy would agree with that.

WARREN MUSGRAVE
GRAHAM PYATT
ALISTAIR WATSON

³ F. Bourguignon and L.A. Pereira da Silva (eds) *The Impact of Economic Policies on Poverty and Income Distribution* World Bank and OUP (2003).

⁴ Another great Australian agricultural economist, a man Jack Duloy greatly admired, and Jack's former Professor at New England.