FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

The role of faith in the provision of services administered by Hunter Valley faith-based (non-government) organisations and the market state objectives of the Howard Liberal National Coalition Government (1996-2007)

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A thesis submitted for the degree of
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DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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Date:.............................................................
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The process of writing this thesis has been rewarding, but also stressful. Most importantly, it has been a lesson in perseverance, not only for me but also for my family, who I have to thank for putting up with me over the years it has taken to complete this work. In particular, deep gratitude goes to my husband Glenn, without whose continued belief in me, I would have been lost. In relation to supervision I could not have asked for better supervisors than Professor Mel Gray and Associate Professor Jim Jose, who have been patient, informative, and understanding: their expert advice has been greatly appreciated. Thank you both for your input and dedication. Lastly, I would like to thank all the research participants, the volunteers, managers, and clients of Hunter FBOs. All have their stories to tell which can help us understand the difficulties some people have while living under circumstances that many people living in better financial and social situations may not be fully aware.
PUBLICATIONS ORIGINATING FROM THIS RESEARCH

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS ORIGINATING FROM THIS RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Welfare policy in Australia during the term of the Liberal-Coalition Government (1996-2007) sought to incorporate the benefits of faith-based Christian morals assumed to be embedded in faith-based provision at the grassroots of service delivery. In turn, it was believed these morals would have a positive impact on the habits of faith-based organization (FBO) clients, who were largely welfare recipients. Correspondingly, welfare reform, particularly Welfare to Work legislation also reflected a paternalistic ethos embodying highly moral views as to why poverty existed. Therefore, it was assumed that faith-based provision could overcome the moral deficiencies of the poor. Welfare and social policy became embedded within a clear duality in relation to citizenship. Those in poverty were seen as a moral underclass lacking traditional Christian values, which prevented them from gaining employment. In turn, volunteers, particularly those who worked in Christian organisations, were upheld as virtuous citizens who would, due to their involvement in social and welfare provision, pass their moral values onto clients in need thus providing a solution to poverty. Australian politicians were following trends in other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, particularly the USA, which promoted FBOs as moral institutions capable of reforming the behaviour of the poor who had become passive dependents of the welfare state. Through a predominantly qualitative research design incorporating quantitative data collected from volunteers, managers, and clients of FBOs in the Hunter, the role of faith in the provision of faith-based social and welfare services was explored to gain an understanding of how it manifested in service provision and
whether the faith of those working in Hunter FBOs could provide a way out of poverty for those reliant on residual state benefits. The findings of this study do not support the belief held by the Howard government that the faithful seek to moralise those in poverty who use their services. In contrast, they seek to provide a caring and compassionate environment where they attempt to convey the love of God through their service.
### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACOSS</td>
<td>Australian Council of Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHP</td>
<td>Broken Hill Proprietary Limited (now BHP Billiton Ltd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASS</td>
<td>Client Assessment of Services Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Church-based Organisations (non-contracted FBOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Centrelink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaCHSIA</td>
<td>Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaCS</td>
<td>Family and Community Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBOs</td>
<td>Faith-based Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB[NGO]s</td>
<td>Faith Based Non-Government Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HVRF</td>
<td>Hunter Valley Research Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JNP</td>
<td>Job Network Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSP</td>
<td>Job Service Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Nongovernment Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPM</td>
<td>New Public Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>New Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Old Testament</td>
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