

Housing Cooperatives: The lived experience in an alternative tenure

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ABSTRACT

This main purpose of the thesis is to investigate the lived experiences of residents in eight housing co-operatives, four in Australia, two in the United States and two in Canada. The thesis gives the primary voice to the residents which enable them to convey their experiences as consumers of housing through their narratives. The secondary aim of the thesis is to ask how, and by what means, can housing cooperatives in Australia become more widespread and contribute to the country's affordable housing stock?

Affordable housing has been the subject of much public and policy debate in Australia. Housing cooperatives are an extremely small contributor in the low to moderate income housing sector in Australia and are usually associated with the public housing sector. Research was also undertaken in the United States and Canada because these countries have long-established housing cooperative sectors which may provide valuable lessons, transferable models and suggestions for alternative methods of funding.

The thesis findings are presented through the lens of self-selection, residential satisfaction, quality of life, social capital, and physical and ontological security. Barriers to the formation of housing cooperatives in Australia are identified. The overseas research suggests the possibility of transferable financial models. Alternative forms of housing cooperatives situated outside of the public housing realm are proposed in order to grow the sector and make this type of affordable housing more widely available to Australians.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without any acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by any other person except where due reference is made in the text.

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