

STATISTICAL INDICATORS

**STATISTICAL
INDICATORS
FOR THE ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL SCIENCES
ROBERT V HORN**



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PREFACE

Forget about exports and imports and profits,
and such neoclassical notions.

Let's balance the product produced from this planet
with the waste flushed into our oceans.

How many hospital beds for each citizen?

What leave for the birth of each child?

How many bookshops? How many cinemas:

What's the street price for a smile?

Nick Horn (1990)

This book is a guide to the role of indicators in the wide world of the social sciences. It concentrates on major areas and aspects of importance, gives some others at least a brief mention, and contains a bibliography indicating recent sources for further study. Although it was written in Australia and offers a few examples taken from there, the text is applicable to Britain, North America and the Western world generally. It deals with indicators of the thrust, impact and direction of change, progressing from theoretical and technical considerations to the discussion of various practical everyday applications.

I received my introduction to the subject while working with the International Labour Office, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and other international organisations in the mid 1970s, when the social indicator movement first took root, and I have continued to watch it spread and ripen since returning to the University of New South Wales in Sydney. I am grateful for advice I received over the years from colleagues at those institutions and elsewhere,

as well as for the essential information services provided by the university and Commerce Faculty libraries of the University of New South Wales and by other organisations. No adequate indicator exists that would scale, weight and aggregate their ineffable contributions to this book, as well as those by my wife and family. I thank them all.

Robert V. Horn