

Letters to the Editor

The Australian

Thursday 16 August 2001

Split Reasons

My preliminary research (as a professional researcher) into a large sample of the pool of Australians living abroad (resident as opposed to traveling overseas) suggests that economic motives are far from the only ones. Their emigrant status may be based on financial self-interest in 65 per cent of cases, but personal self-actualisation comes up as the motive for 20 per cent. This may or may not be consistent with economic motive, but is certainly different.

The remainder are roughly equally divided between interpersonal commitment ("love"), put bluntly, philanthropy (aid workers, e.g.) and the retired.

They are all no less Australian for living in faraway places.

Roger B. Cook
Malvern, Vic

Above this letter a cartoon appeared with two people poring over books in a library. The one on the left is saying "Shush...I'm researching why Australians live overseas". The other one is saying "You've got it easy...I'm researching why they don't".