

## Editorial: No Man Is An Island

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*No man is an Island, entire of it self;  
Every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main...*<sup>1</sup>

If this was true in the 17th century, when John Donne wrote these well-known, and often-quoted words, how much more is it true today? New Zealand, as a small cluster of green, South Pacific islands, with a relatively affluent and highly literate population, has always been subject to international influences in education. Our educationists have always travelled widely, and curriculum, assessment, teaching and administrative innovations have regularly been imported from jurisdictions overseas, to be accepted, modified, or rejected. Our best scholars have always moved in an international educational marketplace, both giving and receiving. Many of our writers in this issue allude to these influences, relatively benign and reciprocal. But globalisation has in recent years taken on an ominous new set of meanings, and as yet there is no consensus about exactly what these might entail. For many, it now means much more than simply the emergence of new, global educational practices and cultural forms, distributed via revolutionary new media and technologies of communication, but rather such things as:

the emergence of supranational institutions whose decisions shape and constrain the policy options for any particular nation state; the overwhelming impact of global economic processes ...; the rise of neoliberalism as a hegemonic policy discourse.<sup>2</sup>

Some writers in this issue are expressing concern about this new development, and their voices are a clarion call to be heeded urgently.

The opening article, by **Graham Nuthall**, Professor Emeritus of Education at the University of Canterbury, is an edited version of his memorable closing "Jean Herbison" address, given at the NZARE Conference in December 2001. With his truly global perspective, Graham reviews honestly and insightfully a lifetime professional pilgrimage, describing a progressive transformation in his own thinking from a focus on the teacher, and what is believed to be taught and the

2 Ian Livingstone

way it is taught, to a focus on the learner, and what is actually learnt, and how it is learnt (and forgotten!).

The two following articles form a complementary pair, both dealing with the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC), set up with a brief to develop a strategic direction for tertiary education in New Zealand. The first, from **John Codd**, is particularly concerned with the *outcomes* of TEAC; the accompanying article from **Jonathan Boston** (who was a member of TEAC) focusses more specifically on the *process*. John Codd picks up the globalisation thrust of this issue, and notes that New Zealand's version of the Third Way (after a decade of neoliberal policies) was designed to head in a new direction which would take account of economic globalisation, technological change and the need for New Zealand to become a knowledge-based society. He critiques the four reports produced by TEAC, and concludes that its proposals could produce a highly centralised and regulated system with the potential to destroy the independent role of the universities within a democratic society. Drawing on his experiences within TEAC, Jonathan Boston considers the necessary conditions for short-term advisory bodies of this type to provide ministers with timely, high-quality policy advice. He then outlines a series of criteria for evaluating advisory bodies like TEAC, examines the performance of TEAC in the light of these criteria, and considers its likely contribution to the evolution of tertiary education policy in New Zealand.

In December 2001, Auckland Metropolitan College (Metro), the only state-funded alternative secondary school in New Zealand, closed after eight highly critical ERO reviews in eight years. The article by **Karen Vaughan**, after an in-depth five-year PhD study in the school, explores Metro's origins, and highlights the tensions between state regulation and innovative schooling within a quasi-market policy context.

Kura Kaupapa Maori have become a distinctive and unique feature of the New Zealand education system. The next article, from **Peter Appleby**, examines the position of such schools within the reformed New Zealand educational environment. A number of themes emerge, including the increasing acknowledgement of Kura Kaupapa Maori in policy documents over time, the lack of specific provision for such schools, and the incongruence of Maori beliefs and aspirations with current philosophical policy foundations.

Our early childhood contribution this year is from **Linda Mitchell**, who argues that the rights of children should be at the heart of early childhood education policy development. She describes the free market framework inherited by the current government, highlights inequalities for children in participation in early childhood education and describes

policy initiatives. The article concludes that there is currently a new valuing of early childhood education, and significant shifts in policy are in train, although some hard decisions about priorities lie ahead.

Next follow four curriculum articles. **Sandra Aikin** meets the globalisation challenge head-on in her article on the emerging stream of ideas related to the globalised effects of the economy on education policy and practice. She makes an assessment of the impact of global pressures on selected aspects of curriculum and assessment policies and practices in New Zealand primary schools. **Brian Thompson** bravely tackles the perennial issue of how children can best be taught to read, and attempts to bring some light to the current heated debate about whether New Zealand practices for teaching reading should include "more phonics". The status quo of *receptive* phonics and the teaching culture in which it is embedded are described, and compared with the *productive* phonics practices of other teaching cultures. The response of New Zealand children to this practice is relatively faster reading procedures, but much remains to be learnt to sharpen New Zealand receptive phonics teaching practices to reduce repetitive teaching rituals. Two articles on the recently introduced, and highly contentious, social studies curriculum conclude this section. **Keith Sullivan** outlines some features of its content, while charting the long-drawn out development process. Essentially, there was a conflict between two ideological perspectives: that of the social democrats who wrote the original draft, and that of the neoliberals as represented by the Education Forum. The article concludes that in the contest over the new curriculum, the social democrat perspective nominally gained the upper hand. **Fiona Beals** takes a more philosophical look at social studies education, using a post-structural analysis to provide an alternative perspective. She argues that the new social studies curriculum restricts many diverse groups in Aotearoa/New Zealand from identification as "New Zealand citizens" through a focus on "citizenship" education and a singular "national identity".

Three articles on assessment follow. **Juliet Twist** focuses on the *Tell Me* (oral language component) of *School Entry Assessment (SEA)*. She finds that although SEA-related documents make a concerted effort to support both formative assessment and the use of teacher judgement in assessment, teachers may not be making formative use of the data obtained, and may be reluctant to use judgement when scoring this component. The Assessment Resource Banks (ARBs) in English, mathematics and science have been designed to reflect current New Zealand curriculum statements and provide schools with an increasing range of valid and reliable assessment materials. They are available on

the Internet and are now established as the main source of school-based assessment resources for New Zealand schools. **Cedric Croft**, who has overseen their development at NZCER over the past decade, notes that during their early development phase, national and school-based uses were seen as dual elements, but they now function exclusively within a school-based environment. Finally, in this section, **Jim Strachan**, in the first of a two-part article, backgrounds a number of factors that have hindered proposed changes in our senior secondary assessment system, and notes the ongoing reluctance to shift from traditional practices, in spite of sound overseas models. He emphasises the need for change, and observes that while the current NCEA design is an improvement over the old, compromises have led to a model with some deficiencies.

**Tina Besley** provides an overview of forty years of guidance counselling in New Zealand secondary schools, at a time that has seen New Zealand move from a welfare state to a neoliberal one. By focussing primarily on official policy and its impact on the place of guidance counsellors, she identifies five phases in the development of this small, but important section of semi-visible specialist teachers.

Following the global thrust of this issue, our first-ever article from Norway presents a method used in Norwegian schools to enhance learning and development in groups of teachers. **Elaine Munthe** and **Unni Midthassel** describe a peer-based mentoring method that was first introduced in the 1980s, and focuses in a helpful way on the uncertainty that is characteristic of all teaching.

The next article evaluates current special education policy relating to secondary students with moderate to severe behaviour needs. **Andrea Milligan** examines whether provisions for the needs of these students are equitable and efficient, and draws upon her experiences as a practitioner to evaluate whether the intent of SE2000 policy is reflected in its execution. She concludes that the current dominance of inclusiveness discourse is yet to be matched with real solutions both for, and in the eyes of, the individual.

The final article provides an index of the 142 articles published by the *Review* in its first ten years, from 1991 to 2000. Some 134 authors, including the two editors and several reference compilers, have contributed a very significant body of educational research literature over this period, and hereby made a major contribution to the international status of the *Review*. *Gaudeamus igitur!*

#### Notes

1. John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions (1624) 'Meditation XVII'*.
2. Burbules, N., & Torres, C. (Eds.) (2000). *Globalization and education* (p. 1) Routledge: New York.