

# Emancipation through education, the dreams of organised teachers: Remembering our history.

## Herbison Lecture: Dr Joce Jesson

### Abstract

This presentation retraces some of the often ignored history of Aotearoa/New Zealand education that has created various aspects of the education structures, dating back to 1860s. Of particular interest is the relationship between educational innovation and change that has come about through the active involvement of teachers as policy champions as they pursue their goal of a professional project, building an education system for a nation. These long established but evolving processes form part of the professional identity of teachers across all levels, early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary and higher education with implications for both current and future policy changes. Sometimes areas are marginalised, ignored or simply forgotten. This talk foregrounds some of those areas bringing them back in alongside or parallel with the mainstream areas along with developments in worker education, union education and activism in communities – which are highlighted in this Herbison address.

### Introduction

This lecture has been organised using Ausabel's Advanced Organisers as a series of powerpoint slides (Ausabel 1968). With this I want to pay a bit of respect to Ausabel's work because it's really important that we keep the memories of people who have contributed various ideas to our education system. Ausabel, an American cognitive psychologist, was in New Zealand at Victoria in 1958/9 (of course this shows my age). Against a background of behaviourism at the time, in contrast, his work became important for the development of school subject lesson planning. He gave lectures at most of the University Departments of Education. Since then we teachers spent a lot of time thinking about just how what we going to teach conceptual links to the learners' prior knowledge. But sadly this idea of Advanced Organisers has deteriorated and we now talking about WALTs and we are WALTsing everywhere. I don't really know what they mean because each school seems different: We are Learning That, We are Learning This time, .....This Term, this week etc. All of this WALTsing that's going on in our classrooms. WALTs are now Words are lists, written on blackboards to keep ERO happy.

Teachers as professionals and the idea of teaching as a learned profession is a central theme that goes right this talk. It connects the concept of what is the professional knowledge to the idea of curriculum autonomy and teacher's identity; and teacher's identity is established in a particular way as I'm going to explain later. The first occupational or professional group to emerge was NZEI. Originally in each province, the Institute was made up of all teachers. The professional association was also the authority for conditions and pay. Eventually the inevitable occurred and the secondary teachers set up separately. The idea, still continuing to this day, is the notion of *post primary*. The formation of the Secondary Teachers' Association, as a breakaway from NZEI, nurtured a squabble as to what they were to be called. Were they all secondary teachers but then what about those manual teachers, those who taught technical or manual knowledge? Eventually in 1952 we got Post-Primary Teachers Association covering all teachers in secondary schools including those in the manual training centres. With the post World War II growth of technical institutes, the tertiary educators or tertiary tutors, also became an identifiable group as a union, Association of Tutors in Technical Institutes.

The latest group which has emerged as a clearly established occupational group, are the early childhood educators who came out clearly from the shadow of Tomorrow's Schools, and the

Kindergarten Teachers Association and are now part of NZEI. Thus battles over teachers' conditions of work was first with the Provincial Boards, then Department of Education and the Ministry of Education. There is a tension in this between the professional and the industrial. Is class size a professional or industrial matter? What about lesson planning? Curriculum content? Teacher qualifications? Are teachers a self-regulating profession or are they state servants? Many of the policy changes in education have been to an attempt to resolve this conundrum usually between politicians and the teachers.

Next I want to talk about my overriding theory. I work out of a French theoretical frame which is called "regulation theory". (Aglietta, 2001). This looks at how capitalism develops over time called regimes of accumulation in various countries and how those changes in a society are related to changes in labour process.

The establishment of a *regime of accumulation* is an historical occurrence. It is the material outcome of the conflicting forces of class, politics, cultures, economics, ideology, agency and structure. All of which have their own individual histories and conflicts. (Jesson, 1995)

### Regimes of Accumulation (after Aglietta (2006))

1830-1914	Extensive	Laissez-faire, competitive regulation
Post 1920s	Intensive initial Limited consumption	Taylorism and early Fordist production
1930s	Crisis	First crisis of intensive accumulation and last crisis of extensive accumulation
Post WW2	Intensive full with mass consumption	Full Fordist production, Both production and consumption increasing
1973	Crisis - "the end of the long boom"	Crisis of production coupled with a crisis of consumption. Increasing technological change & increasing unemployment
Post 1974 ? Post Fordism ?	Flexible accumulation	? Changes in capital/labour relation, just-in-time production, flexible labour market creation .....?

Figure 1: Regimes of accumulation in New Zealand (Jesson, 1995)

So starting in Figure 1 at the top, we start in the 1830s and looking at British laissez-faire capitalism – British Empire colonisation - based on an extractive commodified industry: gold, coal, whale oil, seals, wool. Originally schooling was mainly in Māori village and missionary schools, with pakeha children attending small private primary schools we now call dame schools, or else they went to the various denominational schools. The provinces were each responsible for establishing their own schools. This period for New Zealand gradually lead to the changes in the provinces as a nation emerged. The early 1900s under the Liberals created the New Zealand's form of the state, with its agricultural and extractive industry base. The artifacts of those changing times are still with us.

As we were driving down here to Whakatāne from Auckland, we were passing bits and pieces of things of social geography, the structure of buildings, houses and cowsheds which have evolved over time. These artifacts indicate changes in how people lived and worked. If we look at our dairy-based economy, it has evolved from a little tiny one cow bale, built to supply a household and over time developments in milking cows get bigger, building now into these gigantic sheds. And at the same time each area had a dairy cooperative cheese or butter factory built to process that local product. As you come around the corner we can often see a huge mob of over a thousand cows. This prompts me to query "who on earth does all that work?" The answer now is usually imported migrant labour.

So these are artifacts of social geography for New Zealand but in rush to become modern we often keep forgetting how they came to be.

So as I said the periodisation which starts in the 1830s moves its way through various crises until we get to what is the latest idea. This is the current description idea of now : the supposed post-fordism, post industrial or the digital age. This is a very structured view of society, but out of the crises we developed a welfare state, protected labour and established unions. Currently there is the pressure to create the post-welfare state that reduces labour using digital means. However the big idea that we need to keep in front of us is still the same. What is the nation that we are part of and are currently building? It's not a flag, its about the creation of our citizenry. What do we want, and more importantly what role does education play in building our nation?

Regime of accumulation Mode of production	Political periodisations	Particular character	Various occurrences in education
Māori. non-capitalist - pakeha scavenger economy laissez-faire outposts of other economies	Pre-1830's Māori society, Rangatiratanga	Indigenous agriculture  Mission & village structures	Indigenous forms of social regulation Mission schools Native schools Utilitarian education
Extensive Accumulation  <i>Crisis</i>	1840 establishment of State Phase of rural oligarchy	State established capitalist infrastructure, British extractive industries, speculation	Provincial primary schools Grammar schools Secondary education for rural oligarchy 1877 Education Act state supported
Intensive early	1890-1912 State experiments and urban coalitions	Beginning of welfare state, De-commodification Refrigeration	Universal primary education Women get vote 1893
<i>Crisis</i>	1912-1935 Rural coalitions	Agricultural producer control of marketing	State technical schools established
Intensive accumulation Fordism in agriculture Mass domestic consumption	1935-1970's Historic compromise Keynesian social democracy	Increase in State, economic boom, State assisted manufacturing, British control of agriculture Internationalism of NZ	Extension of secondary education to all  Progressivism in primary education Scientism in secondary curriculum
<i>Crisis</i>	1970s-1984 "end of the long boom"	Technological change, increasing unemployment	Progressivism in secondary education Technical education = Tertiary education
<i>Flexible accumulation</i> Re-commodification (Post Fordism)	1984-1992 Labour Monetarism	Re-commodification of areas outside economy. ? changes in capital/labour relations, just-in-time production Market creation .....?	? Open entry to tertiary on price ? Education as skills ? Educational opportunity as a commodity ?

Figure 2: Economic Periodisation of NZ (from Jesson 1995)

So the *regimes of accumulation*, this stuff that these French regulation theorists talk about, is about how the society sets up its rules and structures, what it does to establish norms of production, and what is taken for granted. When we look at the world we see it in a particular way.

The general idea is that we can divide our country's development into a number of these economic periodisations. New Zealand educationalists often dismiss economics : "oh it's economics can't do anything, we don't understand that" and yet economics is what we deal with all the time. It is how we live.

## **New Zealand Provinces and teacher Identity**

We start this journey to becoming a nation back with the provinces. The person I want to begin with is Robert Stout who became first organiser of Otago Schoolmasters' Association, a forerunner to the NZEI. Stout later entered Otago provincial politics and became Minister of Justice in Liberal Government, with very clearly developed ideas about state education, as I will outline later

Each of the Provinces had established their own Education Boards, each with their own regulations, ways to get income and therefore pay for teachers. If we compare Otago to Auckland, Otago had gold, whereas Auckland extended from Northland to Taupo, and had the most people. Auckland had the cost of the land wars while the Hawke's Bay was mainly made up of landed gentry and sheep. The abolition of the provinces promised national funding and a national system of schooling. With the Education Act 1877, schooling became free, secular, and compulsory for all children aged between seven and 13, with Māori children having the option of attending state or native schools (these had been established in 1867). In 1901 after much campaigning by the various affiliates of NZEI for a national system, the Department of Education finally established a national scale of teachers' salaries and staffing for schools. This was called The Colonial Scale with the detail in regulations, which were set out in the governing Education Manuals.

The Education Act 1914 concentrated even more powers in the hands of the Department of Education, for example from 1914, inspectors of primary schools were centralised in the Education Department rather than based in the Education Boards. The Native Schools had been inspected first. But those first regular inspections of schools and teachers finally led to a national graded list of primary teachers which was then made the basis of appointments by 1920. And yet until 1989 the provinces still maintained some input. They maintained democratic elections, with the total number of teachers grades allocated by each of the Education Boards. Hence the support by NZEI for Tomorrows' Schools and for abolishing the Education Boards.

We all know that the 1877 Act established the Department of Education. Robert Stout who is very important in this development of New Zealand.

### **Robert Stout**

Robert Stout was the first organiser of the Otago Schoolmaster's Association. He came from the Shetland Islands as a trained teacher. Although first assistant teacher at Dunedin North District School he was simultaneously organising the development of the Schoolmasters Association: i.e. putting it together. He was also developing a group of people around him interested in discussing ideas. His ideas on state education as free and compulsory are set out in a paper he read to the Otago Schoolmasters Association in 1870. A copy is held in Volume three of his collection of pamphlets in the Victoria University Electronic Text Collection (NZETC). He was fascinating, where did he come from and what influence did he have on our current schools? Stout coming from the Shetland Islands was known for his very strong Scottish accent. While in Dunedin he was turned down for a headship at Waitaki Boys and so moved into law and then into politics, which was the other thing he brought to education. But the one thing that is really quite important for us to remember is that he was a trained teacher. Teaching wasn't something that you just did; you learned how to be a teacher. As part of the Vogel Government Stout became the Minister of Education and eventually, Chief Justice. The Liberals and the 1890s, actually established a particular form of the New Zealand Aotearoa. Stout wasn't alone but the other part of his life was his wife, Anna Stout. She was really important in the development of the women's movement a friend of Kate Shepherd, and great supporter of women's suffrage. So many of these ideas things that we often keep forgetting, or we bring in policy people with no idea of our history. We have got the Stout

Centre and Stout is a name that pops up in a number of little towns. What we do have to remember is that Stout believed that education was one of the ways they could develop New Zealand. Emancipation through education if you will. Stout became one of the few people who as the Minister of Education also became the Chief Justice and so understood the power of rules and law. He established many of the regulations about schools, some of which still exist.

## **George Hogben**

The second person of note became the Head of Department of Education: from 1899 till 1915, George Hogben. Hogben helped shape the philosophy of New Zealand education in those early years twentieth century. A firm believer that education was a tool for social change he introduced free secondary school education, District High Schools and revised the primary school syllabus with an emphasis on practical. He was instrumental in establishing School Journal rather than text books and insisted on teacher qualifications. Hogben is important for his development of the curriculum.

Some of us remember the Hogben Centre in Titirangi and that it was a place especially established for teachers' professional development. These, two people, Stout and Hogben, helped establish a certain variety of education which was based on some ideas that state education was for all children, it was free, secular and compulsory. Hogben ran into trouble from the denominational schools partly because one of the things that the Liberals pursued was to open secondary schooling up. When you can go back and read the historical documents you will discover that people did not want the workers' children to have a full free education. If you were an Auckland businessman, the merchant class, your children often went to school in Sydney, while country elites established boarding schools. So Hogben decided to deal with this grammar school lobby. He set up district high schools all around the country (often associated with dairy cooperative factories), to enable country children to get access to secondary schooling. His emphasis was on practical learning, down playing the academic focus of the grammar schools. The district high schools have continued to this day often as area schools, with a continuing battle over where do they fit? Are they primary schools, are they secondary schools, what is the nature of pedagogy. What degree did their teachers need? For me personally I learnt a great deal in what originally was Onewhero District High School and then later become part of Tuakau College, one of the first FI -6 Schools under Hiwi Tauroa. Those primary teachers taught me, a secondary science teacher, a great deal about creating relevant curriculum.

Yesterday my friend Kura Marie Taylor and I went out to Ruatoki. This was where my friend had been a PA in 1960s. Some of you might remember how you became a PA or even what a PA is, and we found the school at Ruatoki looks pretty much the same. Looking at school buildings as social artifacts we can see things like the open air classrooms. This was an idea promoted by Prof. Shelley at Canterbury that they could take the whole wall back to let in sunshine, and let the children take their desks outside, and learn from the environment. This idea Education got from Plunket in the 1920s. You had to expose these "poor children to open air, Vitamin D and stop the spread of T.B". "Which was all very well in the summer but in the winter it was damn cold", Kura remembers.

Okay but if we return to George Hogben for a minute what we still have are these country secondary schools, with manual training centres for teaching practical skills

Now the particular school (in Figure 3) is in Waihi: one side of the building is for the manual training as practical education as part of Hogben's curriculum This was the development of a compulsory national primary curriculum. Hogben bought a big fight with the big urban schools because he did not think that it was important that children in New Zealand learnt Latin but he wanted them to learn practical skills important for a developing country. This Waihi school was established using funds raised by the locals, like in the Native schools. Why was it a technical school? Gold mining required people to understand chemistry. So the Waihi students basically had one of the first

focused school I suppose, an early training technical institute, in which they learned about the whole nature and the science of gold mining. What happens when you put mercury and pour it down the river? Where did the mercury come from? Getting gold requires that you extract from the smashed up ore using mercury. If you go through Waihi on your way up to Auckland from Whakatāne just have a look on Kenny Street and see that this particular building that captures the story of a gold mining town. It is now a museum.



Figure 3: Waihi Manual Training Centre. (Photo R.J.McK. Smith 29 October 2016)

In 1912 this town was also the site of an incredible event: the Waihi strike was about piece rates and unionism. What it meant that you got the gold out of the rock gold-bearing ore, and smashed it up using huge battering rams. Workers dug out the rocks and manned the battery. Because of the recession, the new idea became popular: piece rates payment as a pay incentive (Jesson, 2011). Actually the management of the gold company, was almost the same management of the BNZ at that point. So rather than paying for rocks of variable quality, management decided that they would pay workers on what was useful at the end of the extraction process. It didn't matter how much you actually cut out of this mine you had no control over how much you were actually being paid. (Rainer, 1976) So that was at those transitions we can see in Figure 1. above. At that point there was a world wide depression of 1890s hit New Zealand, and the price of gold fell. The way management were going to solve the problem was to cut back on how much the workers got paid (Derby, M. 2016, Rainer, 1976). So appeals by the union to the Arbitration Court had no effect eventually they became the cause of the first ongoing strike. Frederick George Evans who was one of the local miners, was killed. He was regarded as the first of the New Zealand labour martyrs. This long strike involved the whole town. You can go back and read it in Te Ara, (Rainer, 2013). When Fred Evans was shot, the miners couldn't bury him in the town due to ongoing opposition. So with the support of the Federation of Labour, they brought his body up to Auckland. He is now buried in the Waikaraka cemetery.

To return the discussion of Hogben, his interest was in a curriculum for all New Zealand children in order to build great citizens. His reorganization of the curriculum required teachers to create their own curriculum. While he ran straight into opposition not just from larger elite urban denominational schools but also from teachers themselves who found it too difficult particularly without a text book, also given they were teaching to the proficiency exam. Success here provided funding to secondary school. We have to remember all those tiny towns around New Zealand, each

having their own wee school, supposedly to be embedded in that community, staffed very often by poorly trained teachers, not having text books but required to be using school journals and other material. Hogben's dreams reflect on the reality today. This raises the question about, "what is the role of the teacher? What sort of curriculum do we need?" Teachers are the professionals, teachers as the educated people in those communities are common themes that continue. One of the threads is about pay parity. Should secondary teachers be paid more for a degree? Hands up anybody who recognizes the idea of "what is the size of Susan's shoes and recognizes what it has to do with teachers?"

The idea that continues from Hogben is that curriculum is something that teachers are deeply involved in, and they create its details for their class. Whose curriculum is it and what is its purpose?

I want us to just take a minute and think about the development of the teaching unions as they move over time, the idea of pay parity and the danger of co-option. I remember when "Tomorrow's Schools" first came in, there used to be principals' meetings at the teacher's college where I was on secondment at that point. I went outside one day and saw some of my mates who were principals and headmasters and they were all people in suits. Now male teachers in the 1980s used to wear shorts with long socks and sandals. On this day I went out and said to one of them "why is everybody dressed like this? Oh came the reply we are headmasters we are the leaders of our school. Oops, I thought then a phone went and this guy pulled out this brick (phone) and I said, "what is that for?" The guy said "I got to keep an eye on what's happening at school". I kept thinking if you went to a meeting: you didn't want to find out what was happening at the school, why would you do that? So it was these sort of behaviors that made me realize early on that Tomorrow's Schools was about making headmasters into chief executives. Their structure and their culture was being changed. Nowadays we have another idea to rectify the curriculum which is \$50,000 for the head of the cluster. The danger is that teachers will forget their own profession, their own history and allow themselves to be co-opted.

Another set of learning which we have to remember is "what happened to curriculum? In secondary schools originally the PPTA had curriculum committees in every subject. People with recognized expertise in a subject were part of the committee with whom the Department of Education consulted over any changes. Gradually over time the PPTA ended up doing all the work of what they thought was the role of the Department of Education. The culmination for me was the enormous Hui that PPTA helped organise over assessment. It was held at Waaihi, near Huntly. Do you any of you people remember going to the Hui at Waihi? This was the place in which somebody raised the question "if we took the Māori kids out of school, what would happen to the pass rate? That was an interesting thought and implied that the purpose of education for many of the Māori kids was that they enabled more Pakeha kids to pass. People didn't like that thought or grappling with that idea. And around the same time another idea started to percolate through that we should all be able to learn everything.

Yes it is clear that the purpose of education had shifted. When you remember in the 1950s and 1960s, school certificate was seen the dividing line between the middle class and the working class: those people who had to work manually for a living. Many apprenticeships started at the school leaving age. School Certificate acted as a drafting gate to higher education in many ways. However the abolition of School Certificate, University Entrance and the establishment of NCEA was part of the idea that every child was entitled to be rewarded for what they could achieve. So we have NCEA L1-3 in schools and L1-8 in tertiary enterprises. Nowadays the governments expectation is NCEA level II as some sort of standard. We have these new ideas floating around which is about life long learning and anyone can teach anything. That's also an interesting idea. What is it like to be a carpenter? What are the incentives? What are the particular skills they need? Then we'll go back and

look at what's happened Māori trades training. Around in some communities are people who were trained in the Māori trades training schools in polytechs. Sadly when the polytechs started to compete for funding, under the EFTS model many of these courses were seen as too expensive and disbanded.

Now often people forget that NCEA actually was developed and pushed with support from PPTA. PPTA worked very strongly to clarify who's in charge of curriculum, what is it that these kids need, what is it these kids can do and where can we recognize them. Of course then things get captured and we get co-option happening again. (Alison, J. 2007). Judie Alison finishes her Ph. D with these prophetic words

Only teachers can turn a policy-maker's vision into a classroom reality for students. We need to know how those policy-makers' visions can be better fitted to classroom realities so that they become shared visions, and how those classroom realities can be changed to enable shared visions to become actualities. This requires a climate of respect for teachers as responsible professionals who are committed to the well-being of their students, not a climate in which teachers' compliance is sought through accountability regimes that communicate distrust of their professionalism. (Alison, 2007 p254)

In ending I want us to remember again what is it that we think is important for teaching as a professional being. The Teacher's Council initially conceived as a teachers' professional body has been reconstructed into something which I can't quite work out what's its purpose is. The idea that encouraging diversity was something that we believed every school and every teacher would play a part in. Teacher education was something that became important, because of those original guys from the 1890s and 1900s. Stout started off as a pupil teacher in the Shetland islands and was very involved in the development of teacher education at the universities So we had teacher's colleges. Now we have teacher education in which the students never really have time to learn anything much in depth.

My last thought is: what is it we want New Zealand to be like because our education system built a nation.

So what is the model of nationhood that we want education to support?

I will leave it at that point. Thank you very much.

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## **Question 1: It's interesting your views on the way in which... (something about charter schools)**

Professor Meade raised some ideas about Trojan horses and as I said we were out yesterday at Taneatua as they were talking about an education system for Tuhoë and we'll have to make that an idea that will happen. We already have integrated schools and I don't quite know why, having gone through that process, why we couldn't have integrated schools but due to John Banks, and ACT, we now have charter schools. I do remember back at the beginning of Tomorrow's Schools we were looking at the idea of charters for our schools, and we all sat through hundreds of meetings and thought about everything. At the time I was at Auckland Girls, you've no idea what it was like with Charmaine Pountney coming up with a new idea every day. We created this wonderful charter that we were going to have at Auckland Girls and the Ministry at that point said "no no no we don't want that! We want this fill in the gaps model!" so that was the end of our idea of a charter. So where do we sit with the charter schools now? It looks appealing but when you look at the way that capitalism is operating currently we are at the point where much of the labour's been done by what I call the precariate (Standing 2011) those people who've got a temporary job. Universities are taught by people on contracts, we've got zero hours in much of the work force. The thought that there's nothing written in law as to how much you actually have to work, means you can be on call all day So those worries about what it does to the idea of a learned profession. If we claim that everybody is a teacher then where is our professional knowledge, what is it for? I don't know if I've answered the question or not, I've just raved.

## **Question 2: the question was about the Māori trades training scheme**

The Māori trades training scheme was originally established after the war as a way of making sure that Māori students, mainly boys in the beginning, could get access to tertiary education, or what was called higher education then, But it was accompanied by another thing which was very important, there were these hostels in the cities near the polytechnics or the tech as they were then in which people stayed. So you had a system where young Māori boys and girls would come into the city and there'd be a mum or nanna at that home who looked after them. But it was very expensive of course so when Education looked to cut funding, cutting the Māori trades training was the one thing that happened. Giving the control to the polytechs meant that there was nothing to stop it, although a number of tutors of course fought very hard to continue it when you take the funding away that's what happens. So I don't know what the rationale was apart from the expense.

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*Sir Robert Stout (Courtesy of Te Ara)*