CHANGE: TRANSFORMATIONS IN EDUCATION
VOLUME 4 NUMBER 1 MAY 2001

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Change: Transformations in Education seeks to promote discussion of a wide range of issues, themes and problems arising from the varieties of change which now impact upon education at every level, in differing contexts and with enormously varied results. The orientation of the journal is cross-disciplinary and critical. The journal's intended readership is that of educational policy-makers, analysts and activists working in contexts of social and organisational change and development. It also aims to interest professionals involved in the planning and implementation of educational programs across all education sectors nationally and internationally. The journal is published twice a year, in May and November. These two issues constitute one volume.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE SUBMITTED TO AT LEAST TWO REFEREES BEFORE BEING ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

Editorial correspondence, including manuscripts for submission and books for review, should be addressed to Change: Transformations in Education, Professional Development Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia. Details concerning the preparation and submission of articles can be found on the inside back cover of each issue.

Business correspondence, including orders and remittances relating to subscriptions, back numbers, offprints and advertisements should be addressed to Change: Transformations in Education, Professional Development Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia.

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CHANGE
TRANSFORMATIONS IN EDUCATION

PROBLEMS NEW AND PROBLEMS OLD
IN THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION

GUEST EDITORS:
MARJORIE THEOBALD (UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE)
CRAIG CAMPBELL (UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY)

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cont ...
Most decisions made by education policy makers contain an element of historical thinking, often of a regrettably naive kind. Their decisions are also based on assumptions about how teachers, administrators, politicians or the public will act. An understanding of how they have actually acted in the past is important when trying to judge how they will act in the present. Historical research in education may have a less direct influence on practice than areas of more obviously contemporary research but it can give policy makers and practitioners a different and potentially valuable perspective on matters of current concern.

As with the wider issues of Australian identity and nationhood, it is difficult to imagine a period in which historical perspectives have more to offer. Inspired by economic rationalist understandings, our school systems and our tertiary institutions have been radically restructured; there are worrying signs of crisis among our teachers, and the issue of private and public funding of schools, with its disturbing subtext of deepening disadvantage, is back on the agenda.

This collection of historical articles has been selected from the papers presented at the annual meeting of the Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society held in Melbourne in December 2000. They are eclectic in focus and include contributions from Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Three articles focus in diverse ways on the state systems of secondary education in Australia and New Zealand. In a wide-ranging and disturbing keynote address on the comprehensive high school in Australian educational history, Craig Campbell argues that the nineteenth-century nexus between secondary education and class privilege has proved remarkably resilient in the twentieth century. Jo May’s article complements the broad sweep of Campbell’s study by analysing the transition experience of students from New South Wales primary schools to selective high schools from the 1930s to the 1950s. Roger Openshaw analyses the Byzantine responses of the now defunct New Zealand Department of Education to two controversies surrounding curriculum reform in the post-war period: the school bulletin, Washday at the Fa, and the MACOS program. Openshaw concludes that the Department was awkwardly positioned between profession and state, and between pressure groups and political establishment, a selective actor on the policy stage rather than a passive conductor of policy.

Sheila Cavanagh examines the impact of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene on the child, the school and the teacher in Ontario from 1920 to 1950. She traces a shift in the understanding of mental illness based on hereditary factors to an understanding based on environmental factors. She argues that this shift in understand-
ing caused a swing away from policies based on the segregation of the 'mental defective' to policies that required the reworking of the school and the teacher.

Two articles focus on the history of Catholic education. Kay Whitehead questions the orthodoxy that the Catholic Sisters of St Joseph saved the South Australian Catholic elementary schools from oblivion when the state refused to fund denominational schools, which until that time were staffed by lay teachers. She argues that the changing of the guard from state to Catholic Church was often contested by lay teachers and parents alike. Christine Trimmingham Jack also ruffles the smooth surface of Catholic education history, using postmodernist understandings to examine the two-tier system of membership in many pre-Vatican Two female religious orders — comprised of choir nuns who undertook teaching and administrative duties, and lay sisters who undertook domestic duties but did not participate in the Office ritual.

Ata and Maxine Stephenson continue the focus on women teachers. Combining a methodological approach and a focus on race, they examine the historical ‘readings’ of a young Maori woman teacher in a nineteenth-century New Zealand Native School.

Andy Spaull challenges another orthodoxy when he re-examines the role of the Commonwealth Government through its use of constitutional powers in shaping education well before the introduction of federal financial assistance to universities in the 1950s and schools in the 1960s.

Each of the articles not only improves our understanding of past policies and practices in education. The articles also assist us in framing new questions about education in the present.

MARJORIE THEOBALD AND CRAIG CAMPBELL, GUEST EDITORS