

# Historical Research: Perspectives on Political History as a Key Factor in Shaping Art Education in New Zealand

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## Abstract

*New Zealand is a young country with a comparatively recent history. Jill is an experienced tertiary teacher educator and researcher in the field of secondary school art and art history. Postgraduate student, Cathy, is a specialist art teacher in the primary sector and has recently taken her first steps in research. Although their teaching backgrounds differ, both have shown in their respective studies that New Zealand's political history is a key factor in shaping primary and secondary school art education. In this paper Jill and Cathy explain their interest in historical research, how they use historical methodology, and their conclusions about the relationship between politics and art education.*

## The starting point - Jill's perspective

In 1990 the National Art Education Association in North America published *Framing the Past: Essays on Art Education* (Soucy & Stankiewicz, 1990) and in it a chapter, 'South Kensington in the Farthest Colony'. The colony referred to was New Zealand. Authored by F. Graeme Chalmers (1990), an 'historical researcher' and expatriate New Zealander domiciled in Canada, this historical account provided my first insights into relationships between history, politics, and developments in art education in this country. My subsequent research has been framed by New Zealand's political history, in particular developments from the 1840s that have shaped art in secondary schools (Smith, 2002, 2007a). Underpinned by an historical methodology, publications and conference presentations resulting from this research predominantly raise issues of culture, diversity and difference (Smith, 2006, 2007b). In a previous article in *Australian Art Education* (Smith, 2008) I claimed that the origins of art education in New Zealand, and the continuities and changes that have occurred over time, cannot be separated from the contexts in which they evolved. Knowledge of historical context, sought through historical

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methodology, provided a critical background from which I could argue that consciousness of connections between past and present raises significant issues about art education for the future.

While Chalmers (2004) reports that few authors have addressed issues around the teaching of art education history my pre-service art programmes in secondary teacher education are underpinned by a socio-political-historical perspective. A number of graduate and postgraduate students have explored historical research, one of whom is Cathy Warden, a primary school art teacher who recently graduated with a Master of Education (Warden, 2009). In her investigation into the impact of education policies in New Zealand on professional development support for primary school art teachers Cathy used historical research methods in conjunction with qualitative data collection techniques. Focusing on the 1940s to the present, her research was structured within the political framework of three historical periods, a strategy suggested by her co-supervisor Vicki Carpenter.

Together, our respective research into the effects of New Zealand's political history on the evolution of primary and secondary school art education provide important contextual material for developments spanning from the 1840s to the present. In this paper we justify why we use an historical approach to research. Cathy then reports on her study to illustrate how she employed this methodology. We conclude with our perspective on the relationship between politics and the history of art education.

#### Using historical research methods in art education – A shared perspective

While there is a call for art education researchers to employ innovative arts-based and practitioner-based forms of inquiry that extend beyond traditional qualitative paradigms (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Sullivan, 2004, 2005), we maintain that historical research methods have been essential for gaining our individual insights into New Zealand's art education history. Formal settlement in New Zealand, under a national administration, did not begin until the 1840s. Not only is this a young country, but it has comparatively few art education researchers and, hence, a paucity of literature which articulates developments in the field in terms of who, what, when, where, how, and why. Having identified a need for certain historical knowledge we recognised the necessity of gathering as much relevant information as possible about our respective research questions. Our methodology was informed by two aspects – compiling facts and shaping interpretive narratives about the history of education in general (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000), and art education in particular (Stankiewicz, 1997, 2001).

The first aspect of our individual projects required painstaking compilation of historical facts, critical reading of primary or first hand accounts of information, and of secondary sources written after the event, careful recording of data and, most importantly, establishing chronologies which documented

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*“who did what where and when”* (Stankiewicz, 1997, p.57). For both of us the starting point was analysing documents from our pertinent eras, Jill's beginning in the 1840s and Cathy's from the 1940s. In varying degrees and differing ways our sources comprised the material focused on by a *“positivist or scientific historian of art education”* (p.58). In Jill's case, historical evidence was gathered from published primary documentary sources, the *“single most important source for historical research in education”* (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000, p.85). These included Parliamentary Acts and Regulations dating back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, policy documents, national art curriculum specifications, draft consultation documents and curriculum statements, education reports and reviews, demographic statistics, schools' mission statements, art departments' schemes, and teachers' unit and lesson planning. However, as Stephenson (2008) points out, the *“official and professional nature of the available historical evidence [tells] part of the story only”* (p.10). It was important, therefore, that primary sources should include those created by participants in our studies. Gardner and Cunningham (1997) emphasise that, in examining the history of teachers' professional practice, the oral history interview should be the *“principal methodological tool”* (p.331). For Jill, insights into 'other parts' of the story were gained through repeated interviews with ten teachers (the head of art department and an assistant art teacher in each of five secondary schools) in conjunction with extensive observations in their classrooms, and an evaluation of students' art works that represented the outcomes of the teachers' pedagogical practice. The latter 'visual sources' were deployed as supporting evidence to illustrate themes and arguments (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000) propounded in Jill's thesis. In Cathy's case, a potent primary source was the oral histories based on interviews with three key participants, each representing a distinct political period. Cathy's aim was for participants to recall their own experiences as historical evidence (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000). Her approach was informed by Stephenson's (2008) theories and methods relating to 'memory and remembering' in relation to history as a key dimension of the history of education.

Although Stephenson identifies the ongoing tensions amongst scholars *“attempting to reconcile conflicting notions of individual and collective memory”* she, and others (see Frisch, 1990; Middleton & Edwards, 1990; Perks & Thomson, 1998), recognise that *“memory of the past is a social and political phenomenon, negotiated and constituted in conditions of the present”* (p.5). For Stephenson, *“Memory is living history [and is] still alive and active”* (p.8). Moreover, Frisch (1990) argues that the oral historian needs to make memory the object of an investigation, rather than just its method. In Cathy's study the way events were remembered by her participants produced singular insights that were interwoven with the data collected from secondary sources. In both our studies, accounts and interpretations written about historical events or processes after the fact afforded rich sources of information. They provided contextual information on place and period and many offered bibliographic information

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which enabled us to delve further. Secondary sources were also useful for suggesting hypotheses or potential interpretations, thereby linking the compilation and interpretive aspects of our particular enquiries.

The second methodological aspect, paying attention to questions of *why*, was essential for developing narrative interpretations of facts. Referred to by Stankiewicz (1997, p.58) as a "*historicist approach*" this label is attributed to Wilhelm Dilthey, a German philosopher and historian. Dilthey (2000) argued that everyone is a part of history; that no one can stand outside of history when discovering and documenting objective facts about the past. He maintained that historians need to enter the point of view of a past era or person; that understanding the past is the result of imaginative re-creation. An important dimension for our research was to understand the background and developments in art education in order to gain insights into origins, growth, political structures, theories, personalities, current trends, and future possibilities. The historicist approach allowed us to interpret the past and use the history of art education to discuss past and present events in the context of the present condition. It enabled us to reflect and provide possible answers to current issues and problems.

Historical research is described as an art and a science. As Stankiewicz (1997) says, "Shaping historical facts into a coherent, meaningful, and significant narrative through questioning... is the art of writing history" (p.67). In our studies we attempted to understand "what really happened within wider ideological and social contexts" (Chalmers, 2004, p.13). We had to decide what type of story we wanted to tell, the explanatory model we would follow in developing our explanations of the past, and how we could make past events meaningful to contemporary audiences (Stankiewicz, 1997). One of Jill's stories has been heard in this journal (Smith, 2008). It is timely for Cathy, an emerging researcher, to tell hers. Cathy's story exemplifies an approach to research that is important to us both.

#### **A rich encounter with historical research - Cathy's perspective**

One aim of my thesis, "*Rekindling the Blaze: Maintaining Professional Development for Primary Art Teachers in New Zealand*", was to fill a gap in historical research about primary school art in this country. To present history in a coherent story my research was structured around three historical periods - the Keynesian Welfare State (1937-1984), during which progressivist ideals and social-democratic policies directed education; the New Right (1984-1999), when quasi-market policies had a transforming effect on education in New Zealand; and the Third Way (1999-2008) when, under a Labour Government, there was a slight adjustment to the left, shifting education policies to promote the development of a 'Knowledge Society'. I wanted to determine the value and significance of professional development

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programs for art education during these eras, to evaluate the influence of political history on each, and to propose a framework for professional support that could provide maximum benefits for future application. While this paper focuses on the first two aspects each was addressed through a critical search of literature, analysis of education policies, and interviews. This methodology enabled me to acquire historical facts and to critically read primary and secondary sources of information which elucidated the effects of government policies on education, in general, and on art education in particular.

An important dimension of the historical methodology was to seek the perspectives of three key participants – Ronnie, Julie and Karen (pseudonyms) - who provided professional development programs to support primary art teaching during each era. I discovered that the oral histories of these participants, who were all employed as Art Advisors, provided significant insights into 'memory and remembering' in relation to the history of education (Stephenson, 2008). The rich and authentic data expressed through their 'voices' confirmed, enhanced, and questioned the findings collected through other methods. (The voices of nine primary teacher participants are not included in this paper).

#### **The first historical period: The Keynesian Welfare State (1937-1984)**

I began with a critical examination of the Keynesian Welfare State which, following the Great Depression of the 1930s, focused on equal opportunity and developing potential and ability to the fullest. The first Labour Government in New Zealand, elected in 1935, promoted these ideals. There is substantial historical evidence which suggests that egalitarian ideologies adopted by the new government, under the direction of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Peter Fraser, impacted strongly on educational policy and direction (see Adams, Clark, O'Neill, Openshaw & Waitere-Ang, 2000; Olssen & Morris Matthews, 1997; Renwick, 1986). Fraser found a kindred spirit in Clarence Beeby whom he appointed Director of Education in 1940 when he himself became Prime Minister. Curriculum became a conduit of Beeby's ideology, and went through a continual process of review and development (Olssen & Morris Matthews, 1997). During a time of unprecedented growing economic prosperity Fraser and Beeby developed policies, granted liberal funding, and employed key people to provide educational initiatives and projects that affected primary art education. The pursuit of humanist and progressive ideals, and holistic, broad, and balanced curriculum development, gave increased importance to the arts (art, crafts, music, dance and poetry).

Primary documentary sources suggest that developments in primary school art during the Keynesian period were informed by two key factors (Collinge, 1978). The first was the influence of international

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approaches towards art education, especially the theories of Viktor Lowenfeld (1947) and Herbert Read (1943). Their views aligned with the modern art movement and humanist developmental education theory which shifted art education into a period of progressivism, social constructivism, and art as self-expression. Second, and even more significant, were educational initiatives of the Labour Government. In 1937 Fraser arranged a visit to New Zealand of prominent art educators, artist Arthur Lismer and child art theorist Dr Paul Dengler. For the first time primary teachers heard, at first hand, ideas about 'child art' as free expression, without instruction, and freed from imposed adult technique (Blumhardt, 1992; Collinge, 1978). Local teachers were inspired to move their focus on formal drawing to art as a creative, child-centred activity. This shift, including a focus on craft, brought about substantial changes in primary school art. A key political initiative supporting change was Beeby's establishment of the Department of Education Art and Crafts Branch. His appointment in 1946 of Gordon Tovey as the first National Supervisor in Art and Crafts, and subsequent recruitment of a large team of specialist art advisors nationwide, resulted in a Branch which consisted of 65 specialists in 1962. Numbers later increased to 70 (Thorburn, 1975). Supported by abundant professional development opportunities in arts and crafts, art in primary schools flourished. The 'blaze' in my thesis title makes reference to the effect that Tovey, a charismatic personality, had on establishing a strong position for primary art education from 1938-1966 (Beeby, 1992; Hardie, 2005; Henderson, 1998).

My research revealed 'other parts of the story', including the perpetuation of the 'Tovey Myth' (Bell, 2005; Smith, 1996), and of Chalmers' (2004) caution that some accounts of the lives of art educators have been "exercises in 'saint-making' rather than critical histories" (p.14). Close inspection of the historical development of primary art education and professional development indicates that political and economic support from the late 1930s contributed significantly to Tovey's success, enabling an era of intensive in-service courses (Smith, 1996). The 'Tovey era' gave substantial support to schools with free issue of art materials and equipment, and release of principals and teachers to attend refresher courses. These halcyon years were not to last, however. With a change in the political climate in the early 1960s, and a new National Government in power, the name and direction of the Art and Crafts Branch was significantly altered. It became the Art and Craft Advisory Service, with few new advisors recruited (Collinge, 1978; Thorburn, 1975). Further restructuring in 1972 resulted in art advisors becoming members of the local District Senior Inspector's Advisory Staff and in 1975 subject supervisors were disestablished. These adjustments effectively removed national leadership and affected the direction of support for primary art teachers.

Changes in the educational landscape, located within New Zealand's political history, provided the

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context for Ronnie, my first key participant, to share his memories of what happened, the way he remembered events, and how they have come to be understood as history (Stephenson, 2008). Ronnie's career began in 1956 during the Keynesian (1937-1984) era, and continued into the New Right (1984-1999). Following a year of specialist training he joined the Art and Crafts Branch. One of Ronnie's most vivid memories illustrates the extent to which professional development was offered to teachers during the Keynesian period. He and his fellow art specialists went into schools on what he called "a regular milk-run basis" (Warden, 2009, p.62), a system that comprised art specialists moving from school to school throughout New Zealand. For one or two weeks at a time they mentored teachers by guiding art and craft teaching practice through demonstration lessons in their classrooms, later returning to re-motivate and discuss progress and outcomes.

Ronnie spoke enthusiastically about "the holistic approach to teaching and learning through art" that was promoted during the Tovey era (p.63). Although there is little formal documentation to this effect, Ronnie believes that his perspective aligned with Department of Education aims which were "presented as an assumption that the natural learning processes of pupils were most valuable and should be nurtured and extended by probing questions using rich language and wide sensory references" (p.63). His ideas, he says, were representative of the progressivist aspirations for a hands-on primary art education and that professional development received by primary teachers during the Keynesian period reflected these objectives. For Ronnie, an especially potent memory was the sense of collegiality and support for one another promoted by the Advisory Service, and how this transformed the art specialists into a family of like-minded individuals. With Tovey as their patriarch, this 'family' was "a force to be reckoned with" (p.64). It mattered little to Ronnie that Tovey seemed reluctant to commit his ideas to paper. It was sufficient that, supported by the political climate of the early 1960s, Tovey was able to provide his advisors with week-long courses which focused on theory and practical skills that he believed essential for their work. This continuing focus on professional development appeared to demonstrate a belief in principles of life-long learning held by the policy makers of the time (Beeby, 1992). In turn, advisors facilitated longer, more intensive in-service training sessions with teachers who were withdrawn from classrooms to attend a variety of training facilities, including experiences at marae, the traditional meeting places for Maori. Indicative of Tovey's personal interest in Maori arts and crafts (Smith, 1996) Ronnie described how teachers received lengthy, in-depth professional development on using Maori art forms. Withdrawing teachers from schools continued for a significant time during the Keynesian period. Ronnie maintained that the strategy was supported by the Department of Education, despite the expense, because "forward-thinking people, with the power to control the funding, understood the long term benefits" (Warden, 2009, p.65).

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Ronnie's memories of those halcyon days continue to guide his beliefs about the 'right' kind of art education for young people. In his view, the programme had become unsustainable because the advisors themselves could not maintain the substantial workload and travelling involved. However, following Beeby's retirement in 1959 and Tovey's in 1966, the advisors' support base disappeared (Thorburn, 1975). Political history shows that during the 1960s the Art and Crafts Branch specialist service underwent significant changes. Renamed the Advisory Service in 1964 it was refocused to provide advice, largely on a request basis. Advisors were now directly recruited from teaching positions without the full year training (Hardie, 2005; Henderson, 1998). During the next decade they worked under the direction of area supervisors and continued their visits to schools, in-service workshops, and retreats. The advisory role changed to a more consultative relationship with teachers. Ronnie expressed concern that the holistic idea of teaching and learning 'through art', promoted during the Tovey era, was being replaced by the concept of teaching and learning 'in art'. The latter approach, promoted through Discipline-based Art Education (DBAE), a curriculum model developed in the United States (Efland, 1990), invariably affected the shape of art education in this country. A change in political climate, from the Left to the New Right, also affected the nature of support.

#### **The second historical period: The New Right (1984-1999)**

The second political period I examined, the New-right, resulted from a radical swing to the right in political and economic ideologies. Influenced by globalisation the New Right, a loose coalition of groups such as multinational corporations, business interest, and the moral Right, saw the welfare state and power of trade unions as a threat to entrepreneurship and enterprise (see Olssen, Codd & O'Neill, 2004; Olssen & Morris-Matthews, 1997; Peters & Marshall, 2004). This thrust towards privatization created a dilemma for the fourth Labour Government, elected in 1984, which had traditionally held to policies of state responsibility for welfare rights. Pressured by the New Zealand Treasury and Business Roundtable (a market-orientated 'think tank') to move towards the ideologies of the New Right, Labour's problem was to maintain the social services, including education, that are expected within a democracy and at the same time reduce state control of investment and encourage privatization (Dale, 1997). It was in this economic environment that the education system was seen as a tool for those with power to reconstruct society through the education of a skilled workforce. Knowledge was reduced to skills and science and technology were given increased worth, with continuation of traditional high status knowledge such as numeracy and literacy (Gilbert, 2005; O'Neill, Clark & Openshaw, 2004). Two effects of the neo-liberal shift in political philosophy and policy development were the decentralization of school administration and national curriculum reforms. The free and progressivist education that was

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experienced from the late 1930s to early 1980s was 'captured' and restructured to meet the demands of the market (Peters & Marshall, 2004).

A political change that was to particularly affect art education was the devolution of the Department of Education and its replacement in 1989 with a purportedly more efficient, policy-focused Ministry. Ronnie's perception of the move was that the Department of Education, "which was dedicated to the education of children... was replaced by the Ministry of Education, which is dedicated to serve the interests of the Minister" (Warden, 2009, p.71). In Ronnie's view the entrepreneurial and creative approach to delivering professional development, sanctioned and supported by those in power, was replaced by "an efficiency-driven model run by inflexible bureaucrats" (p. 71). With a new Ministry in place the state's attention turned to reforming and standardizing curriculum. The thrust towards global policy migration led New Zealand to develop a curriculum framework that sat comfortably with other OECD nations. Based on the British model, *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993) was strongly outcomes-based, with sequential levels for all 'essential learning areas' (Lee, O'Neill & McKenzie, 2004). More importantly, the dominant agenda of the school curriculum was the future success of the economy (Peters & Marshall, 2004; Priestly, 2002). The curriculum framework included seven essential learning areas: Mathematics, English, Science, Technology, Social Studies, Health & Physical Education and The Arts, each with their own curriculum statement. A significant consequence of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000) was the reduction of four arts disciplines (visual arts, dance, drama and music) into one, the 'arts'. The New Right did not consider that the arts, with their liberalist connotation, contributed effectively to the training of a productive work force. The status of art significantly decreased and support for art teachers was diminished (Mansfield, 2000).

Julie, the second key participant, was selected to represent the New Right era. Her career began at the end of the Keynesian period and continues into the Third Way. Julie first entered the Advisory Service in 1979 during an induction of specialists contracted to the service for one year. Although the Advisory Service had endured the restructuring of the Department of Education into a Ministry, it did so with reduced human resources. Seventy specialist positions in the Advisory Service were pared down progressively until only ten remained in 1989 (Thorburn, 1975). Julie explained that the effect on professional development was to replace school visits with intensive courses for groups of teachers. This change coincided with the implementation of the first national art syllabus, *Art Education: Junior Classes to Form 7: Syllabus for Schools* (Department of Education, 1989). Designed in response to "the changing educational needs of society... as well as... the shift and alteration in New

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Zealand society and its cultural and artistic character" (p.3), the syllabus incorporated progressivist and DBAE ideals. The most significant new element was a balance between the previous progressive/expressionist focus on 'making art', and the DBAE advocacy for students to gain an understanding of the 'sources of motivation' for making art works and 'knowing about art' in terms of its social context and significance (Smith, 2007a). Julie explained that the latter two components presented a challenge for generalist primary teachers. Because the syllabus "wasn't prescriptive about exactly what pupils were to learn in art, those with less confidence, practical knowledge and experience found it difficult to understand and implement" (Warden, 2009, p.72). Julie spoke enthusiastically about Kai Awhina, a mentoring programme contracted to the Auckland Advisory Service. During 1991-1892, 38 teachers across primary and secondary schools attended practical workshops and, supported by art advisors and other art professionals, were trained to mentor other teachers. (I was one of those teachers, an experience that influenced this choice of research topic.)

Although there are no primary sources of documentation to support her view, Julie believes that contracts like Kai Awhina saved the Art Advisory Service from disestablishment. She spoke of the effects of political attrition on the Service and the nature of professional development that could be offered. What saddens Julie most is that the Kai Awhina project "was way back in 1991 and now it is 2006, and we are using the same people now.... they are the key people that we call on, that we rely on... but their use-by-date is approaching" (p.75). Julie expressed concern about who would be providing support for primary art teachers in the future. The point she made, "We haven't grown another lot of people" (p.76), illustrates the kind of data that was absent in the literature of the 'positivist historians' whose work I consulted. Despite the success of Kai Awhina significant changes in national educational policy during the 1990s impacted on the need and availability of professional development for primary art teachers (Adams *et al.*, 2000; Lee *et al.*, 2004). Julie claimed that bulk funding, a mechanism used by principals to reorganize staffing and redraft the school timetable and curriculum allocations; an 'overcrowded curriculum' caused by the introduction of *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993); and emphasis on professional development in literacy and numeracy, also served to reduce the status of art in primary schools. In yet another political move, significant structural changes to the Art Advisory Service further affected professional support for art teachers.

### The third historical period: The Third Way (1999-2008)

The Third Way policies of a new Labour Government, elected in 1999, manifested a small, but significant, shift. The 'reforms' of the conservative New Right had serious social impact upon low income sectors and Labour sought to return to a somewhat 'more caring' state (Peters & Marshall,

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2004). To reduce the growing divide between rich and poor 'Closing the Gap' policies were initiated to promote equity, especially in terms of health and education. Despite this, there remains during the Third Way a strong focus on the principles of a knowledge economy, the promotion of New Zealand as a 'Knowledge Society', and provision of education that invests in the future survival of New Zealand in a global marketplace (Gilbert, 2005; Peters & Marshall, 2004). In 2008, management structures have been flattened and communication skills, creativity, and innovation are attributes in high demand for workers in a fast developing global marketplace.

The major curriculum 'reforms' of the 1990s were followed by further modifications to national curriculum. In *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), Learning Languages has been added to the seven essential learning areas. While most of the original learning areas underwent major changes 'The Arts' area remains essentially intact. *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000), the last curriculum to be developed, was the most controversial due largely to the positioning of four disciplines - dance, drama, music, and visual arts - into one (Mansfield, 2000; Smith, 2007a). An implication of reducing four disciplines, which had previously held separate subject status, is the competition between them for time, resources and professional support in a crowded curriculum. Criticisms were directed, also, at the generic, linear, behaviourist nature of the document, its alignment with the neo-liberal curriculum reform agenda, and the diminishment and devaluing of art education (Boyask, 1999; Mansfield, 2000). In the curriculum four 'strands' are organised into a linear, outcomes-based curriculum model, the suitability of which caused much apprehension (Grierson & Mansfield, 2003).

Karen, the third key participant in my study, began her teaching career as a primary teacher and later became an intermediate art specialist. Her appointment to the art advisory coincided with further political change. In 1999, as part of a nation-wide move towards decentralization, the Auckland Advisory Service became 'Team Solutions' attached to the Auckland College of Education (ACE) (now the University of Auckland-Faculty of Education). The Ministry of Education went further, privatizing the contract. Team Solutions became, in effect, a private company with managerial structures in place, developed as a subsidiary of ACE, using its facilities, and contracted to the Ministry to deliver professional development programmes within allotted funded hours. It was a move applauded by Karen who considers that the "re-branding of Team Solutions showed a bit of vision" (Warden, 2009, p.81). While Julie expressed reservations, Ronnie (now retired) is openly critical.

The professional development that primary teachers in Auckland received for the implementation

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of *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2000) was, thus, contracted to ACE and Team Solutions. Karen was seconded to be Arts team leader and primary facilitator for the visual arts during the trial and implementation phase from 2001-2003. Although she admits “there were difficulties delivering programmes to such a large number of schools in Auckland”, she believes that “teachers who worked with facilitators benefited in terms of content knowledge, and practical organisation and management of art lessons” (Warden, 2009, p.83). In Karen’s view the formation of Team Solutions enabled the advisory service to survive, in spite of the limitations of working to directives from the Ministry. While Karen admits that minimal funding, reduced human resources, demands for efficiency, pressure to gain higher qualifications, and an emphasis on research-based professional development, present challenges for those providing support for primary art teachers, she is aware of accountability demands. The Ministry continues to control programmes through fixed contracts, negotiable briefs, and predetermined indicators and outcomes. A significant outcome, not reported in primary documentation, is that “primary art teachers are now having to take responsibility for their own professional development within their schools” (p.85).

### A summary

An aim of my thesis was to gain perspectives on the effects of political history, during three distinct periods, as a factor in shaping professional development support for primary art education in New Zealand. During the data collection and analysis of findings it was evident that engagement with different approaches to historical research produced differing data. On the one hand, the historical evidence gathered from published primary and secondary documentary sources provided valuable insights into the education policies and curriculum documents of the three political periods. In the published accounts the views and decisions of policy makers, politicians, bureaucrats, supporters, and detractors were visible and distinct in the context of each era. From these accounts it was clear that the nature, quality and amount of support for primary art teachers were shaped by political circumstances. This finding was confirmed, in differing degrees, by the oral histories of the three key participants. The additional dimension of ‘memory and remembering’ as ‘living history’ (Stephenson, 2008), provided perspectives that would otherwise have remained ‘unheard’.

### Conclusion

The process of learning and understanding the background and developments in our respective fields has offered us many insights into political influences on art education in the primary and secondary school sectors. Posited within the context of her particular research questions, Cathy learned about the past, the present, and possibilities for the future. Jill’s article (Smith, 2008) was aptly titled ‘Framing

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the Past / Locating the Present / Questioning the Future’. Our rigorous collection and organization of evidence, and the verification and veracity of information and its sources, was followed by selection, organization and analysis of the most pertinent collected evidence. The triangulation of documented primary and secondary sources with the oral histories of participants verified historical events, although the ‘perception’ of these events is cognizant with the source. In Cathy’s study, for example, written accounts, recorded both during or following events, offered differing perspectives from the ‘stories’ of the participants. The oral accounts of these people who participated in, and observed events, were perceived by them to represent the ‘real version’. We concluded that their oral histories are a part of art education history. Their input has contributed to research which explains the relationship between political history and art education in New Zealand.

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