

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Education and Culture in Postmodernity: The Challenges for Aotearoa/New Zealand

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Education and Culture in Postmodernity: The Challenges for Aotearoa/New Zealand is the title I gave my Macmillan Brown lectures, which I delivered at the University of Auckland in April, 2001. The lecture series consisted of three lectures given over the period of a week. The three lectures were based upon what has become the substance of Chapters 1, 2 and 3, although the lectures were streamlined versions of the chapters that have been revised and expanded for purposes of publication.

Both the lecture series and this publication is an attempt to think critically about the future of education in Aotearoa/New Zealand and to think critically about the future of Aotearoa/New Zealand in terms of education. The chapters are designed to be provocative, philosophically. They are designed also to raise the status and importance of education as, perhaps, the most important future "industry" for New Zealand. I attempt to spell out why this is so by looking at the concept of "postmodernity" and utilising the philosophies of Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein, as well as different forms of contemporary French thought known as poststructuralism. These philosophical orientations provide us with what I consider to be the best purchase for analysing the future of the West. All three philosophers - Nietzsche, Heidegger and Wittgenstein - provide strong critiques of the culture of modernity and offer us intellectual resources for tackling the difficult problems to do with the assertion of new value in an age of nihilism.

I would like to formally thank the Board of the Macmillan Brown Centre for awarding me the Macmillan Brown Lecture series for 2000. I would also like to thank Dr John Hood, Vice-Chancellor, the University of Auckland, for agreeing to host the series at the University of Auckland. A number of colleagues at the University of Auckland helped ensure the success of the event. Specifically, I would like to thank Anna Rees (Registry) for organising the reception and Associate Professor Alison Jones (VC, EO) for hosting the reception; Professor Warren Moran (Geography), Dr Michael Gunder (Planning), and Professor John Bishop (Philosophy) for chairing the lectures; Bill Williams for advertising the series; Lex Matheison, Manager of the Maidment Theatre, and the technical staff of the Maidment Theatre, for organising the venue and recording the series. The series was delivered at the Maidment Theatre, the University of Auckland, 18, 19 & 20 April, 2001.