

# Standardising Practice: Learning to be teachers for the New Zealand nation

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*This article examines the beginnings of nationally-based teacher education in New Zealand. It focuses on the shift from provincialism to centralisation of political and educational administration in the 1870s, and the formulation of national regulatory standards. Drawing on the work of Michel Foucault, teacher education is conceptualised as part of the disciplinary state educational apparatus, a key function of which was to consolidate political and cultural unity amongst the widely dispersed and culturally diverse population in the young colony. The article also examines the nature of the training experience, the rigid system of examination, licensing and certification, and its impact.*

## Introduction

The forms of colonial education which were initiated by missionary and settler community interest and effort before the political colonisation of the country established early parameters of cultural, moral and behavioural expectations for New Zealand citizens. The settler populations, however, were culturally diverse, many had already had colonial experiences elsewhere, and for some, religious affiliations were important. Settlements were widely dispersed and relatively isolated, a fact that was recognised in the initial division of the country into provinces under the New Zealand Constitution Act (United Kingdom Parliament, 1852). Under these administrative arrangements, provinces were responsible for education and this, together with provincially specific aspirations of schooling, created difficulties for the establishment of any nation-wide system of teacher education in the early colonial years.

There were few adequately trained or experienced teachers during the provincial years. A small group of university graduates from Britain and ministers of religion elected to teach but, as Ewing (1960: 28) notes, “at the other end of the scale were the misfits, who kept school as a last resort”. Provincial determinants of what counted as a qualified teacher varied considerably, but there were some commonalities. Most notable was the introduction of an adaptation of the English pupil-teacher system, a school-based form of supervised teacher apprenticeship, which provided some opportunity for instruction on teaching method during out-of-school times (Alcorn, 1995). However, the need for teacher education, and the inadequacy of the provinces in addressing this imperative, was one platform on which an attempt to establish a national education system was brought to parliament in 1871. In introducing the Education Bill, Premier William Fox stated from an educationally impoverished Wellington:

I believe in no single Province in New Zealand ... has there been proper inspection or a proper precaution in order to secure that the teachers shall possess the requisite qualifications; and without those the whole system becomes, to a great extent, a delusion (*New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*, 1871, vol. 10: 200).

In an attempt to standardise practice across provinces, a programme for the instruction of pupil-teachers was published (*New Zealand Gazette [NZG]*, 1871, 30 November). Without appropriate facilities, however, provision continued to be unsystematic and uneven, but immediately prior to the nationalising of state education in New Zealand, normal schools had

been put in place at Dunedin and Christchurch and some ad hoc initiatives were operating in other provinces seeking to offer guidance for aspiring teachers. Ultimately, normal schools, training and practising departments were adopted in New Zealand as the optimal forms of institution for the preparation of the nation's teachers. This article first examines the development of these institutions from disparate provincial offerings. It then draws on the work of Michel Foucault to examine the nature of the training experience and its impact.

For Foucault, the norm is a fundamental organising principle in modern society and state education is an institution that projects subtle but invasive forms of disciplinary power. Writing of the French system from which the training institutions were derived, Foucault claimed that the normal was established “as a principle of coercion in teaching with the introduction of standardised education and the establishment of the *écoles normales* (teachers’ training colleges)” (Foucault, 1977: 184). In the pursuit of order and as a means of reinforcing or reconstructing its internal mechanism of power, the state’s initial focus was on “the organization of its own staffs and apparatuses” (Gordon, 1991: 27), and in education, the *écoles normales* operated as normalising devices and were a significant element in the state disciplinary apparatus (Foucault, 1977: 215-6). New Zealand’s normal schools and training colleges are examined as exemplars of that process.

The article recognises that, as was occurring in a number of countries, the normal schools gained official recognition, and students became dependent on the institutional authorities for their accreditation as teachers (Hollihan, 1997). In the process of circumscribing and legitimating norms for the nation, it is suggested, teacher training institutions shaped the student-teachers in particular ways to become agents in the disciplinary society (Foucault, 1977). Systematic and relentless supervision, doctrinaire training and monitoring precluded opportunity for oppositional thought or action, serving instead to impose self-discipline and to naturalise the conformity required for the student-teachers, and their future pupils, to function in the newly-centralised New Zealand as members of the national collectivity. Foucault writes of a “political technology of individuals [through which] we have been led to recognise ourselves as a society, as part of a social entity, as part of a nation or of a state” (Foucault, 1988: 146). When goals for personal fulfilment are aligned with those of social reform in accordance with some naturalised social good, Cruikshank (1996: 235) contends, “the line between subjectivity and subjection is crossed”. It is argued that the essence of the training, and the rigid system of licensing and certification that was imposed, transcended objectives of occupational familiarisation, and rendered student-teachers objects of normalising practices, defining and standardising their role and identity as members of their chosen occupational group.

### **Institutionalising teacher education and practice**

The pupil-teacher system was first formalised in New Zealand with Otago’s 1862 Education Ordinance, and was subsequently adopted in other provincial areas (Openshaw & Ball, 2008). For girls especially, pupil-teacher positions offered one of the few opportunities to pursue further educational and occupational prospects whilst at the same time being able to help supplement family incomes (Morris-Matthews, 1983). Boys, on the other hand, had more options. By the 1870s, there were a number of well-paying opportunities open to them under Vogel’s public works schemes and these contrasted favourably with the low reward offered for teacher trainees (Ryan, 1977).

Otago was also the first province to establish an institution dedicated to teacher preparation. A large brick building to accommodate “a Teachers’ Training Institution, a Practising School

to serve the purposes of an ordinary district school, and a School of Art” was erected and officially opened in January 1876 (Hislop, 1890: 151). Two appointments were made—a rector for the training institution, or normal school, and a headmaster for the practising school. Students at the normal school included 17 and 18 year old pupil-teachers, untrained assistant teachers and selected older people who had passed an examination and gained certificates of “good moral character and sound health” (*Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* [AJHR], 1878, H-1: 101).

There were positive aspects of the Otago experience, and some opportunities to gain higher education. With the School of Art on site, classes “organised to suit the circumstances of the students, and their several stages of advancement” (Hislop, 1890: 175) were organised for urban and country teachers, as well as pupil-teachers. Normal school students were encouraged to take university classes, with passes being credited towards their training qualifications. The rector’s reports made consistent reference to the co-operation of the Education Board and to the degree of good will expressed towards the students in the local schools.

In Canterbury, things did not go so well. In accordance with the programme of instruction for pupil-teachers that appeared in the *NZG* in 1871, the Canterbury Provincial Board of Education had developed its regulations for their appointment, training and remuneration the following year. Young girls or boys from 13 to 18 years would serve an apprenticeship and training under certificated teachers, be ranked according to age, service and examination success, and, if the principal could “certify to the faithful and diligent discharge of the[ir] duties”, would receive a meagre payment (Fletcher, 2001: 371-372).

By 1872, almost 50% of Canterbury children were attending school and the Provincial Education Board made a formal request to the Provincial Council for a normal school to which pupil-teachers could progress after they had fulfilled their apprenticeship contracts (Ryan, 1977). When the school was first built, it was felt that there was little to differentiate it with “an ordinary district school”. It was met by the public with either condemnation “as a useless piece of extravagance” or with “supreme indifference” (*AJHR*, 1878, H-1: 95). Following the arrival of Charles Howard from Battersea Training College, England, in December 1876, to act as its first principal, the training department was opened with eleven students “of promising type” (*AJHR*, 1878, H-1: 95). Facilities were provided for both boys and girls, with the number of girls far exceeding that of boys (25 to 6 by the end of the first year).

Payment to students differed in the various provincial areas, and was dependent on experience, proven scholarship or availability of resources. Overall it was minimal, and even though boys were paid more than the girls in an attempt to recruit them into the profession, men would often seek positions as assistant masters rather than attend the normal school as students (McKenzie, 2005). Howard was concerned that studying costs prohibited many students from spending long in training and during his time at the school he campaigned, with some degree of success, for financial support to students who chose to gain a more comprehensive preparation at the normal school (Fletcher, 2001). But his term of office at Christchurch was not entirely happy and in 1879 his contract with the Board was terminated because of irreconcilable differences. One issue of contention was whether university study should be undertaken by all pupil-teachers, another was the “excessively literary nature of the examinations for teacher certificates” (Fletcher, 2001: 36). He reported on what he saw as the inadequacies of teacher preparation that was limited primarily to work in the schools.

The training pupil-teachers get in the great majority of cases is not worth consideration. They have been taught or led to adopt certain modes of work, but have very little knowledge of principles, and have not made their profession the subject of scientific study. They reproduce generally the system of the school in which they were brought up, good or bad. They go to working in a stereotyped way, but, having no competent theoretical knowledge to guide their practices make serious blunders, exhibit the gravest defects, and find out only by long and painful experience what they might easily have been prepared for at the outset (*AJHR*, 1879, H-2: 112).

Centralisation of political and educational administration in the 1870s did little to dispel practical and ideological difficulties, but the need for a unified system of teacher education at a national level was acknowledged in the inaugural Annual Report of the Minister of Education in 1878. The Minister considered the matter one of “pressing importance”, but acknowledged a practical difficulty in guaranteeing attendance at one fully-equipped training centre designed to serve the entire colony (*AJHR*, 1878, H-1: 8). To facilitate a way forward, regulations for the examination, classification and certification of teachers and for the management of training facilities were published, along with guiding principles to enable local education boards to formulate and submit for government approval, regulations for the employment, education and examination of pupil-teachers (*NZG*, 1878. Vol.2: 1306-09; 1313). Subsequent developments reflected this nexus of national and local involvement.

The normal school at Wellington did not commence its work until late 1880. Its first principal was Charles Howard, formerly of Christchurch. Again Howard found difficulties, this time because of tensions which were part of the wider national educational reform. Where provincial and central roles and influences were still to be consolidated, Howard explained, settling on regulations had proven to be no easy task. This was exacerbated by the fact that resources were less than optimal and there was a general lack of knowledge about the role and significance of a normal school in the preparation of teachers (*AJHR*, 1881, E-1: 84). Only twelve students attended in those early months, eight women and four men, half of whom were pupil-teachers. Four had some teaching experience, two were entirely new to the work and four were taken on probation only. One probationer, an “out-of-work” milliner, was soon judged not up to the work. She had, it was recorded, been “imperfectly educated [and] proved too backward and in other ways unsuitable for studentship”. Another member of the class of 1880 was an Oxford graduate, the grandson of Mathew Arnold, “not a good teacher”, it was attested, but of “very decided literary ability”. Characterised as “nervous” and “ineffective” as a teacher, Arnold was ultimately employed as an inspector and science teacher in high schools (National Archives [NA], EB-W/10/2 WA 151g).

The Thorndon School in Wellington became the practising school for the students, but was deemed by Howard as less than ideal on two counts. Firstly, as a large well-organised urban establishment, it differed from the model country practising schools that had been introduced elsewhere, considered to be more relevant to the work that students would be taking on in the future (Cumming & Cumming, 1978). Secondly, he believed that, for consistency, the practising school should be linked directly to the normal school and under the control of the normal master. This would enable students to experience, and put to the test, the methods and theories learned in their training. As normal master, Howard occupied the practising school one day per week only, to superintend the students in their practice sessions. He was in no way “to interfere with the ordinary arrangements of the school” and had constantly to work “through the medium of the headmaster” (NA, ABDM W3569).

At Auckland, missionaries had been the early educators and, as there was very little money available for education from provincial taxes, the churches held control for many years under the provincial system. In 1857, an Act to Promote Education in the Province of Auckland (Auckland Provincial Council, 1857) made subsidies available for all schools seen to be well conducted, but as there was little concern for teacher education at this time, not all qualified. In 1865 there were 2686 children attending Auckland Board schools and 3258 attending private schools (Cumming, 1959: 36). Many of the latter were denominational schools with uncertified teachers, and relatively few of the certificated teachers had gained their qualification under Auckland's examination and certification system (Shaw, 2006). When church control was removed in 1869, secular schooling for all children was formalised but not given immediate effect because of financial difficulties in establishing and resourcing schools. The shortage of trained teachers was a major problem and there was general agreement during this period until 1872 when free and compulsory education was introduced, that education in Auckland was in a lamentable state with thousands of children going without schooling (Mackey, 1967).

The most successful classes for pupil-teachers in Auckland were taught by a local principal and focused on content knowledge and the principles and practices of teaching. The feeling in the area was that "the art of teaching [was] best acquired in the actual work of the schools" (*AJHR*, 1878, H-1: 94), perhaps helping to account for the later development of more formalised training facilities in 1881 and less emphasis on the need to supplement training with university study.

Securing central control over education in New Zealand was as much about formalising norms against which individual citizens of New Zealand would be measured and judged, as it was about providing universal education. It also institutionalised the experience of formal schooling as the norm for young New Zealanders (Stephenson, 2008). To this end, centrally defined regulations were published in 1878 for curriculum and assessment in schools, and for the examination, classification and certification of teachers. These nationalised the specialised knowledge of pedagogy, legitimated the pedagogical experts and identified at a national level who could, and who could not be a teacher. Students entering normal schools were to be at least 17 years of age, of good moral character, sound constitution, and "free from defect or infirmity that might impair their efficiency as teachers" (*NZG*, 1878). A prescribed definition of normality, in keeping with a dominant medical model of difference, could exclude potential trainees on physical, as well as academic and moral grounds. This reflected the British influence and its impact on early provincial arrangements, as evidenced in the early correspondence of the Wellington Inspector, Robert Lee who, in congratulating a candidate on his successes in the examination, was compelled to add that, "owing to physical infirmities", he was unable to recommend him to the Board as a teacher. Lee could, however, offer other advice. "From what I have seen of your work I should say that you would do good service, where a good knowledge of accounts and an ability to act as a correspondent would be desirable qualities" (NA: EB-W/5/1).

The role of women teachers was also formalised through the normal schools, in accordance with expectations for girls' schooling that had been mandated under the Education Act of 1877 (*Statutes of New Zealand*, 1877: 126). The Wellington Education Board identified some key roles for the normal mistress. She was to "superintend" the moral training and personal health care of the girls; to teach and also to develop interest in, and convey the importance of the subjects of needlework and domestic economy (*AJHR*, 1881, E-1: 85). In his time at Christchurch, it would appear, Howard was able to avoid the latter as, according to his successor there, needlework had been "entirely neglected among the female students"

prior to his appointment (*AJHR*, 1881, E-1: 86). Such ‘neglect’ was certainly not going to be perpetuated under the watchful guise of the new principal. “Our female teachers should be perfectly acquainted with darning, mending and knitting, that the same may be taught in the schools in which they labour”, he claimed. “Indeed”, he continued, “I am of the opinion that needlework should be a subject, failure in which should preclude any lady from being appointed to a situation in our colonial schools” (*AJHR*, 1881, E-1: 86).

### **Experiencing ‘training’**

The nature of the training experience had significant implications for the prospective teachers. They were prepared to supervise childhood, to transmit and impose fixed definitions of competence, skills and knowledge, and to regulate the socialisation of children as upright, judicious and disciplined citizens of the nation. Through an hierarchical chain of command and watchfulness, in functionally organised spaces and tightly structured divisions of time, student-teachers were prepared to produce a normalising function in school classrooms.

In planning for the normal schools following the 1877 Education Act, the Minister of Education requested that careful attention be given to “the time during which each student [would] be allowed to continue at the college; the subjects of study, and the time allotted to each ... the arrangements for employing students in the actual work of teaching, and the proportion of time spent in such work” (*AJHR*, 1879, H-2: 1-2). James Marshall’s discussion of Foucault’s disciplinary regime draws attention to the way that the allocation of individuals to organised time and spaces “permit[ed] *any* individual to be placed under surveillance at *any* time” (Marshall, 1996: 95, emphasis in original). This was equally invasive in defining the activities of student-teachers through standardised exercises, regularised and regimented to enable mastery within an anticipated time frame, and their progression on to the next planned stage. In what was classed as a “well-equipped and efficiently-conducted training institution”, the training process was structured to enable an incremental development of practical skills, as student-teachers graduated from working with small groups to large classes, and from junior to senior pupils (*AJHR*, 1881, E-1: 20). The organisation anticipated a norm of development and imposed “disciplinary time” on student pedagogical practice (Foucault, 1977: 159). It assumed a scale of difficulty in practice contexts that ignored individual responses to working with large or small groups, infants or older pupils. It also contributed to the creation of successes or failures.

Provision for continual observation and assessment of progress, and for constant monitoring, recording and evaluation of professional and personal attributes by others in the chain of surveillance was defined at local and central levels. At Christchurch, the principal of the normal school made regular observational visits to students in the practising school. His personal evaluation of their progress was supplemented by “weekly detailed reports from the heads of departments”, all of which were subsequently made “the subject of a private personal interview” (*AJHR*, 1878, H-1: 96). Similarly, the Minister of Education directed that:

The master of the practising school will report weekly to the Normal Master, in a book and according to a form provided for the purpose, on each student’s regularity, punctuality, and efficiency as a teacher and disciplinarian. These reports shall be copied into another book week by week, to form a continuous record of the student’s progress, for future reference (*AJHR*, 1881, E-1: 86).

Influential were the inspectors who, because they were part of the national disciplinary apparatus but under education board organisation, were well placed to facilitate the organisation, implementation, and monitoring of the training programmes to reflect national

objectives. Their seniority invested them with the authority to analyse and make judgements about the teachers—to observe and correct teaching practice and pupil responses which did not conform to prescribed norms around which everyday pupil experiences in the schools would be shaped. This is exemplified in the following example of a Dunedin inspector's instructions to student-teachers concerning standardised classroom drills.

For opening of schools girls and boys form up in separate lines near the door. After marking time and marching to the command 'forward' they respond to the commands 'halt', 'front', 'seats', 'forward', 'sit'. 'Attention - pass copy-books' (one at a time from pupil to pupil - 'pass pens, open copy-books, pen in hand - take position, begin, first line - second line etc. stop writing etc. etc' (cited in Miller, 1956: 37) .

Such precise and calculated training of parts of the body, it has been argued, create normalised units, able ultimately to combine as a disciplined, efficient and productive whole (Foucault, 1977). Thus, in the shaping and monitoring of their practice, student-teachers were themselves individualised, and simultaneously provided with the 'tools of the trade' to perform a similar function in their own classrooms. After a period, however, to ensure certain knowledge had been absorbed, student-teachers were required to take an examination. As part of the certification process, this was a key instrument through which they would be judged, classified, punished by termination of their position if not performing to expectation, or rewarded with a salary increment if successful (McKenzie, 2005). Examinations required knowledge in line with, and slightly in advance of 'the standards', the official programme of instruction that was introduced for New Zealand state primary schools in 1878. They ensured a tight focus on a unified (and unifying) curriculum. Examinations also provided formalised knowledge of the individual student-teachers—to be documented within the record of progress, and to provide material for comparison with other student-teachers. No longer individuals, but members of a distinct occupational group, examinations in their universalising function sorted successful candidates into hierarchically organised holders of certificates, their authority in legitimating teacher expertise being demonstrated in the practice of offering appointments to teaching positions by order of merit in the certificate examination (*AJHR*, 1878, H-1: 70).

Examinations had other consequences for pupil-teachers. In the years following the establishment of the national system, especially as economic recession took its toll on personal employment opportunities and on government revenue, the practice of employing pupil-teachers escalated. As an exercise in government economy they filled an important role (McKenzie, 2005; Openshaw & Ball, 2008), but exploitation was common. This could impact on the quality of schooling offered the pupils as well as the quality of work experienced by the apprentices who, having little choice, were obliged to accept the rigorous conditions of their training. Eventually, however, an over-supply enabled education boards to demand selective procedures to be initiated. The competitive national Junior Civil Service examination introduced in 1886, and similarly developed around the primary school 'standards', became a state mechanism to control or authorise access to the teaching profession, and thus to identify candidates as suitable or unsuitable future teachers on the basis of their examination performance.

Academic performance was not the sole determinant of the qualified teacher, though. The ability to impart both knowledge and moral values, deemed appropriate to the growing status of the occupation and to its moralising mission, were integral to the ways in which prospective teachers were differentiated and ranked. Attainment of a teaching certificate was determined by age, examination success, completion of two years of work experience and a personal recommendation by either an inspector or a training school principal. This required an evaluation of their "fitness

to teach and to exercise control” (NZG, 1878: 1306-8—both what the teacher *was* and what the teacher *could do* in terms of exhibiting and effecting desired ways of being. This was made explicit in an inspector’s report.

Not many teachers appreciate adequately the important duties devolved on them. It is not enough that they should preserve order in their schools, and teach the prescribed subjects well. They should do what in them lies to form the characters of their pupils. They should study to elevate and refine them by every means in their power; to imbue them with a love of truth, not only in matters of occurrence, but also in matters of opinion, thus teaching them to be thoughtful and moderate, as well as tolerant, in judging the opinions of others ... Teachers should also impress on their pupils that it is due to themselves as well as to others to be always courteous in their demeanour; that rudeness and boorishness are social crimes (AJHR, 1880, E-1: 4).

These early expectations underpinned the development of a complex and distinctively New Zealand system of classifying teachers, which compared and ranked them on a scale of A to E for qualifications, and 1 to 5 for length of service and “teaching efficiency as estimated by the inspectors” (Butchers, 1930: 66). For decades this grading system remained oppressive and hostile to imaginative and innovative classroom practice. What resistance teachers may have been inclined to exert over the rigid and exacting regulations under which they were working was minimised by the imperative to prepare pupils for the mechanical examination. This restricted both their creativity and their classroom *modus operandi*, rendering the teachers themselves agents in the reproduction of repressive disciplinarian practices. Speaking in retrospect, one inspector went so far as to suggest that the lot of the inspectors was similar to that of the teachers, in that both groups were subordinated to the demands of a system which served only to “create a monotonous level of attainment on certain special lines of knowledge ... [I]n the great majority of cases”, he claimed, “the effort of teacher and inspector was ‘like the dyer’s hand subdued to what it worked in’ ” (Bakewell, 1928: 51).

### **Responses and implications**

Despite the pressure to conform, some teachers attempted to incorporate innovate classroom practices around their personally held pedagogical preferences. But, as McKenzie (2005: 9) notes, “teachers were primarily required to dispense information and keep order as they drove pupils through an examination-ridden syllabus”. Presented with the on-going threat of grading and examination, institutional demands usually won through. Within a short time of the legislation and official policy having confirmed the principles of correct functioning for the education system, these had become so integral to its functioning as a whole that any form of opposition was readily quashed. Indeed, reflecting the self-regulatory potential of disciplinary power, recognition of the futility of opposition against the pervasiveness of conformity was at times openly expressed and accepted with resignation.

No good purpose would be served by the reiteration of my opinion as to the relative merits and demerits of the present as compared with the former system of examination. The matter is settled, for some time at least ... The docility with which the bulk of our teachers have adapted their style of instruction to the requirements of the standards should gratify the most ardent admirer of uniformity (AJHR, 1880, H-1: 22).

According to the pedagogical experts, the ultimate capitulation of those attempting to do things differently was evidence that they had recognised their beliefs had been misguided. Such teachers, it was observed, eventually came “to the conviction that it is easier to have silence and order than to apportion noise and confusion”. This was “a truth which some of the best of

them were slow to learn, so hard do old superstitions die” (*AJHR*, 1880, E-1: 3). Other processes were at play, though, not the least of which was the practice of ascribing pupil performance in the standards examinations to teacher efficiency. Thus pupil failure elicited a disciplinary judgement on the teacher. In inspectors’ reports, for example, pupil results were often explicitly discussed as “the teacher’s results” and, if unfavourable, attributed to something lacking in the teacher him/her self; “want of judgement, want of training, or from sheer incapacity”, for example (*AJHR*, 1880, H-1: 15).

The punctilious system of keeping records of trainees did not cease with certification and grading presented teachers with an on-going threat for many decades. Indeed, at the New Education Fellowship conference held in New Zealand in 1937, the system became the target of much criticism. Characterised as demanding “omniscience and infallibility from the inspectors”, it was claimed to embody “the worst features of a lockstep system of education” (Kandel, 1938: 465). From another conference delegate it was contended that the grading system was simply a “numbering process which enabled the wise men to sort out the teachers into their proper places”, which was “antagonistic to the whole spirit of good education” (Boyd, 1938: 471; 479). Moreover, it was argued, the children were too well behaved and the teachers too controlled by keeping up superficial appearances, the end result of which produced “intelligent but dull” pupils in an education system “obsessed with the petty, empty things of education rather than its essence” (Boyd, 1938: 479; 475).

### **Conclusion**

Education provision prior to the establishment of a national system in New Zealand included rudimentary attempts at the provincial level to introduce teacher training initiatives. The first years of national education were characterised by increasing realisation of the principles of compulsion and universal participation and by attempts to effect a shift from provincial to national identity and loyalties in a heterogeneous settler population. Standardisation of educational provision across the country was central to this project and was expressed in the setting of standards for pupil instruction, the training and certification of teachers, and the nationalisation of teacher education institutions. The norms and expectations which defined rules and regulations for teachers became incorporated into the practices that constituted everyday life in the training institutions. Normal schools and training colleges, the agents responsible for enforcing the regulations, and the practices through which their objectives were realised, were therefore important mechanisms in the consolidation of political and cultural unity in the young colony.

Whilst the duration of periods that trainee teachers spent in the normal and practising schools differed between the four main centres, the underlying principles on which the training operated expressed a universal objective. They sought to transmit and impose fixed definitions of competence through supervisory, evaluative and corrective practices with which the trainees were constantly and systematically confronted and disciplined. This article has suggested that a Foucauldian-based analysis of disciplinary practices offers a cogent understanding of the consequences, at the level of the individual trainee as well as the teaching profession in New Zealand, of exposure to doctrinaire regulation and normalising strategies.

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