**ACCESS: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN EDUCATION**
2021, VOL. 41, NO. 1, 52–59
https://doi.org/10.46786/ac21.2779


Photo by Johannes Plenio on Unsplash

**Nesta Devine**

*Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand*

After Jim's funeral one of my PhD students wrote to me:

> Nga mihi aroha kia koe, Ki te Whanau o matua James, nga mihi arohanui kia ratou hoki. Ki a koe e te Rangatira, e matua James, okioki tonu koe i roto i te ringa o te Matua nui I te rangi, moe mai, moe mai, moe mai ra.

Another wrote:

> Condolences Nesta I thought about your supervisor too and his legacies, I'm truly blessed to be part of his legacies as a grandchild of his work. Inspirational big time!

Suzanne Weber described Jim as our 'DoctorVater'; the ancestor of a continuing inheritance of scholars and students, not just in Auckland, or Aotearoa New Zealand, but abroad too, wherever his students and his students' students work – in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Pacific, China, Taiwan, Bhutan, and undoubtedly other places.

Jim and his colleague Colin Lankshear founded *ACCESS* in the 1980s. It was initially a vehicle for members of the School of Education at the University of Auckland, both staff and students. The journal has had several editors over the years: including Michael Peters, Susan Robertson, Elizabeth Grierson, and Nina Hood. It has had several different forms of presentation - most recently finding new life when it was re-established by Tina Besley as part of PESA Agora. But it has always carried with it the dual imperative to scholarly acuity and social justice that it took on under Jim Marshall's initial guidance. It spread beyond its early character of an almost in-house journal, acquiring an international character. We try to maintain its early character as a critical, intellectually rigorous vehicle for exploration of the social sciences, with a focus – but not an exclusive focus – on education.

I saw Jim fairly regularly in his retirement home as my mother was there too. It is widely known that he had dementia, but he never lost his personality. Always busy, always courteous, and always somehow able to make friends. I was immensely touched that he appeared to recognise me.

Jim's contribution to philosophy of education is quite widespread. He will be remembered for his works on punishment, for introducing Foucault to New Zealanders, for his interest in Māori educational issues. But I would like to draw attention to a prescient interest in the very nature of

**CONTACT** Nesta Devine nesta.devine@aut.ac.nz

education itself. He set the struggle for the soul of education into a wider context than opposition to neo-liberalism. In a book published in 1987 he outlines in his inimitable way, the characteristics of positivism and contrasts them with his preferred educational theory, pragmatism. His critique of educational positivism goes to the very heart of the way we think about education in this country, and is as true today as when it was written:

> The very structures of our education system are positivistic. Cries of centralism are legion in a structure designed to ensure accountability and control for technocratic "ends". The system is partitioned into layers by age with a corresponding division if not fragmentation of responsibilities. If there is a connecting thread it is that of an instrumental approach to knowledge…. Habermas' central argument against positivism is that it extracts one paradigm of knowledge – i.e. the empirical analytic – and treats it as the universally valid measure for all paradigms and even for rationality itself. The positivistic interpretation of science presents a technical or instrumental rationality behind a value freedom in a way that ultimately, Habermas argues, prevents it from justifying its own assumptions and interests (Marshall, 1987, pp 47-48).

Neo-liberalism has only exacerbated the problem Jim drew attention to, and although he would probably later have substituted a Foucaultian argument – perhaps biopower or his own neologism, busno-power, the vision, founded on a nuanced, humane, generous conception of what education could be, remained the same.

## Elizabeth Gresson

*Emeritus Professor RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia*

The time had come in 2001 for Professors James D. Marshall and Michael A. Peters to hand over the editorial role and management of *ACCESS* journal. It was a privilege to be asked to take up the role and to travel through many years of academic life at AUT and RMIT always with *ACCESS* by my side. Jim Marshall and Colin Lankshear established *ACCESS* in 1982 at University of Auckland with a focus on the philosophy of education and Jim remained closely associated with the journal over those twenty years and beyond. He was always a ready contributor and remained a support to me during my years of stewardship of the journal. One of the highlights for me was his contribution of an article on Simone de Beauvoir in 2007. He wrote about freedom through de Beauvoir's writings and her philosophy of lived experience, her use of literature, diaries and journals for its exposition, and her contribution to existential ethics. The article taught me a great deal about de Beauvoir and lived experience as a valid philosophical position. Jim was a consummate teacher through his writings and here was a potent example. One learnt about de Beauvoir, about philosophy in action, about educating through philosophy and philosophically educating. I always thought of Jim Marshall as 'the father' of philosophy of education and I valued our many discussions on philosophical issues and his often wry 'take' on life. I always saw Jim as a practical man, one who lived life to the full, and like Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre, one for whom philosophy was a way of life. That was why he was such a good educator. Jim concluded his article on de Beauvoir by bringing it back to education when he wrote, "I cannot *prescribe* studying de Beauvoir to others, but I would suggest that they might step into the 'waters' themselves – if they believe themselves to be free" (Marshall, 2007, p. 70).

## Mark Olssen

*Emeritus Professor, University of Surrey, Guildford, UK*

Jim was a big support to me when things were not so smooth at the University of Otago, many years ago, and I recall he came specially down as a visiting Professor for about ten days at one point. During his visit, Jim attended my classes, especially the class on radical psychology that I ran with John Morss, using the book *Changing the Subject*, by Julian Henriques et al. (1984) as the major text.

Jim regularly came home for meals and my partner, Judith, took him on a visit to Olveston, an old historic house in Dunedin. When I later took up duties as external moderator for the School of Education at Auckland, Jim met me at the airport and took me to stay with him and Bridget, at their home at Rothesay Bay for the first night. It was a gesture which I deeply appreciated. Over the years, I was to have many meals there. After that first night I was accommodated in the University of Auckland 'little house' that was opposite the Hyatt hotel at the bottom of Waterloo Quadrant, where Education 'hung out' next to the Hyatt, in the Fisher Building, at the time. They were great days!

Jim's influence on me related to his serious interest in the writings of Michel Foucault, who we both shared as an intellectual mentor and guide. Foucault dominated Jim's work was an always present background influence in the philosophy of education, and several of my own articles - on autonomy, and on Wittgenstein importantly - paid special attention to Jim's work. That a senior philosopher of education should take Foucault seriously in the way Jim did so well, was an especially important influence for a younger academic. Jim provided mentoring, guidance, and leadership for me in the absence of suitable and available expertise at the University of Otago, where I was largely without intellectual interest or support of a serious philosophical sort.

Two years ago, while on temporary contract to AUT for the PBRF, I indicated to Professor Nesta Devine that I wished to see Jim, and Nesta organised a visit to the care home that Jim was residing. While at one level this was a sad experience, in that Jim didn't recognize either of us, we spent about 45 minutes with him, and our strategy became that of reminding Jim who he was, how important he was, and who he knew. We left him with a box of chocolates, which we noted he seemed to really enjoy, and I knew as we left that that would be the last time I would ever see Jim - and it was.

Jim has gone now, and death has come as a final release, surely. Yet, for me, at least, and for so many other people, I know, his influence lives on in their lives and in their work. Long live Jim!

**Ruth Irwin**

*RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia*

Jim Marshall was astute, dry, and fun. But more than that, he made a huge impact on New Zealand's educational community. He was deeply interested in ethics and diversity, and the relationships between power, language, embodiment, and praxis. Jim was one of the first people to put a narrative of decolonialism into practice in education, starting with research in Tai Tokerau. He worked in multiple directions to support women and Māori through research, theoretical and practical initiatives, policy, and institutional support. He was a leading thinker in the critique of neoliberalism as it began to encroach and then define educational policy, finance, accountability, subjectivity, and epistemology.

Jim was influenced by rich educational thinkers such as Dewey and Rousseau, Wollstonecraft, Montaigne, along with Foucault, Lyotard, Poster, and feminists such as Arendt, and Weil. He was not wed to a traditional white patriarchal liberal account of education. Nevertheless, he strongly resisted the shift to neoliberalism, forging a formidable conceptual opposition with other New Zealand educationalists such as Michael Peters, John Codd, Ivan Snook, Peter Fitzsimons, Nesta Devine, Mark Olssen and others, that shook neoliberal foundations all over the world.

After the 1984 election, neoliberal governments in New Zealand – both Labour and National – took advice from the British neoliberal playbook, using shock and awe tactics to introduce radical changes before the people could comprehend how damaging these initiatives were to the wellbeing of community and students. But the intellectual response in New Zealand was rapid, especially once these reforms started to hijack the education system in the early to mid 1990s. Jim showed how the 'rational individual autonomous chooser' was an impoverished, patriarchal and instrumental concept of subjectivity that did not meet empirical or theoretical standards of good scholarship. He was scathing in his close analytical reading of emerging neoliberal educational

policy, showing how instrumental ideas of vocationalism were seeping through the standard educational curriculum. He demonstrated that consumerism had taken over the older, fuller concept of 'student' and 'learner' and subsequently the approach to pedagogy also deteriorated into a vortex of instrumental measurements and credential inflation.

As the Dean of Education at the University of Auckland, Jim made a succession of excellent hires, building an extraordinary Faculty of Education that competed with Illinois for honours by producing world class research. During this period, he threw his weight behind the new Indigenous Research Institute, which Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Graeme Smith began in the Faculty of Education, and which eventually became its own independently funded institute attached to the Māori Department in the Faculty of Arts.

Following his close reading of Foucault and with attention to the relationship between power and policy, Jim developed his critique of the concept of busnocratic rationality which anticipated the development of New Public Management. He was very interested in how students internalise these banal operations of power through techniques such as physical and intellectual excellence, the gym, revealing the self through 'reflection' and 'truth'.

> Technologies of domination act essentially on the body, and classify and objectify individuals. The key to technologies of the self is the belief, now common in Western culture, that it is possible to reveal the truth about one's self. By telling the truth about one's sexuality, where the "deepest" truth is embedded in the discourse and discursive practices of sexuality, individuals become objects of knowledge, both to themselves and to others. In telling the truth, one knows oneself and is known to others in a process which is both therapeutic and also controlling. (Marshall, 1996, p. 271)

In regards to the advent of technology as a pedagogical innovation, Jim was astute about the changes this would have on students thinking and bodily comportment. Busnocratic rationality produced "docile and healthy bodies (that) can be inserted into the machinery of production so that populations can be adjusted in accordance with economic processes" (Marshall, 1996, p. 271).

One of Jim's enduring and astute observations is that 'progress' is illusionary, and that the genealogy of ideas all reside commensurately rather than in an evolutionary process where the latest and best iteration obliterates earlier concepts and ideas. I am currently writing on Stiegler's work on AI and robotics, and find salient ideas about computing that Jim wrote 20 years ago. He teases apart the fundamentals and then shows how each 'stage' co-exists, informing later stages as underlying assumptions that either confirm or deviate from the new normative regimes.

> In the first stage, the self is seen as established in face-to-face relations through a position of enunciation, as the person who speaks; in the second stage, the self is constituted as being personally/rationally autonomous and as the author endowing meaning to the printed page; and in the third or electronically mediated stage, the self is decentered, dispersed, and has multiple "identities". (Marshall, 1996, p. 273)

His final work focused on Hannah Arendt, and as his health and mind started to fail him, I mourned the lack of time he had to write a new book on Arendt's humane approach to conflict, democracy, ethnicity, gender, Heidegger, and other thinkers in the Jewish European and American milieu.

Jim Marshall's legacy is deeply rooted. He has influenced a great number of Kiwi educationalists and seeded ideas that now take root throughout New Zealand and in countries all over the world. His dry, astute, and generous disposition has helped New Zealand gain a maturity in the philosophy of educational thought, and as neoliberalism is now beginning to roll back, I hope these ideas will forge the groundwork for a new era to flourish. Personally, I am honoured to have been one of Jim's students, and I know my own ideas are still following pathways that he set down in the late 1980s. Thankyou Jim.

## Eve Coxon

*University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand*

I first met Professor James Marshall late in 1989 when he was Head of School, Education, at the University of Auckland (UoA), which until then had offered its teaching programmes only within Faculty of Arts degrees. I was a half-time teaching fellow at UoA's newly established Centre for Pacific Studies, for which I had been co-opted from my full-time employment as a secondary school teacher. I had returned to school teaching that year subsequent to two years' leave doing a Master of Arts in anthropology, including a thesis on education in Tonga. Although I was well pleased with the first class honours I received for my Masters, my return to school teaching was because that's where I perceived my working life to be; I never saw myself as an academic, as working long-term within the university system. But that was before I was to enjoy the very real benefits of Jim Marshall's educational vision and his generous academic mentoring and support. Reflecting on those years, I see my initial access to what became a 30 year academic career as quite fortuitous, as about being in the right place at the right time; courtesy of Jim Marshall's very strategic approach to academic programme planning, however, I was soon set on the path towards an extremely enriching academic life in Pacific education.

Jim had been charged with putting together a BEd degree to be taught for the first time in 1990 at the then Auckland College of Education (CoE), by UoA academics working with CoE education staff. He was well ahead of his time in envisaging the education policy studies aspects of the degree as requiring a critical approach to the study of education in Aotearoa New Zealand, one which gave appropriate attention to education for Māori and Pacific students. So, despite my having only a masters' degree, in 1990 Jim employed me as a half-time temporary lecturer in education policy studies, my main tasks being to under-study him in co-ordinating the first-year BEd paper and to develop and deliver a Pacific Education component within it. Then early in 1991, I was appointed to a four-year full-time lectureship on the understanding that I would soon enrol in my PhD part-time, take over the co-ordination of the first-year paper, and develop and deliver a 300-level Pacific Education paper, the first in the country. The following year I co-developed a 200-level paper with a significant Pacific component, thus completing the three-year pathway which Jim encouraged me to see as the means of facilitating Pacific students' achievement and transition through a first degree.

Before the end of my four-year appointment, thanks to Jim's remarkably trusting mentorship (and that of his successor as HoS, Roger Dale), I also had developed an existing masters' paper into one slanted towards education in the Pacific (popular with the burgeoning number of Pacific post-graduate students) and had supervised the masters' theses of six Pacific students. Importantly, especially in view of my not having yet completed my PhD, during these years Jim secured funding for three eminent educationists from Pacific universities to be appointed as visiting professors to the UoA School of Education (SoE). As well as raising the visibility, within and beyond SoE, of Pacific education as an academic area, each of them made significant contributions to BA and BEd Pacific education courses, delivered well-received seminars for staff and students, and provided much appreciated collegial support to my ongoing doctoral research.

Fortunately for me, Jim also insisted that I not fall into the trap of focusing so much on teaching that I neglected the other essential aspect of an academic position. So I accepted the need to begin publishing my own writing. Here again, the spaces he created were crucial to the realisation of my early efforts. The first was in 1992 when I was one of the co-editors of a special issue of *ACCESS (11:2)* (this very journal, which he co-founded). The issue included four articles on Pacific education, three of them authored by the same Pacific colleagues who had or were about to become visiting professors to SoE, and the other by me. The second publication opportunity Jim offered me was as co-editor of a textbook for our BEd students. *The Politics of Learning and Teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand* was published in 1994 after a quite lengthy, collaborative production process involving a team of 12 writers, some SoE and others CoE, all of whom taught sections of the first-year course.

Included was a chapter on Pacific Education developed, with prompting by Jim, by two Pacific colleagues and me, comprising an overview of learning and teaching in Polynesian Pacific countries in precolonial, colonial and decolonising periods, leading into the time of large-scale migration and Pacific communities' experiences of education in Aotearoa from the 1960s to the then present day. This was the first comprehensive chapter on Pacific Education published in a New Zealand university text, and 30 years later it is still being used.

My tribute to Professor James Marshall encompasses only one small aspect of his work during a very few years of his many decades at the University of Auckland. It is, however, a significant part of his legacy. Jim saw that Pacific Education should be an area of academic study in the university serving the city in which more Pacific people resided than anywhere else in the world. He had a very clear sense of direction as to how this could happen. Thanks to Jim's foresight, within a period of less than five years Pacific Education was well established within School of Education undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. And despite the many changes within the University in the three decades since, thanks to the ongoing commitment of subsequent Heads of School and the growing pool of Pacific education academics, the achievements of those few years have endured and flourished. We remain in your debt, Jim. Rest in peace.

## Ho-Chia Chueh

*National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan*

Dear Jim,

I admire your scholarship in innovating a trend of education philosophy discipline from analytical philosophy to the Foucauldian approach. We have been busy ever since you made this historical moment.

You are so good at trout-fishing. You carry photos of yourself holding trout. Your smiles show off your great talent and confidence. We will always miss those photos.

You have a small cup of coffee that sits on your desk. I once made coffee for you before the class. You taste coffee and talk in a low tone. That is such a good picture of a philosopher speaking elegantly. Every time when I said something, you would reply to me: 'I beg your pardon.' We will always remember your sophistication.

You are heart-warming and honest. You said to me, "That is a good essay, but you need to improve your English!" When you wrote a book review for me, you said "that's a good book, but you know your English needs to be improved." When we are frustrated with institutional difficulties, we can look up to you for guidance. We will remember your wisdom and kindness.

You are a Dionysian. It is your way to think philosophically through sipping. We will remember your special style of lecturing.

Jim, we salute you for guiding us so much. Sleep well and enjoy your whisky.

Warmest regards,

Ho-chia

## Richard Heraud - A pocket put to good use

*University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand*

My immediate sense of what it meant that Jim has passed to the next world, although I am unclear how he regarded where he would be going, was that 'Jim gave me more than I gave him'. What does

this thought refer to and from where did such a thought come are questions I shall do my best to engage in what follows.

Jim lectured me at undergraduate level during my Bachelor of Arts (Education), in what was probably a politics and or history of education paper. I cannot remember exactly what it was although I do remember a series of academics in this course who had a huge impact on me, including Pita Sharples and Linda Tuhiwai Smith. Jim may have been the course coordinator. I remember him raising my grade from a C+ to an A- when my tutor sought a second opinion. The tutor thought I had gone off-topic. Jim thought I had been creative. Jim was also my supervisor for an elective course I did in the first year of my master's, for which I needed to read Jürgen Habermas' (1972) *Knowledge and Human Interests*. Having not had any grounding in philosophy at secondary school or at undergraduate level, the idea was to prepare me in the little time we had to write a master's thesis. I may appear to be writing about myself here, but what I mean to say, is what was achieved during this period and afterwards is largely due to Jim and the way he accompanied me, something I will get to shortly. The following year, he supervised me when I did my master's thesis on Friedrich Nietzsche's influence on Michel Foucault. Outside of university, we attended a few conferences at which we met, always aware of the intrepid nature of the intellectual journey we had made to that point. Jim came and spent a week with me in Barcelona in 2005. Very occasionally, we had a beer and more seldom than I should have, I visited him after he retired.

The idea that it should be relevant to share with you that Jim gave me more than I gave him, is in one sense a simple acknowledgement that the nature of his contribution to my development was a consequence of Jim having come from an earlier generation. The wisdom that comes from the experience of learning to think for ourselves – and he truly could – is something we might credit or might hope to credit all our elders with, just as I hope I am doing in my responsibilities to the following generations. However, the idea that Jim gave me more than I gave him, also refers to the wisdom he employed when interacting with me – something I will be eternally grateful for.

I would not have been the easiest student Jim had – not by a long shot. I struggled with reading. I was a slow reader. Many concepts were new to me – I was working with concepts that I not had serious prior engagement with. Furthermore, during the period in which I did my master's, I was wrestling with a psychological event that was always, so to speak, much bigger than I was. In these circumstances, I had no choice but to corral the psychological event and dispute its meaning within the parameters of my thesis topic, and do this without ever making it a preoccupation of my thesis topic. Jim knew this was not easy. I was very lucky to have Jim as my supervisor during this, what was then, epic moment. I knew this at the time and I still think the same way as I continue to benefit from that experience.

During the writing of my master's, Jim needed to make a trip to Europe. He might have been away for about 6 weeks. When we met up after he got back, he pulled a newspaper clipping from his pocket and handed it to me. It was a story about someone who was going through the same psychological event that I was going through. Jim had been carrying this article in his pocket for the previous month of his travels. Of course, he could have put the clipping in his diary but no, he carried it in his trouser pocket, which evidently meant he would have needed to move it from one pair of trousers to the next – a ritual of devotion in itself. This wasn't just about Jim wanting to show that he understood my situation, in as much as that was possible, but it was also about his investment in that understanding and his fidelity to the importance of standing by me, accompanying me. I don't think his gesture would have had the same impact if he had not carried the article around in his pocket for a month.

The metaphor is more subtly loaded than one might first think. Jim had a special capacity for listening, accompanying and questioning – a capacity that rather than defaulting to accumulated knowledge, was one that, to me, centred on the importance of being able to ask why. This is to say, his question trumped knowledge, cut through it, brought it into question, perhaps first in relation to itself but more significantly in relation to what this knowledge could not explain. How did this

intellectual approach manifest itself in Jim's mode of supervision? Firstly, he appeared to have an innate appreciation of the complexity of life, of how an individual's relationship to the world was diverse, based on this complexity of their experience. Secondly, Jim appeared to have an innate appreciation that for this complexity to be formally addressed, it needed to be taken seriously within the context of its own formation. Here is where Jim was special to me. His supervision seemed to involve a special aptitude to put himself at a distance such that you always felt safe while never knowing where he was locating himself, meaning he continued to listen and accompany one but without intruding. Then when he intervened, it was often gentle and discrete. Once for example, I naïvely complained that he had put no comments in a draft of a chapter I had written. Then I found the insertion of a comma written in pencil. I asked, "What's this about?" Jim said, "I want you to be more conscious of what you are doing"! This was perhaps the best and most effective advice I might have had during my post-graduate education. Jim understood that I myself had to write my master's thesis – of course, all supervisors understand this – with the added difference of both having a more complex understanding of what that responsibility might suppose to the author and furthermore understanding how to support that individual's realisation of responsibility to him/herself and relationship with the world, given this complexity. In these respects, Jim was always more than a supervisor. He is someone one remembers for what we now struggle to understand humanity to mean.

## References

Habermas, J. (1972). *Knowledge and human interests*. Heinemann Educational.

Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C., & Walkerdine, V. (1984). *Changing the subject: Psychology, social regulation and subjectivity*. Methuen.

Marshall, J. D. (1987). *Positivism or pragmatism: Philosophy of education in New Zealand.* NZARE.

Marshall, J. D. (1996). Education in the mode of information: Some philosophical considerations. *Philosophy of Education*, 268-276.

Marshall, J.D. (2007). Simone de Beauvoir: Philosophy as a way of life. *ACCESS: Contemporary Issues in Education, 26* (2), 64-74.