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# Academic development in Aotearoa New Zealand

A Janus view



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**AUCKLAND**  
Te Whare Wānanga o Tamaki Makaurau  
NEW ZEALAND

**MEDICAL AND  
HEALTH SCIENCES**

# Outline

- Critical history of academic development
  - The project
  - Early ways of working
  - The primacy of teaching and learning
- The trends
  - From lone operators to centres
  - From the periphery to the centre
  - Voluntary to mandatory
- The future

# Critical Histories of AD – the project

- A multiple histories approach to explore the emergence of academic development in **Aotearoa NZ, Australia, UK.**
  - Interviews (Oral history – the personal view)
  - Archival analysis (Traditional history – documentary analysis)
  - Genealogical reading (Critical view)

# Two Waves of AD

## The first wave

- Rod McKay, Canterbury, 1972
- John Clift, VUW, 1973
- John Jones, Auckland, 1974
- Terry Crooks, Otago, 1976

## The second wave

- Neil Fleming, Lincoln, 1987
- Neil Haigh, Waikato, 1988
- Judith Nathan, Massey, 1994

# Historical Moments

**AD has exploited the “structural possibilities associated with particular historical moments” Clegg (2009)**

The late 1950s – early 1970s

- Knowledge as the engine of progress
- One University of New Zealand to four standalone universities
- Two new universities established, a *tertiary sector* gets established
- Massification of HE begins
- Concerns about ‘wastage’, student under-achievement and increasing student diversity

# Contested Contexts

**AD occurs in “contested contexts” Clegg (2009)**

AD struggles/d against disciplinary forces and the freedom of academics to practice based on their disciplinary knowledge

# Early days

Scientists

Structure(less)

Networkers

Pragmatists

# Teaching and learning: A place to call home

- AD has been called a “family of strangers” with teaching and learning as the ontological glue that holds it together (e.g. Clegg, Harland and Staniforth, Rowland)
- The first four directors set out to cultivate networks of staff interested in becoming ‘more sophisticated thinkers about their role in teaching and helping students learn’
- Through their networks they developed new systems of truth and new power relations that developed a discourse of teaching and learning that gained credibility and authority



# Wave two: an institutional mandate

- By the late 1980s new power relations were in play
  - Academic development units
  - A move from the periphery to the centre with clearer reporting lines and more institutional guidance
  - A move from designing voluntary activities to overseeing mandatory ones.

# SET: from pastoral to disciplinary modes

- Individualised student evaluation of teachers were an important tool used by all of the early developers
- They used these evaluations to help individuals and design more general assistance
- Later they oversaw the 'scientisation' of the questionnaires and the processing of results, as well as policy controlling their use
- The technology became individualising and totalising, a tool of normalising judgement
- Academic development has lost control.

# The trends

- From lone operators to centres
- From the periphery to the centre
- Voluntary to mandatory

# Turning back to look forward

- The philosophical - speaking back to the university vs agents of the university
- Coat-tailing/serendipity – learning management systems, digital learning, learning analytics, engagement
- Curriculum change – challenging Western paradigms, postcolonial approaches, Mātauranga Māori
- Move away from the student facing side of the university into the research domain



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Thank you

Questions/comments