

Appendix: The New Zealand Literature on Social Class/Inequality

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A broad account of the New Zealand class system can be readily assembled from popularly-available sources such as the item in the official New Zealand online Encyclopaedia *Te Ara* or the Wikipedia entry, together with common knowledge. Having provided a sketch, this appendix then goes on to provide a brief overview and then listing of a bibliography on Social Class/Inequality in New Zealand.

Traditional Māori society was strongly based on rank, which derived from ancestry (*whakapapa*). There were three classes – chiefs, commoners and slaves - with very limited mobility between them. Chiefs were almost invariably descended from other chiefs, although those in line to take up a chieftainship would be bypassed in favour of a younger brother if they did not show aptitude. In some tribes exceptional women could emerge to take on leadership roles. Prisoners of war were usually enslaved with no rights and often a low life expectancy. However, children of slaves were free members of the tribe. Contemporary Māori society is far less hierarchical and there are a variety of routes to prominence.

European settlement of New Zealand came with a ready-made class structure imposed by the division between cabin and steerage passengers with the former mainly constituting middle class with a sprinkling of upper class ‘settlers’. This shipboard class division was reinforced by the Wakefield settlement system which endeavoured to reproduce a cross-section of UK society in the colony, with the mechanism that capital was needed by the middle/upper class to provide the frame in which the working class voyagers (they were only retrospectively entitled to be termed ‘settlers’) could be put to work. However, the rigidity of this imported framework did not entirely endure as it took time to get the intended structure up and running. Various accounts stress the continuing importance in various areas of colonial life of an imported educated and landed elite.

There quickly developed an ideology of ‘egalitarianism’ with its claim of (relative) classlessness. This still allowed some wriggle-room for language

concerning class groupings. Egalitarianism arose because of a desire for many immigrants to not reproduce their class-bound origins, an open frontier (access to land), high demand for labour and some difficulties in enacting a separation of the classes in the exigencies of early colonisation. Moreover, it is accompanied by difficulties, especially the intolerance of the 'tall poppy syndrome' and the exclusion of some groups. In fact, the ideology was broader and included some rejection of industrial and urban models as well as class ones, and Bill Sutch extended the concept to include a concern for security as well as aversion to both undue poverty and undue wealth. From the nineteenth century local writers and many intellectual visitors made this claim that New Zealand was a 'classless society' and this undoubtedly reinforced its hold. The fallback position was – as Keith Sinclair wrote in 1969 - that New Zealand "must be more nearly classless... than any advanced society in the world".

The evidence for a limited class structure included and reflected:

- the relatively small range of wealth (that is, the wealthiest did not earn hugely more than the poorest earners),
- lack of deference to authority figures,
- high levels of class mobility,
- a high standard of working class living compared to Britain, especially post-WW2,
- progressive labour laws which protected workers and encouraged unionism, and
- a welfare state which was developed in New Zealand before most other countries.

However, this view was increasingly contested by some writers and a widespread model was that class formation and political party alignment to represent this emerged during the 1890s and continued thereafter. Belich (2001) significantly develops a commonly held model when he includes a class analysis in his monumental history of New Zealand, placing his class analysis within his three-phase periodisation of New Zealand history. Four 'class cultures' are posited (each having "roots in a particular relationship of work and property, labour and capital" p. 126 but not necessarily binding everyone in that category):

- Genteel: upper class
- Respectable: middle class
- Decent: working class
- Disreputable: irregularly/illegally employed.

In turn the Middle Class was subdivided into:

- a petite bourgeoisies of small-medium urban proprietors
- a farming class of small-medium rural proprietors
- a lower middle class of white-collar workers.

Onto this general model he adds a development analysis in which various ‘tight classes’ (i.e. fairly conscious and socially-linked class communities) rose and fell (see his Chapter 4 “Social Harmony: the touch of class”.)

By the 1870s there was the emergence of the New Zealand gentry as a nationwide class community and as a ruling class. This gentry had rural and urban wings, and emanated in large part from genteel cabin-class immigrants, of whom there may have been a higher proportion than the migrant streams to other British colonies. This class became established particularly on large-scale sheep runs (often on lease-held lands). Their decline (or considerable transformation) took place by mid-century. Causes of their demise include “..the economic circumstances of the recolonisation era; stagnation; the rise of the protein industry; close-settling sentiment; and the actions of the Liberal government” (predominantly middle class). From c1900 the gentry was swamped with rising numbers of (aggravated by their different attitudes) members of the higher professions and higher-level managers and industrialists who spanned respectability and gentility. As the 20th Century wore on, this ‘upper middle class’ increasingly merged with, even absorbed, the gentry. A large expansion of education fuelled change, servants became mutinous, and the officer corps they manned had a particularly high casualty rate in WW1. Moreover, the Gentry were vilified by Liberals as an aspect of their nationalist project – although there was less bite than bark. So the gentry disappeared into relative seclusion.

A New Zealand working class culture was of long standing but Belich claims was not a ‘tight class’ until 1906 or so. It covered both craft workers and working class workers: represented by different unions. Craft unions linked workmen to middle class ‘masters’. Around 1890 there was a big surge in unionism and again in 1912 – both combated by capitalists. Craft workers became strong supporters of the emerging arbitration system and the developing Labour Party actively represented their interests while strong linkages with Australian unions reinforced their local development. But, ‘Recolonial’ industries required bigger factories and therefore more organisation and so craft work became more sidelined and industrial education rather than apprenticeships grew. In the 1900s there was a shrinkage of opportunities for small businesses, but an expansion of working class jobs. Worker solidarity was

bolstered by sexism and racism. However, over a longer term affluent life styles (including home ownership and education) borrowed from the middle class became possible and this was another factor stunting their class action potential.

A newly emerging class of (small or medium) farmers reigned in the working class. This active grouping was able to span a range of different farming experiences and coalesce around a masculine and pro-farming ideology- a 'Sturdy Yeoman' image. Links were made to those providing supporting rural services etc. Belich's class analysis is not extended to the current de-colonisation period apart from noting the expansion of inequalities over the last decades.

Data sources and Scales

One unfortunate effect of the New Zealand classlessness model is that it leads to resistance to studies on the topic. In the early 1950s, Congalton was attacked in newspapers for researching into class. This was reinforced with the conception that it was impolite ('not British') to raise such issues. So Vellekoop (1969) reports with relief that her then-recent study on vocational choices got a 75% response on occupation and income of head of family. Many researchers would agree with Caldwell & Brown's argument that in researching their book:

...we found that most New Zealanders will do a lot to avoid using the word class to describe their relationships with others. But they do recognise that there are some groups of people they identify with, and some they don't. They will talk at length about the differences in behaviour, the attitudes, even the dress that make them different from their embarrassing cousins or the schoolmates they've outgrown (2007: 7).

They also argue that while there are commonly expressed ideas about the typical New Zealander these have little analytical traction, since rather than one monolithic image there is a set of diverse social identities that summarise ways in which New Zealanders feel different from each other. These not overtly expressed but are readily recognisable and indicated by the typical areas of residence of such groupings.

Work on inequalities/class must be based on a firm measurement infrastructure. Official data can also be pressed into service. Such data sources include marriage, birth and death registers, probate data, tax returns, welfare records: but above all census data on income, occupation, education, labour force status, tenure and dwelling amenities, supported by other official surveys.

The ‘Official statistics apparatus’ in New Zealand has had an ambivalent relationship with measures of inequality and class. Because of its connotations (but also difficulties in assigning a clear meaning to it and measurement of it) the term ‘class’ is somewhat justifiably banished from any official publications.

On the other hand, as Perry, 2013: 91 reports, whereas “as recently as 1996, the government of the time in New Zealand was openly disapproving of any poverty discourse” by 2002 ‘poverty reduction’ was central in government and public discourse. Official recognition of what constitutes a ‘living wage’ was determined within the system (and this has been revisited recently by a widespread campaign) and monitoring of a semi-official ‘Poverty line’ has been carried out.

Since research work on inequalities/class in large part must be quantitative, it must therefore be based on a firm measurement infrastructure.

The basic data for analysis is derived from a variety of sources including:

- Census (Employment Status, Education, Income, Sources of Income, Tenure, Dwelling amenities),
- Household Economic Survey,
- Household Income Survey,
- Survey of Family Income and Expenditure (Sofie),
- The General Social Survey (GSS),
- MSD’s Standard of Living Surveys (last fielded in 2008),
- Inland Revenue data - see <http://www.ird.govt.nz/aboutir/external-stats/>
- Estates and Gift Duties data – since discontinued with the lapsing of death duties in 1991.

Further data on attitudes and characteristics of individuals and households in relation to Social Class/Inequality can be variously obtained from a range of other New Zealand non-governmental surveys such as Big City Quality of Life, International Social Science Programme (ISSP), New Zealand Values Survey (NZVS), New Zealand Election Survey (NZES), Office of the Children’s Commissioner material and the research work of a variety of action groups. Many of these add more subjective information (especially attitudes but also experiences and cases). However, irregularity of surveys being run and quality of data are issues detracting from some of these data sources.

The key data generated by these data-collection vehicles includes employment status, occupation, education, income, assets and tenure. Most of these have fairly well regularised coding frames although there are some difficulties (for a scale regularising educational qualification see Ministry of

Education: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Studying-in-NZ/New-Zealand-Qualification-Framework/requirements-nzqf.pdf>); StatsNZ revises the income categories it uses from time to time and also has definitions of income – see http://www.stats.govt.nz/surveys_and_methods/methods/classifications-and-standards/classification-related-stats-standards/income-bands/definition.aspx) Occupation has been coded using a variety of scheme over time: most linked to appropriate international frameworks and now firmly ensconced in a Trans-Tasman common classification. Backwards linkage is possible through concordances. The rationale for the most recent coding schema is given on the website.

In turn, social researchers have endeavoured to construct occupation scales which will turn these official categories into a set of theorised categories or a continuous scale. Several early attempts (and others reported by Vellekoop, 1969) were prestige scales in which respondents were asked to rank a selected number of occupations. Over the last few decades increasingly sophisticated ‘objective’ scales of socio-economic status have been generated with the long-running Elley-Irving series being gradually replaced by the more sophisticated NZSEI scale (which is formally adopted by StatsNZ): see Milne et al, 2013. Methodological issues that need to be dealt with in such scales include (see also Perry, 2013: 40, 208 for discussion about these issues in relation to standard of living research):

- what measures to include and how to weight/combine each;
- what population base to use;
- how fine-grained the classification and its underlying units;
- whether adjustments needed for particular groupings;
- dealing with assigning mid-points for open-ended bottom and top categories;
- reporting of lower incomes self-employed workers than waged;
- the different labour market situation of women more generally, self-employed, part-timers and the economically inactive;
- developing justifiable cutting-points to convert into categories;
- validation against likely associated outcomes such as smoking, motor vehicle access, housing tenure, household overcrowding, and deprivation.

More recently, over the last two decades, this concern with measurement of inequalities has generated several streams of work including several projects:

- the NZSEI scale (Milne et al., 2013);
- NZDep: <http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/nzdep2006-index-deprivation>;

- MSD's SOL programme see <http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/monitoring/living-standards/index.html>;
- Poverty measurement program (see Waldegrave et al., 1996).

Earlier official classifications (e.g. of occupation or industry: see Olssen and Hickey, 2005) tended not to be well-theorised. A continuing demand from New Zealand social researchers has been for ways of classifying socio-economic groupings based particularly on occupation. This methodological demand led to a long series developed by educational researchers Warwick Elley and Jim Irving (and sometimes others) who over successive censuses categorised occupations into 6 s.e.s. groupings based on average education and income for each – from time to time gender or ethnicity variants were also developed or at least explored. These scales are developed on a limited age-range and usually only include full-time workers. More recently the COMPASS team has developed the NZSEI using the same general approach, while adding some degrees of sophistication. The NZSEI-06 scores are based on a path-analytic representation of the ‘returns to human capital’ model of stratification, in which occupation is viewed as the means by which human capital (education) is converted into material rewards (income).

There are several advantages of an occupation-based approach (cf. Milne et al, 2013):

- occupation is readily and accurately recalled (although there is some ‘status inflation’ in job titles);
- occupation can be retrospectively recalled with some accuracy (so retired respondents can be asked about their main occupation during their working years);
- occupation is often recorded in survey datasets and on administrative datasets (e.g., birth and death records, although no in recent health surveys in New Zealand);
- validation shows that expected stratification patterns across smoking prevalence and other socio-economic correlates are produced;
- because of long history of occupation-based socio-economic measures that have been frequently updated, socio-economic comparisons over time can be undertaken (including cohort samples having socio-economic status to be assessed at different life-stages using the ‘current’ occupation-based socio-economic measure at each point).
- proxy persons can be used to assess socio-economic status (e.g. for children).

The MSD has sponsored an internal Living Standards research programme since the late 1990s (see Perry, 2013: 183-187) which has produced:

- a 40-item material wellbeing and hardship/deprivation scale (Elsi)
- a short form version (Elsi_SF)
- an experimental alternative (the Fixed Reference Index of Living Standards- FRILS and
- an updated/extended Material Wellbeing Index (MWI).

Concern about inequalities in health led from 1995 to the development of an area index of deprivation, which has the advantage of enabling an assignment of s.e.s. status as long as an address is available for a respondent. Meshblocks from censuses are combined into small areas of at least 100 people and the NZDep scale is developed based on census measures including - for 2006 in order of decreasing importance:

- being on a social welfare benefit
- household income below an acceptable threshold
- not owning own home
- a single-parent family
- unemployed
- lack of qualifications
- less living space
- no access to a telephone
- no access to a car.

Several atlases of deprivation have been produced which vividly present the results. Difficulties are that comparison over time is limited by fresh calculations of indices (largely because of differential availability of information) and there needs to be further work on which are the most casually pertinent characteristics within the scale. (A 'code red' issue is that it is possible that the high deprivation areas will be over-targeted for assistance rendering the pink (almost deprived areas) starved for attention and liable to regress.)

The Poverty Measurement Project carried out extensive work (mainly using focus groups, but also surveys) on respondent's conceptions of income needs and related issue. The work which was carried out in the late 1990s was recently updated (at least in part) at the behest of the Campaign for a Living Wage (King and Waldegrave, 2012).

In addition, models have to be set up to slot the incoming data into proper frameworks within which stocks and flows can be traced. Over time various tools have been deployed, including: see Perry, 2013: 27 which noted two Treasury tax-benefit micro stimulation models which estimate tax liabilities for

individuals and benefit units: the current model *Taxwell* and the previous *Taxmod*.

It is also important that national data be included in international databases which have been assembled on these topics so that rigorous cross-national analyses can be developed. New Zealand's record on this is not altogether good. Although New Zealand information has been included in the High income data base, it was not considered possible to provide unit record data for the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS). Nevertheless, the OECD has been able to include New Zealand in many of its data-bases and monitoring studies.

Despite the considerable resource and effort deployed to build up measures, the New Zealand situation faces many lacks (Rashbrooke, 2013: 19-23):

It is important to acknowledge that our understanding of income inequality in New Zealand is far from complete (especially compared with the domestic data available in many OECD countries) Despite committed and ongoing research by academics, commentators and various organisations and government departments (notably, the Ministry of Social Development), significant gaps in our knowledge remain.

One gap is the lack of detailed information on the top 10 per cent of incomes (especially the top 1 per cent), including the composition of those incomes and how they have been earned. No country has a complete record of top incomes, which are difficult to sample accurately and can be obscured by tax avoidance. In New Zealand, for example, family trusts are used to avoid an estimated \$300 million in tax each year. But New Zealand has less data than many countries, because we do not tax or record capital gains – an issue of policy as well as measurement. New Zealand researchers are also deprived of important income data because this country chooses not to participate in the flagship Luxembourg Income Study.

Only chief executive pay for the period 1997–2002 has been studied in-depth, and New Zealand has relatively little data about how much this pay has increased, what form it takes, and why it has risen. Slightly further down the income ladder, we know even less about pay for senior managers and company directors, and the means by which these salaries are set. The only significant analysis of wealth in New Zealand is based on 2003 data. We have relatively little information about long-term social mobility, and our research into attitudes towards inequality has been limited. Our reporting of social indicators, many of which are tied to inequality, could be improved.

The Ministry of Social Development's *Social Report*, for example, has been reduced in frequency from once a year to once every three years at most. New Zealand has recently been excluded from an international league table of children's health because our data are so poor.

One other, temporary limitation is that the delay of the New Zealand Census until 2013 leaves researchers reliant on data from the 2006 Census.

Further work on measurement is warranted with Milne et al. (2013: 122) concluding their report on s.e.s. scales with a useful challenge:

...given that researchers have a number of different options for assessing socio-economic status in New Zealand (e.g., NZDep, NZiDep, education, income, living standards, as well as the NZSEI-06), it would be worthwhile to assess the extent to which these different measures have independent as opposed to shared influences on outcomes of interest.

The Contribution of Historical Studies

The attention of New Zealand social historians to class has been exemplary, although their interest mainly is only up to Second World War, with very few exceptions. Sociologists have also contributed to historical studies: especially the Canterbury department, John Martin, David Pearson and Claire Toynbee.

Some histories of New Zealand have passages suffuse with class vocabulary and/or analysis: a far wider field than there is space to attend to more than cursorily here. Some historians have produced portraits of class groupings: notably the Southern Gentry (Eldred-Grigg, 1980 & McAloon, 2002) and the rich more generally (Eldred-Grigg, 1996) but also the working class (Millen, 1984 for the 19th and Eldred-Grigg, 1990 for the 20th) and recently portraits of the rich/ruling class have been advanced by Hunt, e.g. 2003; Jesson, eg. 1999 and Murray, 2007). Labour histories are sometimes too fine-grained to see underlying class structures but the Labour History Project has been important together with books such as Len Richardson's (1995) *Coal, Class, and Community: the United Mineworkers of New Zealand*. Some are important analyses of crucial events in Trade Union history (e.g. Green, 2001).

But the pertinence of class in the understanding of New Zealand's past is more problematic. In a long review article reacting to a major collection of New Zealand historical writing drawn from the pages of the *NZ Journal of History* Jim McAloon (2004) argued that "Class, once a fundamental organising category of social science, has disappeared from New Zealand (and more

generally Western) historiography...Gender and Māori themes abound, but there is absolutely nothing about class in that collection”. He argues that class in New Zealand has been central from the beginning of its settlement and certainly in the colonial period. A difficulty he sees is that New Zealand historians have often failed to deploy a sufficiently sophisticated model of class, and have over-emphasised the importance of class consciousness. Thus a common model, which began to be argued from Sinclair and Oliver’s work of the 1960s, was that class was irrelevant up until c1890 when working class consciousness and mobilisation began to develop. A major focus of debate concerns the extent to which New Zealanders were enmired in a grim world of deprivation required to shift often to track jobs or whether the abundance of land allowed escape.

McAlloon’s model of colonial class structure involves (p.70):

- the upper class [which] comprised the movers and shakers of the colonial export economy, whether as pastoralists or as merchants and financiers, complemented by a significant element of manufacturers and of large agricultural farmers;
- a very significant middle class of modestly-wealthy family farmers, reinforced by the plethora of comfortable country town merchants, and the self-employed urban business and manufacturing sector (facilitated by the fluidity of colonial society and the ready availability of land);
- Wage-earners .. ranged from the relatively secure artisans of the towns to the itinerant rural workers.

This model applied to the South Island situation, whereas the North Island varied from region to region:

- Rural Hawkes Bay and Wairarapa were similar to Canterbury and Otago in combining pastoralism with smaller-scale agricultural farming (p.71);
- A strong mercantile element clearly existed in Auckland and Wellington, while
- A later frontier in much of the North Island might well have meant a larger proportion both of reasonably substantial family farmers and country town merchants in places like Wanganui and Hamilton, as well as smaller centres like Martinborough.

Finally, Olssen and Scates’s (2008) reflective comments bring McAlloon’s review more close to the present and contribute to the sociology of no sociology.

Just three decades ago, most scholars in New Zealand thought that the major social, cultural, and political fault-lines ran along a rural-urban

axis, but that within the towns, as if in a minor key, social class generated the most significant and enduring divisions” It was axiomatic, of course, that New Zealand was a capitalist society and that the stratification or class structure of all towns was rooted in the industrial division of labour. This was the conventional wisdom and nobody doubted that from 1840 onwards New Zealand had been but an outpost of British capitalism with a 'normal' class structure.⁵ How to characterise family farmers occasionally caused a problem, but much of the best work ignored them and focused, as W.B. Sutch did in *The Quest for Security* (1966), on the colonists' attempts to remove the sources of insecurity and the consequences of poverty.

Across the period from the 1880s until the 1930s, class by itself, even in the main towns, only possessed explanatory power when we disentangle or disaggregate the following: the occupational structure; the degree of demographic class formation; the extent of occupational and social closure; the level of unionisation, if not the nature of those unions, itself not unrelated to the local or regional product and labour markets. All need to be kept analytically distinct while allowing for personal and ideological influence to affect outcomes, and indeed for events such as strikes, changes in government or public policy, and not least such global events as wars and depressions.

Review articles on aspects of New Zealand history are also valuable: e.g. Nolan (2009) draws attention to periods of increased social mobility and other phases of New Zealand history which were less amenable to social change.

Historical overview of Sociological/Social Science Attention to Class/Inequality in New Zealand:

In the preface to his splendid *A Vision Betrayed* Tony Simpson (1984) makes some pointed comments concerning the New Zealand literature in this area which somewhat echoes comments applicable to the historical studies:

..the extraordinary amount of research undertaken in New Zealand, which, after its completion never sees the light of day or if it does is confined to a narrow and essentially academic audience. This is despite it often having broad general interest and arriving at conclusions which at a direct variance with generally received beliefs. In apparent contradiction of that there are clearly some subjects of research which have in the past and which to an extent remain taboo. The most important of these seems to be the subject of class division. It is rather too rare to find thorough examinations of the socio-economic determinants of phenomena; this is becoming less the case but suggests that the dominant mythologies of any society set the agenda in research as much as in much else. In some few examples

which were examined the data sustained a socio-economic variable as the principal available explanation but the researcher, inexplicably, looked elsewhere for a conclusion. Related to these two is the question of access to sources. Much of the research is buried in specialist library and is theoretically available to all but in practical terms available to very few.

The historical sketch presented here calls attention to studies rather than retrieving their details. The section is organised as follows:

- SOL/Distribution Studies
- Ethnographic or community-based studies
- Political economic treatments
- Social psychology studies of class in the 1950s and 1960s.
- Burgeoning of class studies in the 1970s and 1980s
- The 'long haul' of s.e.s. studies in the more applied areas - education, health, welfare, recreation studies etc.
- The inter-regnum of the 1990s and 2000s: tangential and small-scale studies.

The backbone of New Zealand Social Class/Inequality studies are those concerning SOL and distributions. SOL research in New Zealand goes back to a 1893 study of family budgets carried out by the then recently formed Dept. of Labour – involving a 'sample' of family budgets which were presented in some detail. (No doubt this emulated some of the poverty studies being carried out in the UK.) SOL has been revisited quite regularly from time to time since, often through investigative committees or Commissions. And determination of SOL was built into the heart of the Arbitration and Conciliation industrial relations system. Doig and fellow investigators carried out a field study of the SOL of dairy farmers in the late 1930s whose published findings shocked the nation and in part led to the closure of the unit carrying out a series of such studies before they were completed and published (see Robb, 1987). A little later Doig's left wing sympathies were even more openly expressed in probably the first systematic study of inequalities in New Zealand.

Since then a series of studies ensued with major investigations launched in the mid-1980s by the *NZ Planning Council* and continuing with work sponsored by VUW's IPS in the late 1990s and more recently work from several government and government-related analysts. The use of official statistics was complemented with field investigations to pin down measurements (as discussed above), and then – through StatsNZ several surveys to measure wealth as well as income. Related studies, such as on fiscal

distribution have also been carried out so that the costs and benefits of government transfer activities (taxes and benefits) can be reasonably assigned to different income and age groupings.

An interest in Class/Inequality accompanied the advent of ‘proper’ social science research in New Zealand: the ethnographic monograph on *Littledene*. This and later studies of Johnsonville, and are adequately discussed in Pearson and Thorns, 1983: chapter 9. Since then, only a couple of more recent ethnographic studies come to mind – Hatch’s (1992) superb historical sociology of the Canterbury/Otago area in which he superbly deployed the imagery of one-table and two-tables lifestyles and Dominy’s (2001) study of a particular class/occupational grouping of high country lease-holders which particularly explicated the cultural meanings of their properties.

However, recently several journal articles report studies in which the lived experiences of various class-related groupings are examined.

In the early 1950s quantitative work began – in the Wairarapa – to develop understandings of class and rankings of occupations through surveys. Congalton conducted several studies and developed the Congalton-Havighurst scale – although this was criticised for mainly applying a US categorisation onto the New Zealand situation without much finessing. In the early New Zealand sociology readers, appropriate chapters were able to report a busy mini-industry of studies on class-related topics. Vellekoop (1969) notes a range of studies including her own monograph into occupational mobility aspirations. And the first significant international sociological publication on New Zealand concerned the impact of occupational mobility on suicide rates. Over these few decades a ‘community survey’ tradition developed, particularly at VUW but also at other New Zealand universities’ sociology departments such as Peter Davis’s early work out of the Canterbury department and Barry Smith from the Auckland department. Occupations of respondents was a standard item in questionnaires and at least one publication on occupational mobility was one result.

These concerns with class were swept up shortly thereafter into Pitt’s (1977) collection. This covered essays which nicely reflected then-current work on an extensive agenda:

- D. Pitt's "Are There Social Classes in New Zealand?"
- E. Olsen's account of nineteenth-century social classes
- J. Macrae's income distribution & poverty
- D. Thorns’s urbanization & suburbanization

- C. V. Baldock on occupational choice & parental social class.
- C. Macpherson on ethclass, and
- D. Bedggood's Working class self-awareness.

However, reviews were critical as well as appreciative.

Shortly after, Pearson & Thorns's (1983) book was published which provided a complete 'one-stop shop' review, and again leading to wider discussion (Crothers, 1985 provides reactions by Auckland sociologists).

Moreover, during the 1980s several authors essay a more Marxist approach (e.g. Stephen, 1975) while other authors provided a broader political economic interpretation. Several other empirical studies ensued, carrying this agenda forward. The culmination of this fairly active period of work on New Zealand class/inequality was the Wilkes et al. (1985) attempt to seriously invoke the EO. Wright schema in carrying out a large-scale survey of New Zealand, with some of the authors providing themselves as the foot-soldiers for the task of questionnaire delivery and collection: but a full report was never published.

Sociological attention then became orientated elsewhere, particularly into the issues concerning ethnicity and migration engendered by political and cultural developments. Academic class/inequality studies in New Zealand were then mainly reduced to a trickle of studies – many historical or chapter treatments in introductory texts – together with some applied sociological work.

'Rogernomics' (during the 1980s) involved a major shift of resources tilting against the working class in favour of allowing high class levels to accumulate more resources. In turn, this generated counteracting research work, both in government and from NGOs. The Ministry of Works & Development (MWD) set up a social impact unit which carried out studies of unemployment and related fallout from the 'reforms'. As already mentioned, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) initiated a programme monitoring household inequality which gradually picked up momentum generating a series of Standard of Living surveys and scale development to measure deprivation etc. Alongside these was a disparate array of 'small studies' on aspects of poverty and hardship. Some of these were carried out by action groups or by Commissions and Committees of Inquiry. Medical social research generated a series of Deprivation atlases as well as the scales used to produce them. At one point a vigorous argument erupted which involved (or could be interpreted as) the possible reduction of ethnicity to social class when it was pointed out that Māori differences nearly disappeared statistically when controlled for measures

of social class. Extending the government programme of concern with poor social outcomes led to the emergence of Social Indicator studies, which attempted to measure a wider array of socioeconomic outcomes (see Cotterell and Crothers, 2011).

Utilising the various updated socio-economic (s.e.s.) scales a steadily accumulating array of applied social research routinely deployed s.e.s. as a measure in their studies – medical, education, welfare and even political – although such studies were carried out in several areas quite independent of each other and no overall inventory of findings has yet been attempted.

Roper (1995: 79, 80) summarised the scene in the mid-1990s. He begins by stressing the continuing importance of class more generally:

..the central argument...is that New Zealand society is fundamentally stratified by class and that class inequality, class interests, and class struggle are central both to the overall organisation of this society and its polity. Class matters. Whether we are conscious of it or not, it shapes our lives in profound ways.”

..and more specifically (p. 83) ...other important empirical manifestations of class inequality, including the growth of poverty during the 1980s and 1990s, the rise of unemployment, the deterioration of the housing conditions of the poor, the restriction of working class ‘life chances’ for health, education, and travel, alienation in the workplace and in society, the prevalence of competition, accumulation, and material acquisitiveness, and the extent of industrial accidents and violence in capitalist societies”.

He then provides an incisive critique of the lack of attention to class in New Zealand sociological writing (p. 79):

Although it is understandable that those on the political right, such as the Treasury, the Business RoundTable, and the National Party, seek to deny that society is characterised by class inequality, many of those on the left have also failed explicitly to discuss class inequality and conflict. E.g. the terms ‘class; and ‘class struggle’ appear no more frequently in Kelsey’s (1993, 1995) otherwise valuable critiques of Rogernomics than in the Treasury brief upon which that program of reform was based. The feminist literature in New Zealand pays scant regard to the interconnections between gender and class – even DuPlessis (1993) seem reluctant to conceptualise socio-economic inequality explicitly in terms of class. And Awatere (1984) in her seminal text on Māori nationalism, fails to provide a systematic consideration of the class dimension to Māori subordination.

..and more specifically he refers to New Zealand sociological writing (p.96):

Somewhat surprisingly, given the healthy size of the discipline of sociology in New Zealand, the empirical research and literature on class inequality is sparse and the quality of the available literature is highly uneven. Pearson and Thorns (1983, 1986) provide the most sophisticated neo-Weberian analysis of New Zealand's class structure during the post-war era, while Stevens (1978) remains the most sophisticated Marxist analysis. Bedggood (1980) provides a valuable analysis of the historical emergence of capitalist class relations during the 19th century, but his analysis of the changing class structure during the 20th century fails completely to deal systematically with the available statistical data. Wilkes (1990) attempts empirically to operationalise Wright's theoretical mode through a NZ survey but generated results that can be described as questionable at best.

Some studies in political economy have paralleled these developments. These include some case studies of political action from business interests (peak bodies) and considerable analysis of 'rich lists' and directorship and share ownership data, since the rich like (or have a commercial need) to obtain information about each other.

Finally, over the last couple of decades the study of class has been decked out through some diagonally/orthogonally couched attempts which it is worth noting in more detail.

James and Saville-Smith in their *Gender, Culture & Power* (1989) argue that there are three forms of inequality or oppressive relationship – sex, class and race – and that one should not be “.. presented as more basic, more important, and, consequently, as taking political priority or precedence in the struggle for the fair society (p.2). They review in their introduction proponents of the various key points and point out that each on their own is inadequate as an explanation (p.6). They argue that inequalities are more than emergent from ‘subjective individual interactions between oppressor and oppressed’ but rather “..inequalities of race, class and sex emerge out of the very material conditions of people's lives...out of the organisation of production and reproduction.”

Having raised the question of how the three dimensions relate together they intend in their book to: “...explore the notion that New Zealand is a ‘gendered culture’, a culture in which the structures of masculinity and femininity are central to the formation of society as a whole (p.6)” and that “.. the gender culture should be challenged because it enables hierarchies of sex, race, and class to be maintained”. Expanding further on this conception they suggest New Zealand is:

..a culture in which the intimate and structural expressions of social life are divided according to gender. Notions of masculinity and femininity are a pervasive metaphor which shape not merely relations between the sexes, but are integral to the systematic maintenance of other structures of inequality as well. Inequalities of sex, race, and class in New Zealand are tied together by and expressed at a cultural level through the organization of gender relations.

There is a constant struggle between the male world of mateship and the female world of kinship. Indeed, they see this culture as emerging from the social orders and problems of settling which required a collective societal response by the end of the 19th century. Whereas the female culture was constituted through the ‘cult of domesticity’ male culture integrated the two apparently contradictory constructions: ‘Man Alone’ and the ‘Family Man’.

Howland (2004) provides a wittily presented anthropology of ‘Middle New Zealand’ entitled ‘Lotto, long-Drops and Lolly Scrambles’. Middle New Zealand refers to the middle classes but also the geographical middle of New Zealand – the generalised experiences of New Zealand’s predominantly Pākehā urban middle classes. This is seen as a shared culture which operates as a model against which differences can be compared. He assumes “...that most members will be relatively affluent, educated to tertiary level and generally employed in white-collar jobs. Yet many blue-collar workers similarly possess the necessary wealth, learning and social sensibilities to be middle class” (p.12). New Zealand’s middle classes he sees as being characterised by ...an ethos that idealises individuality. The unfettered and vibrant expression of individualism is considered by many to be the ultimate goal of a healthy capitalist society, democracy and meritocracy... They also share the idea that education and wealth are the primary ways a person’s individuality can be creatively nurtured and expressed”. There is divergence “.. on the relative merit they attach to schooling or lucre as the ideal method for asserting their individuality”. Finally, in comparative terms New Zealand’s middle class “.. are still self-effacing about our social privilege. We often save our conspicuous displays of wealth and privilege for appropriate and compartmentalised occasions”.

In the absence of comprehensive class analysis, two market researchers, Jill Caldwell and Christopher Brown, produced in 2006 another grouping of New Zealand society which they labelled the ‘8 tribes’. These were less a measure of material distinctions such as income, occupation or property

ownership, than they were distinctions of culture and ways of life. The ‘tribes’ were:

- the North Shore tribe: achieving – ambitious, heavily mortgaged and suburban
- the Grey Lynn tribe: intellectual – highly educated frequenters of inner-city cafés
- the Balclutha tribe: staunch – down-to-earth and provincial
- the Remuera tribe: entitled – children of privilege and breeding
- the Otara tribe: community – urban, Polynesian, and focused on the family and church
- the Raglan tribe: free-spirited – laid-back hedonists
- the Cuba Street tribe: avant-garde – trendy and bohemian
- the Papatoetoe tribe: unpretentious –urban working people who like a beer with their mates.

This was not a division that arose out of tight statistical analysis, but rather a set of judgements about style. However, it appealed precisely because in a diverse society the old distinctions of class no longer successfully explained the growing differences and inequalities of New Zealand society. Money is not all that important except for the North Shore (spending) and Remuera (old money) - together with interest in titles. Relatedly, market researchers have indulged in various lifestyle segmentation studies and some of these impinge on inequalities/class (cf. Lawson and Todd, 2002).

Finally, class is not limited to a national location: Australia is also implicated in the Australasian cross-Tasman and there are also some South Pacific formations of class. Some articles have been written on the former while the later topic was reviewed in the 1987 Hooper book. Although the book does not glimpse class formation in any part of the South Pacific except Fiji it is clear that modernisation is exerting pressures on island socio-political structures. Latter, a flurry of debate has concentrated on class (non) development in Tonga.

Conclusion

We need a ‘sociology of no sociology’ (to use Harvey Franklin’s term). Because biculturalism and identity politics emerged in the 1970s and was then more generally put on the political agenda by Rogernomics as its area of ‘social conscience’ this locked-in these issues for consideration at the expense of adequate attention to Class/Inequality as an issue. Earlier, a focus on rurality had also subverted attention. On the whole in considering the literature it seems the glass is half empty rather than half full. There is a considerable scatter of

studies of social class in New Zealand, with some quite heavy concentrations at particular times. But with little cumulation. Inequality has been studied but not so much its embedding in social class. This is a difficult area leading to error and often valid critique has been aroused by studies. Much consolidation and updating are required. However, the recent emergence of interesting field studies on class and related topics (e.g. Stephens and Gillies, 2012) is encouraging. It is intended that this inventory of studies begins to outline the available stock of studies to assist in further work.

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The bibliography was garnered from a range of sources including the extant literature and updated thru on-line searches of sources including *Index New Zealand* and *Sociological Abstracts*. Because of the length of list references to some series of studies are consolidated. No dissertations/theses are included¹: nor are reviews, and coverage of the grey literature is probably limited. Chapters in books (or special issues) are not separately identified. There is some coverage of Pacific. While I am confident that the coverage is quite definitive in terms of core literature, however related literatures only sampled. Over 350 items have been identified. They stretch back to the 1890s.

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