

some instances detail may be familiar from earlier work on specific aspects of political history (most of which is now rather old), but most of the content will be familiar only to those few with a special interest in such issues. The synthesis aspect of this work is one of its great strengths.

The book is extensively illustrated and most images have detailed captions. Many of the images are new to me, including a number of fascinating election posters. There are also several extremely useful appendices. One provides a succinct chronology of key dates in the history of electoral reform. Another provides details regarding elections including dates, numbers of registered electors and turnout. A third, somewhat clumsily formatted, gives the party results by seat and percentage of vote. I can see myself strip mining these in the process of preparing lectures, always a sign that a new book meets at least one key test for an academic. A website created to supplement this book (<http://www.elections.org.nz/elections/pandr/vote/index.html>) is very well designed and adds considerable value for those interested in taking aspects of the book further. This emerging History Group model of books and websites complementing each other is to be applauded. The two media have a role in supporting rather than replacing each other; thankfully it need not be an either/or proposition.

When analysing the meaning of the story that he describes so well, Atkinson argues that the results are often a complex interaction between pragmatism and principle. This is perhaps a rather banal argument, but it is helpful to be reminded that even some of the most celebrated outcomes in expanding the franchise, where we 'led the world in democratisation of government', were not always the result of a vision of equality and the spirit of democracy we frequently like to pride ourselves on. It was at the level of analysis that I was left wanting more. What explains our pragmatism? Were New Zealanders inclined to vote by habit as Austin Mitchell suggested? How do we explain the contradiction between our self-perception as progressive and our willingness to accept a ban on communist radio broadcasts in the 1960 general election?

Some of these issues are part of a vision for a broader project on New Zealand political culture than the work Atkinson was asked to produce. Perhaps with this project having been so successfully concluded more work on New Zealand political culture can be expected.

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The Wonder Country: Making New Zealand Tourism. By Margaret McClure. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2004. 318 pp. NZ price: \$44.99. ISBN 1-86940-319-3.

TOURISM IS A MAJOR PLAYER in the New Zealand economy yet the history of tourism in this country has received little attention in books written for either academic or general audiences. For this reason *The Wonder Country: Making New Zealand Tourism* is to be welcomed. The book was commissioned by Tourism New Zealand and is a history of the government's involvement in tourism. It provides a descriptive account of the way New Zealand tourism has been developed and marketed for international visitors by governmental agencies. Episodic case studies are provided to propel that narrative in an engaging and interesting way. The book is also lavishly illustrated, which not only illuminates the text but gives an indication of the changes that have taken place in New Zealand society. It would be easy to criticize the book for not including domestic tourism, which has always been of greater value to the New Zealand economy than international tourism, but that would be churlish as governmental policy and particularly the policies of Tourism New Zealand and its predecessors over the last 100 years have not been primarily concerned with what local tourists do or want.

The events described are primarily chronological. The first chapter starts at the end of the nineteenth century and each subsequent chapter takes us on another ten or 15 years. A number of themes run through the book, including the scenic nature of tourism in New Zealand and the mix of what John Urry calls the 'Tourism Gaze' with what Paul Cloke and Harvey Perkins refer to as the 'tourism performance'. Throughout the twentieth century New Zealand promoted the unspoilt nature of the environment coupled with the opportunity to indulge in activities in places of spectacular scenery. The opening sentence of chapter 1, for example, states that 'For the Victorian traveller and novelty-seeker, New Zealand's difference lay in its landscape'. This has been added to with the promotion and commodification of Maori culture as a tourism product. Indeed, Thomas Donne, the first superintendent of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, considered Maori to be an important part of the attraction of Rotorua and the history of Maori involvement in tourism is another theme covered as governmental attitudes towards both tourism and Maori have changed over the years.

All the themes, both explicitly and implicitly, are of interest to the student of both tourism and social history. McClure's description of the type of international tourists who visited New Zealand in the latter part of the nineteenth century is very similar to the 'interactive' tourist that Tourism New Zealand is trying to attract today — well educated, financially successful, long stay visitors who are travelling 'for diversion and to escape the ennui of urban life' (p.9). Other themes include the debate over the preservation of native flora and fauna which is linked to New Zealand's appeal as an adventure destination. In this respect it would have been nice if McClure had picked up the links between domestic and international tourism. The hunting that was promoted for international tourists at the start of last century is now mainly undertaken by local people and an anathema to the clean, green, environmentally friendly image that is promoted overseas.

Governmental policies also affected other aspects of tourism throughout the century. After World War II hotel owners were expected to provide similar working conditions and overtime rates as other industries. This resulted in rigid meal times and guests being hurried through their meals so that the staff could get off work by 7pm. The quality and variety of food was low and service industries were considered demeaning forms of employment. The first hotel and catering school set up by the government and industry to improve service quality failed because of a lack of applicants. In addition the hospitality industry had to negotiate price controls, import restrictions and building and employment regulations. The general attitude to tourists who complained was that they should stay at home.

What comes through very clearly is the way deregulation has changed the face of New Zealand international tourism. In this respect the book is clearly written from a contemporary perspective. The labour and import restrictions before the fourth Labour government are presented with amazement without any consideration of why they may have occurred. In the same way, the socio-political climate of each age affected the attitudes of the main actors, and some of these actors had very powerful personalities. Throughout the last 150 years New Zealand has been more than a tourist destination. Tourism has fitted within the social context of both people and policy-makers. For example, attempts to make Tongariro National Park a game park for rich foreign visitors and to anglicize the landscape were met with a variety of responses based on the purpose of these parks — whether they should exist for profit, conservation or recreation. These arguments, which continue today, have developed and changed as a result of changing mores. It is here, perhaps, that the book could have been developed. There is very little analysis provided. A major part of brand New Zealand is the unspoilt nature of the countryside and adventure activities. These have developed as a result of what has happened in the past to create a distinctly New Zealand lifestyle. How this has occurred should be addressed.

There are a number of minor errors and quibbles with the book. The Pacific Area Travel Association is called the Pacific Air Travel Association on one occasion. Whalewatch Kaikoura is referred to as an ecotourism product which is not a claim that Whalewatch themselves make. In fact any form of nature tourism from the 1980s onwards is called ecotourism. Some terminology, such as SARS, is not explained. While this may be acceptable now, it may not be the case in the future. Similarly aspects of New Zealand culture for which implicit knowledge is required may not be understandable to a non-New Zealand audience.

Nevertheless, McClure provides an excellent starting point for the history of New Zealand tourism. The narrative is lively and provides plenty of incentive for further study. This, hopefully, will include more work on domestic tourism.

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Our Islands, Our Selves: A History of Conservation in New Zealand. By David Young. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2004. 298 pp. NZ price: \$59.95 ISBN 1-877276-94-4.

THIS HANDSOMELY PRODUCED BOOK provides a scholarly and comprehensive synthesis of the history of conservation in these remote isles. As such it represents a very real contribution to the newly emerging field of environmental history in particular, while also constituting a significant addition to New Zealand historiography in general. It is certain to serve as an indispensable reference work for many years to come.

There is little that is new in *Our Islands, Our Selves*, but Young has synthesized the work of Ross Galbreath, Michael Roche, Geoff Park, Paul Star, Lynn Lochhead, Robin Hodge, Les Molloy, Neville Peat and many others in expert fashion. The book is particularly strong on context. Each part of the finely crafted narrative is explained in satisfying depth. Young is a good and sometimes clever writer ('Romanticism, child of the enlightenment and protégé of nineteenth-century intellectual life, was a strange foundling in the challenging landscape of Victorian New Zealand') apart from the odd occasion when he tries a little too hard to massage the complexities of the past ('Marsh, often referred to as a "dessionationist", argued that indiscriminate forest clearing meant degradation of landscape and civilisation — old and new . . . His was a kind of "Rome wasn't silted in a day" approach'). Well-chosen illustrations amplify the text and small box inserts add details on key people and events (even if I find that these additions tend to distract the reader's attention from the main text). The balance of coverage is sensible and appropriate (patterns of antiquity; Maori; transforming landscape and identity, 1790–1870; dawning awareness, 1870–1905; reserving remnants, 1905–1945; sleepers awake, 1945–1965; the price of progress, 1965–1985; citizens of a living landscape, 1985–2003) apart from spending more time than is necessary on pre-human history given that there are many excellent books on this subject. Equally important, Young's primary concern is with environmental rather than ecological history, a distinction that he needed to discuss a little more fully. Despite this quibble Young's energy and powers of organization have opened up many new areas for postgraduate inquiry (examining the relationship between first-wave feminism and concern with conservation comes immediately to mind) and no one need ever again believe that conservation started in the 1960s.

The few responses which follow reflect Young's success in meeting his target audience and result from his ability to write so well to task. Indeed it would be very useful if he replied in essay or article form where he is less concerned with maintaining a powerful