

testimonies contain wonderful ethnographic descriptions of local social life. Nowhere is this more apparent than in their observations on attitudes towards alcohol, gender roles, and race relations. In an incisive reading of the evidence, Hutching notes the existence of 'strong contradictory elements' in New Zealand opinion: 'they had a great deal of admiration for things British, but appeared to have an inferiority complex about their country — perhaps a hangover from the colonial days — and many immigrants noticed that they did not encourage what they perceived to be criticism of "God's Own Country"' (pp.139–40).

Perhaps the most important contribution of this fine book is methodological. Hutching blends together a variety of research strategies such as oral histories, social surveys, and archival research. What makes this work so valuable to students of migration studies is that she documents the entire research process and appends questionnaire and interview schedules. This will enable other scholars to repeat these procedures in order to resolve particular research questions or establish cross-cultural comparisons. Above all, this study shows how these techniques can be applied to construct an actor-centred immigration history in which personal narratives provide an alternative perspective on the past. Megan Hutching has succeeded in producing an excellent account of British assisted migration to New Zealand and an extremely useful blueprint for future researchers.

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New Zealand Politics and Social Patterns: Selected Works by Robert Chapman. Edited and introduced by Elizabeth McLeay. Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1999. 369 pp. NZ price: \$49.95. ISBN 0-86473-361-5.

ROBERT CHAPMAN was Professor of Political Studies at the University of Auckland for 25 years from 1964. He came to the post as an established poet as well as an historian and social commentator, so it was no wonder that he called his new department Political Studies rather than the more Teutonic and American Political Science. As a teacher he nurtured such luminaries as Helen Clark and Phil Goff, as well as Professor Elizabeth McLeay, who has edited and introduced this sterling volume. I use the word sterling for several reasons. You treasure and polish sterling. You add sterling writings to your bookshelf for future reference and contemplation.

I came to appreciate the timelessness of sterling writings some years ago when, in preparation for a conference paper, I consulted the first essay republished in this book, 'Fiction and the Social Pattern: Some Implications of Recent New Zealand Writing'. Published in *Landfall* in 1952, Chapman's article has stood the test of time well. In it he was positive and optimistic and saw clearly that artists and imaginative writers are often the most perceptive political and social commentators in any age. As an historian he acknowledged, without judgement, that our Anglo-Celtic settlers had brought more than material baggage with them. He thought it particularly significant that much of white New Zealand's immigration was in the 20 years 1861–1881. The settlers came, on the whole, from the agricultural labourer and working classes, and 'they came from the nadir of the industrial revolution'. They believed in the Protestant work ethic, and they came in the hope and expectation of a better life: 'Many if not most prospered only to a minor degree, and some not at all, but the proportion of success was infinitely greater than in the lands they left and more than enough for the myth'. Chapman went on in this

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article to write with insight about the pattern of family life in New Zealand. He thought it significant that although the culture was overtly patriarchal, in fact within the family reality tended to be otherwise. He was observant enough to note that he could not recall 'one significant novel where the European father is treated as the dominating figure in the home, or where a fair degree of tension between the parents is not recorded'. Chapman also noted 'A sour discordant ground-tone in much of New Zealand literature' (and life?) and admitted that novelists tended to focus on rebels, loners and those at odds with authority. So what's new?

It was as a political commentator to a generation — on television as well as in the printed word — that Chapman was most well known and will be most remembered. Given that ours is an intimate democracy — we have only two degrees of separation rather than the proverbial six — we have been blessed by the wisdom, common sense and larger vision of some of our earlier masters of the small screen — John Roberts, Austin Mitchell, Reggie Harrison, Robert Chapman and a few others. They reminded us of our better selves. Chapman mastered the minutiae of electoral returns and the detail of polling booths and he was fascinated by the machinery of democracy. He never lost sight, however, of what it was all really about: 'The possibility here of a truly human ease and depth of living, and an attack on the distortions produced by an irrelevant puritanism of misplaced demands and guilts'.

I am delighted to have this collection of Chapman's ruminations bound in a single volume. Over a long and thoughtful life he has been a true scholar in the sense that he has given himself time to think before committing words to paper. For that reason, as much as for the quality of his mind, his writings have a continuing relevance as we wrestle with the shared task of forging a meaningful collective identity, a humane and civilized society, and a fair and just polity.

Aristotle's *Politics* is thought to be a compilation of his lecture notes. This book is a compilation of the most timeless of Chapman's published pieces. I'll warrant that generations of students who passed through his classes will recognize recurring themes of enduring questions, values and beliefs. Chapman served his students memorably, and in bringing together this compilation of his writings, McLeay has gifted all engaged citizens.

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Christchurch Changing: An Illustrated History. By Geoffrey W. Rice with Jean Sharfe. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 1999. 172 pp. NZ price: \$29.95. ISBN 0-908812-53-1.

AT THE END of his introduction to *Historic Christchurch: a Walking Tour*, John Wilson admitted that, notwithstanding everything that he had said, he imagined that his readers would be left with the impression of an English city of grey stone buildings. Despite the wonderful picture of the statue of a po-faced Godley bound neck and foot to the back of a truck making its way across Cathedral Square, that, too, is Geoffrey Rice's verdict on a city that he feels 'has the charm and convenience of an English town'.

Christchurch Changing is the popular market's share of the 1993 'Christchurch 2000 History Project'. Stablemate *Southern Capital*, John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall's collection of scholarly essays, will cater for the academic market. Behind the scenes, the Christchurch 2000 History Project has created an electronic database of books, articles