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**How Can Public Geography Reignite Geography
and Reclaim the Generative Potential
of a Geography Education?**

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in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Geography has long been distinguished by its grounded approach to producing knowledge centred on understanding processes as they materialise in place. There has been an almost inherent publicness to its problem identification, research questions and field-based methodologies. This was reflected in close relationships between the discipline and post-war development states across the world, especially in countries like New Zealand with resource-based economies that required the particular interdisciplinary approaches at the core of geographical knowledge. However, this was all to change in the last fifteen years of the 20th century. Geography was forced to recognise and respond to the full extent of social diversity and the emergence through the cultural turn of the disruptive new knowledge approaches required to address difference in a rapidly changing social world. The pre-defined relevance afforded the discipline by its easy relationship with national and regional governments founded on development projects disappeared with the rise of the neoliberal state. New ways of practising geography, new knowledge, new audiences and new ways of reaching them were now required. These challenges materialised in new pressures on foundational divisions within the discipline and narratives of crisis, especially as the discipline became pulled apart by changes in the institutional structures of universities and new demands to demonstrate relevance in different ways. This thesis examines the concept of 'Public Geography', which has emerged in stuttering form over the last fifteen years as a response.

The thesis the practices of New Zealand academic geographers are made the object of this thesis which seeks to identify a public geography from a practice-based reading of the discipline. It asks whether there is public geography in New Zealand and what this looks like. It aims to highlight the publicness of academic

geography and to present this public geography as a platform for demonstrating the discipline's generative potential and reigniting its values and self-confidence. At the core of the research lies an in-depth analysis of what academic geographers actually do, derived from in-depth interviews with roughly half of the country's academic geographers, an interrogation of the CVs and institutional profiles of geographers, and a series of interviews with teachers, professional geographers and others working in the public spaces in which geographical knowledge is put to work. I found that geographers carry out a vast array of practices in a range of public spaces, but do not tend to aggregate these practices into a conception of public geography, even under the pressure of having to narrate the impact of their research brought on by performance assessment regimes. I also found that they do not attend as fully as they might to representing their work in these public spaces, either individually or collectively, as geography. Yet, I find that they remain confident in the value of their work, as do others with whom they engage. In short the thesis finds that there is a considerable untapped potential in the idea of building a project of public geography for a discipline damaged by institutional change and suffering from deep doubts about its collective identity. The findings suggest that simply being prepared to announce and label what they do as geography would be both a pragmatic and progressive first step towards providing the discipline with the security and recognition it deserves.

DEDICATION

To Cushla,

I love you and thank you for your support, encouragement and strength, without which I could not have achieved this ambition. The next five years are yours.

To Imogen and Fletcher,

Be ambitious, follow your dreams and have the courage to make the hard decisions even if it means upsetting someone. Encourage, support and love each other and use your God-given talents. To achieve your ambitions requires self-belief, determination, dedication, resilience and enthusiasm because life will not always run smoothly.

Do not be afraid to make mistakes as your best learning will come from these.

Natural enthusiasm is the greatest thing in the world, you are nothing without it.

I love you both.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAG	American Association of Geographers	NCEA	National Curriculum of Educational Achievement
AASSRC	Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
AGTA	Auckland Geography Teachers' Association	NIDEA	National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis
AO	Achievement objectives	NRO	Nominated Research Outputs
AUCER	Australian Centre for Cultural Environmental Research	NSC	National Science Challenges
AUT	Auckland University of Technology	NZBoGT	New Zealand Board of Geography Teachers
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	NZC	New Zealand Curriculum
BE	Biological Economies	NZGB	New Zealand Geographical Board
BRCSS	Building Research Capability in Social Sciences	NZGS	New Zealand Geographical Society
CFRCS	Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in the Conduct of Science	NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
CRI	Crown Research Institute	PANZ	Population Association of New Zealand
CV	Curriculum Vitae	PBRF	Performance Based Review Fund
DEVORA	Determining Volcanic Risk in Auckland	PIS	Participant Interview Sheet
DORA	Declaration on Research Assessment [San Francisco]	PSPE	Post Structural Political Economy
DOC	Department of Conservation	QS	Quacquarelli Symonds
DOE	Department of Education	RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
EAR	Excellence in Research in Australia	REF	Research Excellence Framework
ECPG	Early Career and Post Graduate	RGS-IBG	Royal Geographical Society–Institute of British Geographers
ERSC	Economic and Social Research Council	RMA	Resource Management Act
eSocSci	Engaged Social Sciences Hui Rangahau Tahī	RSGS	Royal Scottish Geographical Society
GIS	Geographic Information Systems	RSNZ	Royal Society of New Zealand
GNS	Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Limited	SCUFN	Sub Committee on Undersea Feature Names
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England	SENV	School of Environment
IAN	Ireland After NAMA	TLG	Teaching and Learning Guidelines
IAG	Institute of Australian Geographers	TVNZ	Television New Zealand
ICSU	International Council for Science	UAHPEC	University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee
IF	Impact Factor	UK	United Kingdom
IGU	International Geographic Union	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change	UNGIWG	United Nations Geographic Information Working Group
ISSC	International Social Science Council	USA	United States of America
MBIE	Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment	VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
MCH	Ministry for Culture and Heritage (Manatu Taonga)	WGGRN	Women and Gender Geographies Research Network
MOE	Ministry of Education		
NAMA	National Assets Management Agency		

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

My major satisfaction rests on the fact that more than a million New Zealanders regularly watched “Landmarks.”
(Cumberland, 1990)

1.1 “Landmarks”

On 21st August 1981, the first of ten episodes of the television series *Landmarks* was broadcast on Television New Zealand (TVNZ). Written and presented by the University of Auckland’s foundation Professor of Geography (Figure 1.1), Kenneth B. Cumberland, the documentary examined “human intrusion on the New Zealand landscape and how it has been transformed by the destructive and constructive urges of mankind” (Cumberland, 1981). It addressed multiple themes and developed key geographical imaginaries that it wove into an environmentally-aware modernity project of material and regional economic development and notions of New Zealand national identity (Howie & Lewis, 2014). Modelled on the 1972 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) series, *America*, *Landmarks* was a rare New Zealand expression of public intellectualism through geography. Indeed, if the aim of broadcasting, as explained by former Director General of the BBC, Lord Reith (1924), is to “inform, educate and entertain”, *Landmarks* achieved this on a number of fronts. It attracted the largest viewing audience ever achieved by a local documentary series (Boyd-Bell, 1985) and received a 1982 Feltex Award for Best Television Documentary. The book, *Landmarks: Kenneth B Cumberland Tells How New Zealanders Remade Their Landscape* which was developed in conjunction with the series, was published by *Readers’ Digest* and sold 70,000 copies (Figure 1.2).

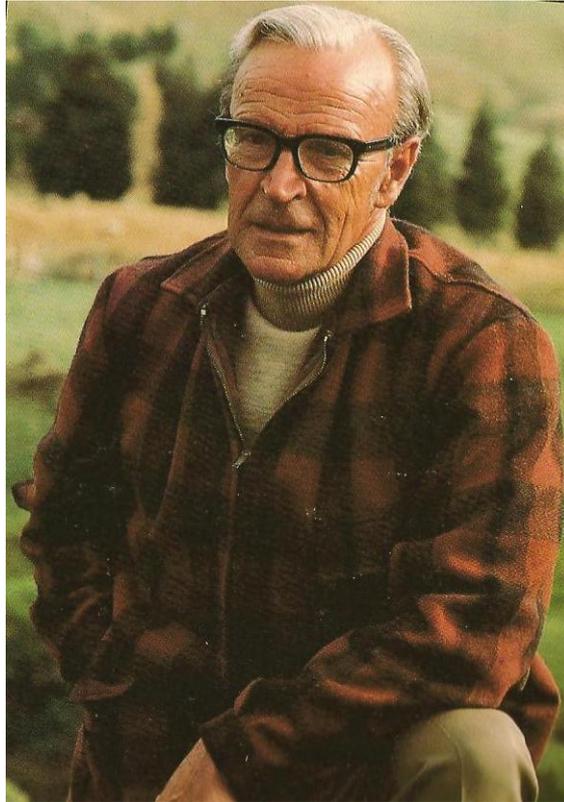


Figure 1.1: Professor Kenneth Brailey Cumberland

Source: Boyd-Bell, R. (1985). *New Zealand Television: The First 25 Years*. Reed Methven Publishers Ltd, Auckland.

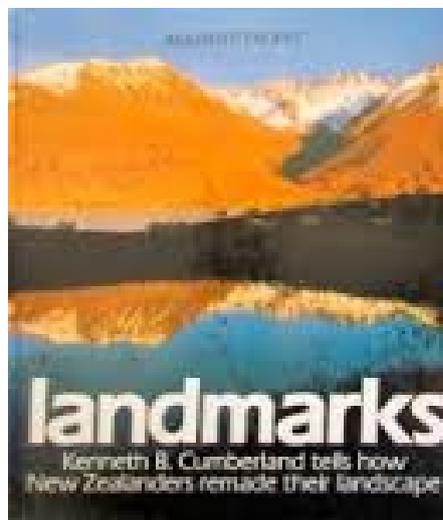


Figure 1.2: Cover of the book, “Landmarks”

A teacher kitset which accompanied the initial series, was distributed to schools. The increased availability of video technology allowed the Department of Education (DOE) to distribute a video of the series to schools across the country in 1984. A series of posters, such as the one in Figure 1.3 accompanied the video, with one poster containing multiple images for each episode. The series thus performed much further

work in the discipline of geography and in shaping the geographical imaginations of the nation. The programme itself was the only extended and theorised statement of nationhood and human-geo/biophysical relations available at the time and in this format—particularly one that gave meaning to and linked New Zealand’s social histories, landscapes, identities and economy. The series screened during a period when New Zealand was attempting to shake off its ‘cultural cringe’ and when a swathe of drama productions such as *The Governor* (1977) and *Children of Fire Mountain* (1979), which had New Zealand landscape and history as their backdrop, were being broadcast. *Landmarks* placed geography in New Zealand homes.

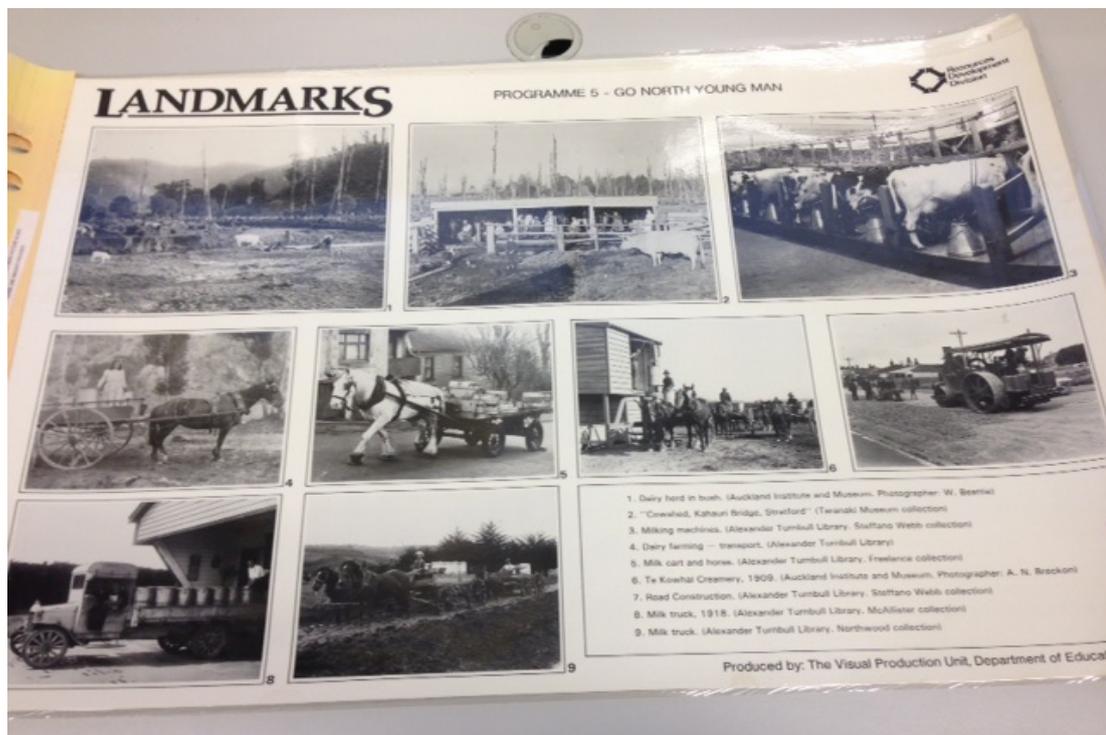


Figure 1.3: A poster of programme 5 of “Landmarks”

Source: University of Auckland Library, Epsom

I had been teaching geography in New Zealand high schools for ten years. My enthusiasm is for a geography that is a dynamic and ever-changing discipline which requires a kaleidoscopic rather than a specialised knowledge base. Geography, as Mitchell (2008) observes, is “a living subject that reflects natural and cultural processes, rapid and slow, local to global, complex and chaotic, current and future orientated.” *Landmarks* sparked the geographical imaginations of my students when I presented selected clips from the series to my Year 9, 10, 11 and 13 geography classes at St. Peters College in Auckland. This led me to ask, “What was it that was engaging

them?” Was it the material itself, the imaginaries of New Zealand that it conjured up, Cumberland, the technical skills of the filmmaker, or some undefined other?

These experiences have led me to ponder whether lessons might be drawn from asking these questions for the teaching of geography, the promotion of geography, public intellectualism more broadly or even theoretically about the grip of particular geographical imaginaries. They connect with a literature concerned with the future of discipline (Castree, 2011) and with the values of teaching geography (Lambert & Morgan, 2010). I came to ask whether geography had a public role to play today and what it would take to think through and deliver appropriate imaginaries in ways that would have cultural and political purchase.

The iconic nature of the series allowed Jeremy Wells to parody Cumberland’s presentation style in parts of the TV programme, *The Unauthorised History of New Zealand* (Baker, Braunias & Hill, 2005), which introduced *Landmarks* to a new generation. Extracts from *Landmarks* are available on a number of websites which have educational aims and narrate New Zealand including Te Ara: The encyclopaedia of New Zealand (www.teara.govt.nz), New Zealand On Screen (www.nzonscreen.com/title/landmarks-1981/series) and the national film archives, Nga Taonga Sound & Vision (www.ngataonga.org.nz). It is worth asking whether there exists another potential ‘space of credibility’ (Wilson & Henry, 2011) for building geography in the public sphere and guiding collective geographical imaginaries. Assuming the existent potential, one needs to consider what a reconceptualised and remade *Landmarks* could look like, how it could be developed and deployed, and to what effect. The material is still deeply relevant to the negotiation of national identity, which is arguably the geographer’s guiding *raison d’être*.

The content and tone of *Landmarks* was driven by Cumberland, who was both writer and presenter. He was a lecturer, academic, farmer, local body politician, geographical politician and public intellectual. Billig (1995) used the term ‘multiphrenia’ to describe the splitting of the individual into a multiplicity of self-investments, and this could appropriately be applied to Cumberland. *Landmarks* made Cumberland a household name in the early 1980s and circulated his geographical imaginaries widely. His death on 17th April 2011 triggered reflections not only upon his contribution to New Zealand geography (see Pawson, 2011), but also on whether

geographers can once again somehow grip the public imagination in a way that animates the discipline and defines it, for both public and itself. He was one of a small number of influential New Zealand public intellectuals. It is this performance of public geography that will form a key object of analysis for this project, particularly as it is expressed through the production of *Landmarks* which was in many ways the culmination of his life's work. In closing the first episode of the series, Cumberland reflects on his good fortune to have spent his life studying the mark which man had made on New Zealand, a task he portrayed as 'congenial' and one which he had and still 'savoured.'

1.1.1 Thirty years on: Changing material context

Much has changed since *Landmarks*, establishing a key context for examining the geographical imaginaries of the series and raising questions about its legacy for practising a public geography. Geo/bio-physical and cultural landscapes have been reshaped by new political projects, new technologies, altered environmental values, new investment trajectories, and new socio-environmental and political commitments. The introduction of the Resource Management Act (RMA) in 1991, accompanied by the removal of assets from state ownership and the hollowing out of the state have created a very different framework for land-based national development. Different actors and different governance regimes are now at work directing some very different investment trajectories (Coombes & Campbell, 1996; Lewis *et al.*, 2013). The development of tourism as our second largest industry has altered our internal infrastructure and provided new forms of engagement with landscapes and environments, new economic possibilities and levels of interaction with international values and investors (Brown & Brabyn, 2012).

The Treaty of Waitangi Act (1975) has fundamentally altered land ownership and iwi are now significant investors in New Zealand landscapes. Māori cultural values have become much more significant shapers of landscapes across multiple spheres of environmental management and governance (Pawson & Brooking, 2002; Menzies & Ruru, 2011; Arunachalam, 2012). The ownership, guardianship and utility attached to New Zealand landscapes have changed, yet much has stayed the same, notably our reliance on productivist agriculture (Haggerty *et al.*, 2009). In summary, geography must now understand and seek to influence New Zealand's 21st century evolution.

Meanwhile, geography too has changed. The ‘cultural turn’ in geography of the late 1980s fundamentally altered the disciplinary landscape from that which existed at the time that *Landmarks* was created. In their influential explanations of ‘the turn’ in *Geographical Imaginaries*, Derek Gregory (1994) and Kitchin & Thrift (2009) celebrated the opening up of geographic thought to cultural and continental social theory. They urged geography to confront the deep questions asked of it and talk about a decisive break in disciplinary traditions and trajectories.

The arrival of new ideas from literary, cultural and science technology studies resulted in a re-examination of the discipline and its core concepts. It stimulated a deep reflection on the concept of culture by geographers. Valentine (2001) suggests that the holistic, almost functionalist representational dimensions of the relationship between culture and process led to a closure of some avenues of traditional discourse. One crucial example of this was the reconceptualising of landscape as a ‘way of seeing’ or a ‘text’ or a ‘symbolic form’ or in ‘terms of iconography’ (see Cosgrove & Daniels, 1989). The ‘cultural turn’ has led geographers to prioritise different objects for study and challenge the categories they use for explaining the world (nation, region, scale, environment and others). As environmental and post-colonial scholars have incorporated these ideas into their work, they have in turn challenged the relationships between human and non-human actors, the masculinism, colonialism and other situatedness of their gaze. The ‘cultural turn’ directed challenges to the heart of Cumberland’s geographic project of late settler, modernist and land-based development.

Geography in New Zealand is positioned to take alternative disciplinary directions (Le Heron, R., 2013). Institutional landscapes have shifted as a new era of inter-disciplinary co-operation and knowledge production takes root within academic institutions (Lau & Pasquini, 2008; Evans & Randalls, 2008). Historically, the discipline has had occasion to present itself as being mired with inward reflection and navel gazing with regard to its contemporary and future relevance (Wright, 1947; Harvey, 1969; Gregory, 1994; Thrift, 2002). Since becoming a disciplinary subject, geography has confronted theoretical and philosophical debates which some view as a disciplinary strength (Johnston, 1993; Turner, 2002; Baerwald, 2010). The title of Livingstone’s 1992 book, *The Geographical Tradition: History of a Contested Enterprise*, adheres to the long history of geographical epistemological debates. The

disappearance of 'Geography' as a named institutional home in New Zealand universities suggests that today's challenges present a special edge.

The challenges confronting the discipline are multi-layered from the micro to the macro. Castree (2011) argues that the challenges on this occasion are not geo-exclusive but are framed by the "market demand for geography." He identifies four structural alterations: university financial pressures, fee-paying students, students as consumers and the gap between school and university geography, which require geographers and geography departments to 'shape' their market as opposed to react to it. Barnes (2011) titled his article, "This Is like Déjà Vu All over Again", and noted the correlation between the advent of the quantitative revolution in the 1960s and the push for geography to get on the "autobahn of science" to remain relevant in providing solutions for the planet. He argues that the disciplinary strengths of methodological diversity and pluralism and not a restrictive relationship with science will help geography to maintain its contemporary relevance.

In an age of specialisation, geography's strength has also been its greatest weakness, an ambition and gaze "absurdly vast" (Bonnett, 2008) especially for a neoliberal moment of competing specialised knowledges. School teachers' roles have changed markedly and an increased emphasis on competencies has reduced teachers to what Robertson (2005) labels "solution assemblers" and Winter (2012) terms "knowledge brokers." Specialist geography teachers are rarely involved in the pedagogical debates surrounding curriculum development and have become detached from changes in their discipline. The increasing autonomy of schools to select from an expanded curriculum, combined with the political drive of neoliberal states to encourage school and tertiary students to focus on what Barnes (2011) terms "the big S of science" has left one to ponder: "what is the purpose of geography?" (Lambert & Morgan, 2010; Morgan, 2012).

Castree (2011) infers an impending crisis in the linkage between schools and universities in England, stating that: "most academics have little connection with pre-university geography." Morgan (2017a) provides details of the level of 'geographic illiteracy' which was disclosed by a 2012 survey of 2000 adults in the UK, commissioned for Geography Awareness week by the geographic technology company, ESRI. In the US, Morin (2013) describes the 'Roadmap' project, which aimed to increase the geographical literacy of students aged 18-24. The director of the

Royal Geographical Society Dr Rita Gardiner, acknowledges the difficulties in engaging people with poor geographical knowledge and skills to act as responsible citizens, although she argues modern technology is making the subject more relevant and teaching students 'marketable skills'. The inherent dangers in this approach are highlighted by Morin (2013) who detailed how the US survey was based on factual recall, and was partially funded by some companies whose aim was to secure economic and national benefits for the US. This brings into question who is going to benefit from the 'skills' to which Gardiner refers? What type of public do they aim to bring into being? What national interests are they attempting to serve?

Binns (2011) argues that, in spite of the best efforts of individuals, there is evidence in New Zealand of splintering between schools and universities. This is due to the institutional dislocation between schools and universities as teachers become increasingly involved in curriculum development and an academic's role becomes increasingly defined by internally-driven citation metrics. Macaulay (1988) and Roche (2011) provide detailed accounts of the books developed for school students by academic geographers and the work they carried out in preparing and marking scholarship exams. The fact that since *Landmarks* the number of resources prepared by practising academics can be counted on a single hand is a concern. A New Zealand Geographical Society (NZGS) webinar in October 2012 relating to disciplinary future argued for a more symbiotic relationship between secondary and tertiary education. Morgan (2017b) argues that in having an open and permissive curriculum with no set skills, the discipline is in danger of thumbing its nose at geographic knowledge. This risks creating a generation of students who, while initially gaining employment through their cutting edge computer-based geotechnical skills which rapidly become obsolete, leave themselves open to being characterised only by their personal geographical ignorance.

Geography in New Zealand has not collectively responded to this changing environment; this while individual geographers have continued to make themselves relevant to the job they do, the discipline as a collective has not taken this step. Thus, the discipline/subject has been left to appear dated and slightly forlorn against the new objects of study, environment and sustainability.

1.1.2 (Re)firing the geographic curiosity

In 2012 I researched and found a clip concerning moa bones on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbK0wdlxcMo>) to assist in teaching a class of Year 9 students on the subject of early New Zealand. The students clearly found the topic interesting but this was not the student-initiated ‘digital engagement’ (<http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Teaching-as-inquiry/Student-engagement>) that the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) promoted. This was a clip researched and chosen by the teacher (me) as a result of my subject knowledge. This was not stumbled upon by a student aimlessly searching cyberspace. My other four geography classes ranging from years 9 to 13 were also gripped by the topic and this colonial, bespectacled presenter resplendent in tweed jacket, occasionally a Swandri and with a distinctly English accent. My geographical curiosity (see Gade, 2011) had been piqued. The New Zealand Curriculum (2007:35) promotes “teaching as inquiry” and I wanted to understand if it was the subject matter, the use of technology or other that had captivated my students. I extended the experiment with other clips from the *Landmarks* series, which included kumara cultivation (Episode 2), the arrival of sealers and whalers (Episode 3), and the development of national transport networks (Episode 8). Cumberland’s narrative and rural images remained consistent and the students’ levels of engagement were the same. This was a New Zealand of yore—rural, white settler, modernising and state-led. This was a world of rugged landscapes being brought to heel by pioneers and a colonial nation being made.

The clips were sourced from *Te Ara – The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/video/45772/kenneth-cumberland-in-landmarks-1981>) and the “NZ on Screen” website (<http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/a-land-apart-1981/comments>). *Te Ara – The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* is run by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage (Manatū Taonga) (MCH) with the aim of “bringing New Zealand's culture and heritage online”. *Landmarks* is part of the project and, as previously stated, placed geography in New Zealand homes. The introduction to each episode stated “a personal view of the story of New Zealand” by Kenneth Cumberland and many of the imaginaries projected were vestiges of the political projects that Cumberland had waged over a long career as both an academic and public geographer. Some of the visions of geography were at odds with the academic temper of the time which was beginning to see the embryonic stages of the cultural

turn in geography and the end of the command and control narrative. Some 30 years later, the sparking of the students' geographical imaginations gave me a rare glimpse into the potential work of the discipline in public spheres. It also sparked my enthusiasm for re-engaging with geography in the university.

Shortly after, I approached Associate Professor Nick Lewis of the Auckland University Geography Department in the School of Environment. I had met him through his work with the Auckland Geography Teachers Association (AGTA) where he was involved in the annual school quiz and making presentations to geography teachers. He had also presented lectures to final year geography scholarship students, demonstrating he had an affinity, awareness and concern for school geography. The initial discussions were based around the idea of public engagement and public intellectuals and how 'geography' the discipline and subject appear to have retreated from the high water mark of *Landmarks* in the sense of public engagement. In our conversations we began to ask what work geography might perform today in public spheres from classrooms to television documentaries, and what it would take to achieve this potential. Like Morgan (2012), we also began to question the purpose of a geographical education and how to achieve that purpose in multiple spaces. Could we, for example, remake *Landmarks*? Was there still a "Geographer's Point of View", which was the title of Cumberland's (1946) inaugural lecture at Auckland University? If so, what was it, and how might it be deployed?

1.2 Research objectives

This thesis explores the nature, potential and purpose of 'public geography' in New Zealand. The intent is to examine the possibilities for revitalising geography by assessing the generative potential of 'public geography' in New Zealand today, and examining the part that public intellectualism might play in building a new, purposeful and contemporary geography. The spotlight of geographic inquiry will be trained on the discipline itself, particularly in the New Zealand context, and will pose rarely-asked questions about its contribution to public debates. The key objectives are:

- To document and assess the nature and extent of challenges facing the discipline in New Zealand today—is there a crisis and what form does it take?

- To detail the forms of ‘public geography’ practised by academic geographers in New Zealand today and assess their potential to confront the challenges facing the discipline.
- To explore the potential of public geography to revitalise, reintegrate and reignite the discipline.

To achieve these objectives and extend the literature I will ask a series of research questions:

- Where does New Zealand geography stand in 2018, and how is its relevance, purpose and potential narrated and understood at key sites of knowledge production (schools, universities, government science agencies and national media)? Is there a problem, and if so what is its nature and extent?
- What geographical imaginations are held by geographers and what geographical imaginaries do they deliver into these key sites, i.e., what does geography have to offer?
- How is ‘public geography’ understood and practised in the performance of geography in New Zealand?

To achieve these objectives requires an examination of and engagement with the literature that relates to the key concepts of discipline, geographical imaginations and imaginaries, public geography and public intellectualism, in both the wider literature and accounts of how they connect with the situatedness of New Zealand geography. The concept of a political project of knowledge production (Lewis *et al.*, 2013) is central to the way that these fields will be stitched together. It will be used to explore the intentionality of *Landmarks* and the connection between disciplinary projects and public intellectualism. Lewis *et al.* (2013) argue that the politics of creating and deploying knowledge is “commonly structured discursively and institutionally into political projects that align and marshal interests and groups”.

The literature on geographical imaginaries, while a crucial concept in much geographic writing (Wright, 1947; Said, 1978; Gregory, 1994; Massey, 1996 and 2007), is rarely made the object of geographic inquiry. By taking the examination of *Landmarks* forward to thinking about another similar 21st century public geography, I will develop the project explicitly as an exercise in enactive research (Le Heron, R. & Lewis, 2011; Carolan, 2013) and engaged public geography (Castree, 2011). In

addition I aim to advance understandings of new research methodologies and the political potential of knowledge production in geographic inquiry (Le Heron, R. & Lewis, 2011).

1.3 Thesis outline

This thesis is organised into four sections. Chapter 1 is the introduction anent individuals, events and circumstances in the genesis of the thesis. The second section comprises Chapters 2 and 3 and provides a critical overview of the literature and the methodology I employed to investigate my research questions. The third section contains Chapters 4, 5 and 6 which are empirical and detail the New Zealand context in which I collected the data and synthesise the information I gained as a result of my research. The final section, Chapter 7, provides a summary of my findings and offers avenues of exploration which have the potential to strengthen public geography within its institutional homes.

Chapter 1 outlines how, during the course of his work as a high school geography teacher, the author re-encounters the 1981 TVNZ documentary series, *Landmarks*. This prompts him to re-examine how his geographical imaginaries are deployed in his teaching craft, and more widely how geographical imaginaries are nurtured and disseminated by the discipline in the New Zealand setting. A hypothesis for a PhD thesis emerges and the chapter outlines the research objectives and questions that provide the framework for the thesis.

Chapter 2 examines the existing literature surrounding five key themes: geographical imaginaries, public geography, public intellectuals, disciplinary heritage and future prospects. The conceptual awakening of geographical imaginaries is well documented and I engage with this literature and explore the future educational opportunities and disciplinary potentialities from deploying imaginaries. The genealogy of the term ‘public geography’ is examined. Both traditional and contemporary methods employed by geographers to share geographic knowledge with academic and non-academic audiences are explored. Public intellectuals provide an individualised and distinct *modus operandi* and I examine why there is a dearth of geographers who operate in this space. Finally I explore geography’s disciplinary contortions and examine the contemporary and future relevance for the discipline.

Chapter 3 details the methodological practices I adopted. Locating the sites of geographical knowledge production within New Zealand and potential users of this knowledge preceded participant identification and recruitment. Deciding on the interview process as my primary mode of data-gathering entailed formulating and designing questions which were pertinent to my two identified groups: geographic knowledge producers and geographic knowledge users. I also decided to engage 300-level university geography students by means of a questionnaire with the aim of surveying a geography demographic whose opinions on geography are being formed as a result of teaching and learning. The granting of ethics approval allowed me to interview 54 academics, whom I class as producers of geographic knowledge, and 56 individuals who worked in schools, state organisations, media or private companies and had the opportunity to benefit from the knowledges produced.

Chapter 4 is the first of three data chapters and sets out the context in which geography is situated in New Zealand schools and tertiary educational institutions. It details the history and structures which support and promote academic geography in New Zealand and also the place of geography in the school curriculum, the number of students studying the subject and how they are assessed. The lack of clearly visible 'Geography Departments' in all but two New Zealand universities made the task of identifying academic geographers challenging. I developed eight separate criteria against which I tested individual academics, which allowed me to produce a database of those who identify as geographers. I also explored both the changing institutional and disciplinary landscape and the challenges they present and the opportunities which a changing environment always offers.

Chapter 5 is the second of the data chapters and sets out the three different forms of public geography performed by the academic geographers in New Zealand identified in Chapter 4. The three forms of practice are inward-facing, inward/outward-facing and outward-facing. I develop a table which details the eight modes of knowledge-making practices and, using the interview data from the 54 interviews I conducted with academic geographers, I interrogate each mode and demonstrate the multiplicity of ways in which academic geographers perform public geography.

Chapter 6 is the last of the three data chapters and examines the spaces in which outward-facing practices of public geography occur. I update the original spaces of the public geography diagram (Figure 2.1) which I devised in Chapter 2 and create a floral

representation of the seven spaces of engagement where geographers can practise public geography (Figure 6.1). These spaces are identified as institutional and non-institutional spaces and are not mutually exclusive. The perceived strengths of the discipline, as detailed by the academic geographers and the geography students whom I interviewed, are examined and the potential for these strengths to be deployed and produced in the spaces identified in Figure 6.1 are explored. The chapter then uses the interview data from the 46 non-academic geographers to try and detail what they view as the potential spaces of co-operation between themselves and geographers working in the academy. The chapter concludes by examining the potential for a public intellectual to emerge from the discipline of geography and promote the values of contemporary geography in an era of composite problems with multiple tiers of complexity at global, national and local levels.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 7, summarises the findings of the thesis. The institutional moves to actively encourage interdisciplinary research mean that the frequently noted strength of geography, the ability to work at the margins of disparate disciplines, has become less valuable. This coupled with the assessment matrices generating the requirement for researchers to generate impact from their research has heightened geographic anxieties relating to the discipline's future. The thesis demonstrates that public geography is more prevalent than previously thought and many geographers, simply by performing their academic jobs, participate in public practices. This body of public work, when presented as a collegiate portfolio of public geography, indicates a discipline that needs to be celebrating its vibrancy and diversity, not its imminent demise. For geography to recapture the public perception of a discipline at ease in the higher echelons of disciplinary epistemology, the key issue is the need for geographers to become more comfortable in labelling themselves, their work and that of their fellow geographers, as geography.

CHAPTER 2: A CALL FOR A NEW 'PUBLIC GEOGRAPHY'

*... geographical imaginaries state who 'we' are collectively and individually, who 'others' are, and how the world works.
Morgan (2004: 32)*

Since its inception as a stand-alone discipline in universities from the mid-19th century (Livingstone, 1992) geography has been shaped by paradigmatic shifts and institutional reconfiguration. This chapter positions recent changes in New Zealand geography within longer term shifts as well as contemporary trajectories and pressures for change, and the anxieties they generate and new opportunity spaces they open. In particular, it points to the recent call for new community-centred public geographies as a platform upon which to redefine geography at a time when its purpose and contribution are under question and its institutional integrity within universities is under severe strain.

I then remake the case for the values and enduring relevance of geography by reference to the concept of 'geographical imaginaries' which positions the production of geographical knowledge at the centre of identity, economics and politics. This section is followed by a review of recent calls for a new 'public geography' amidst debates about geography's purpose, relevance and its increasing fragmentation at the hands of intra-disciplinary realignments, university restructuring and new demands to demonstrate performance and 'social impact'. Finally I will introduce the idea of 'public geography' and consider how it is currently practised and performed in New Zealand. Allied to this is consideration of the role of the public intellectual and the work they do in disseminating knowledge and debate beyond an academic sphere.

The emphasis of this chapter is on the key concepts of geographical imaginaries and public geography, introduced above. First, geographical imaginaries offers a conceptual platform for demonstrating the potential for geography to offer insights and understandings of an increasingly complex world. Second, the chapter suggests that the inherent potential of the discipline of geography when amalgamated with geographical imaginaries, might be safeguarded, revitalised and best practised by turning its attention to 'public geography'. The florescence of academic interest in

‘public geography’ since the early 2000s when combined with intellectual acumen, is expressed in varied performances of geographical knowledge ranging from classrooms and political debates to written works and documentaries.

2.1 Geographical imaginaries: a 21st century disciplinary gaze?

The idea of a single ‘geographical imagination’ has long been used to try and identify a disciplinary essence and as a starting point for laying down a disciplinary canon (Wright, 1947). Most efforts have focused attention on the co-constitutive material processes and intersecting knowledges associated with the meeting of geo- and bio-physical phenomena and social worlds (Lowenthal, 1961). For generations of school children, geography has been defined in this way along with some reference or other to place, space, landscape and/or environment—the study of patterns in place and what brought them into being or the study of interactions between the physical and social.

Arguably, however, and despite periodic categorical statements such as Hartshorne’s (1939) *The Nature of Geography*, geography has failed to distil its essence, which has proven both its strength and its weakness (Sheppard, 2004; Le Heron & Lewis, 2011). Historians of the discipline (see Livingstone, 1992; Ogborn, 1999; Mayhew, 2015; and Barnes, 2016) recount contests over the nature of geography as a related set of imaginaries and practices that go back centuries. While the term ‘geographical imaginary’ has only recently entered the mainstream disciplinary lexicon as a way of thinking about constellations of geographical thought (Gregory *et al.*, 2009), it builds on longstanding interest in ‘geographical imaginations’ (Douglas *et al.*, 1996). In this chapter, I explore some of the twists and turns and underlying debates about what geography might be and what form of public face and engagements it might be able to generate.

2.1.1 Geographical imaginings: A conceptual awakening

A decade after Hartshorne’s 1939 landmark text and in response to an early dislocation between physical and social approaches to the discipline, Wright (1947: 9) argued for a set of essential qualities defining the disciplinary gaze, suggesting that a “geographical psychoanalysis” of his fellow geographers would reveal an individual influenced in equal measure by intellectual curiosity and aesthetic awareness of their

research environments. He recognised a “geosophy” (Wright 1947: 11) that well and truly put environmental determinism to bed and invited a study of:

the geographical ideas, both true and false, of all manner of people – not only geographers, but farmers and fishermen, business executives and poets and painters, Bedouins and Hottentots. (Wright 1947: 12)

In effect, Wright (1947) recognised that multiple geographical imaginaries were at large in the world and that we all have a geographical imagination. He embraced an openness to aesthetics ahead of its time in geographical inquiry and adopted a scholarly inclusivity that sought to erase the boundaries between the material and the imagined. He also emphasised how damaging such boundary lines and associated divisions in methodology, epistemology and research interest could be within the discipline. These materialise as on-going academic disputes between geography as humanity or social science and geography as science; prioritising culture or nature as the source of spatial change; or the deployment of qualitative or quantitative approaches to understand social change. Wright was of his time, and would have been unable to fully imagine and accept the pluriverse of different geographical gazes, such as feminist, post-structural and post-colonial, that represent contemporary geography.

By the early 1960s the contest over geography’s heart if not essence had begun to resurface in the landscape versus nature debate. Prince (1962: 22) argued further for the co-construction of culture and nature in geographic thought and practice. He observed that, “We cannot know a place until we discover its literature, its arts and its sciences; nor conversely can we understand literature or art or science without some knowledge of geography”.

Prince echoed an earlier observation by Anderson (1954) who argued that technical descriptions of landscapes and features lack the impact provided by good writers with the ability to capture people’s imagination. Landscape studies offered a way out of the environmental determinism debates, but still located geography firmly as a field of studies at the intersection of socio-cultures and nature.

Over the last sixty years, geography has experienced a series of redefining shifts in thought and practice. These present not as paradigm shifts in the Kuhnian sense of the fracturing and replacement of existing knowledge, but as shifts in concerns and approaches that revitalised and redirected energies, reorganised existing knowledges (Taylor, 1976), launched new methodologies and epistemologies (see Binnie, 1997;

Kindon, 2003; Pain, 2004; Kitchin, 2014), reconfigured status hierarchies (see Stokes, 1987; Sharp, 2005; Louis, 2007), and identified new questions and objects for analysis (see Anderson, R.B. 1997; Longhurst & Johnston, 2014; Beer, 2016). They indicate a dynamic and restless discipline.

The quantitative turn in the 1960s, for example, introduced new methodologies and a new commitment to theory, abstraction and ‘objective’ mathematical analysis. For Johnston (1971), these turns did not sweep away what was there before or add much that was fundamentally new, but rather reworked insights, sensitivities, dispositions and not yet fully developed ideas. For Prince (1962) the spatial-analytic turn threatened the ‘character’ of geography by eliminating a geographical imagination from analysis of both social knowledge and knowledge of nature-society relations. He reflected (1962: 23) that:

It is the providence of the intellect to observe the facts, to reduce them to order and to discover relationships among them, but it is the imagination which gives them meaning and purpose through the exercise of judgement and insight.

Much of the 1960s and 1970s saw the subsequent dominance and scientisation of geography by spatial analytics in human geography, the adoption of new methodologies in physical geography and the dominance of political economy in more radical disciplinary thought. Place and space had been broken-in and corralled into measurable, knowable, and even regressable spatial forms and hierarchies by geographers. Analysis was performed to advance disciplinary analysis of the processes and patterns they contained or exemplified or for governments to manage. This pushes landscape studies and notions of imaginary and imagination into the disciplinary background.

More broadly, the notion of a “value-free” geography (Staeheli & Mitchell, 2005: 358), left some geographers questioning whether the social forces behind factors of modern life were being disguised (see Prince, 1971; Mitchell & Draper, 1982). In response, some human geographers turned to more humanist modes of knowing rooted in philosophy (Buttimer, 1976 and Tuan, 1976). Economic change gripped geography in the early 1970s and there were questions which examined people’s urban inequality which encouraged Harvey (1973) to develop geographies which allowed common citizens to enact powerful change.

In the late 1980s, the arrival of new post-structural social theories from continental Europe disrupted the stabilities and certainties underpinning both of these schools of thought. The so-called ‘cultural turn’ developed in parallel with challenges to both the universalist politics and explanatory potential of both these schools from feminist and post-structural geographers who drew on new theorists to explain space and place. The cultural realm was seen not as pre-given, but as entangled in economics, environmental issues, politics and society, and thus a lens through which spatiality and the production of space could be viewed. Culture became the new hot subject of geographical inquiry into social transformation. The cultural turn ushered in new interests in inclusion, post-modern spatialities, post-development and post-colonialism (see Cosgrove, 1983; Duncan, 1993; Barnett, 1998; Barnes, 2001; Valentine, 2001, and Robinson, 2003)

The cultural turn, however, also drove a shift from materialist to identity politics, and one of building knowledge that others, such as state agencies, would enact to a different form of critique that had no obvious enactive subject in mind. A direct consequence was that both economic and social geographies became squeezed from the centre of the discipline (Gregson, 1995; Smith, 2000; Amin & Thrift 2000; Harvey, 2000). The cultural turn “dematerialized geography” (Philo, 2000: 30). The turn was highly critical of neoliberalism at many levels; however, Barnett (1998: 388) claims that it reflected neoliberal times as it involved “a turn towards a set of disciplines in which distinctive individualised modes of authority are predominant”. Whilst a turn to the cultural need not essentially be anti-political, in practice the same political paralysis that gave neoliberalism its lead had yielded a turn to making cultural knowledge with an unclear politics (Lewis, 2017). For Harvey (2000), geography’s new lack of political substance was lamentable.

This depiction of the cultural turn, however, fails to recognise what it spawned. Social and economic geographies became refocused on community as opposed to the grander aims of social democracy which were focused on research of nation or region. In these guises the concerns with inclusion and identity politics generated their own community-focused relevance. Here, the audience was a new set of actors who were seen as able to bring their own worlds into being. This form of geographical knowledge created its own politics and relevance, which did not address power in quite the same way as Marxist or pluralist institutional critiques. The same post-

structuralist and post-colonial thought and political sensitivities that gave impetus to the cultural turn yielded community turns in economic geography (for example, the community economies of Gibson-Graham and others) and the community scale health, education and welfare critiques (see Gibson-Graham & Roelvink, 2000, 2008 and 2011; Staeheli & Brown, 2003; Carolan, 2009).

With the shrinking of the state, physical geographers encountered the same loss of enactive subject to which they might plausibly address their work. They also turned for inspiration to networks beyond the discipline (Thrift, 2002). As knowledge became more specialised within the academy in the 1980s and 1990s (Marcus *et al.*, 1992; Pickles & Watts, 1992), the distance between human and physical geographies increased and deep fractures emerged. This led Bauer (1999: 677) to ask, “Have our subdisciplinary dialects become so specialised that conversations are no longer possible?” While the unfamiliar language of the cultural turn seemed an easy target to blame for this fracturing of geographical imaginaries, it was far from the only factor involved or in itself a simple cause. What it has helped, if not forced, us to see is (a) that geography needed to seek new audiences for its knowledges and a new relevance after the demise of the social democratic state; and (b) it needed to think through its future as a discipline with multiple imaginaries. While never endangered or extinct, the ruminations within the discipline, particularly human geography, created renewed interest in the dormant ideas surrounding the geographic imaginary and how it may be productively deployed.

2.1.2 A postmodern (re)turn to geographical imaginaries

The cultural turn in social and geographic theory from the mid-1980s reawakened interest in the ‘geographical imagination’, but as a plural and pivotal force in the social construction of nature and society. The turn reinvigorated interest in the cultural construction of landscape and nature presaged by geographers such as Wright (1947). A significant number of geographers, including Cosgrove (1983), Massey (1985), Entrikin (1991), Peet & Thrift (1989), Barnes (2008) and others began to open up a geographical gaze that saw the world as represented and enacted in geographical terms. Studies of landscape took on a cultural studies form in which postmodern epistemologies and methodologies such as intertextuality took seriously geographical imaginations, their formation and their affect and effects and introduced new vitality

(see Cosgrove, 1983; Duncan & Duncan, 1988). Gregory's seminal 1994 text *Geographical Imaginations* provided a platform on which to confront the deep questions asked of geography by the cultural turn. He altered thinking about the discipline by emphasising plurality (hence 'imaginations'), the work of representation, and the primacy of language, knowing and cultural practice.

These imaginations saw popular, institutional, political, and technical representations of the world as structured by more or less fixed, distinctive and discernible framings of relations between people, place and territory. Literary studies scholar Edward Said (1978: 55) introduced the idea of an "imaginative geography" to argue that colonialism and British imperialism had been embedded in the practice of geography, therefore making and securing the colonisation of the mind by European rationalism. This cogitation provided strength to the fledgling thoughts of those who became prominent in the cultural turn. In his work on imaginative geographies, geographer May (1996: 57) contends that Said envisioned "a geography that overlaps a more tangible geography and helps shape our attitude to people and places." These framings may be intuited, discursive, textual, or institutionalised, but they shape and frame how people understand their worlds and those of others (see Livingstone, 1992). The community, the neighbourhood, the nation, and the region are all geographical imaginaries. So too are the Pacific, South Auckland, Asian students, the beach, the Coromandel, and Brand New Zealand. Each is freighted with subtle and often place-specific meanings. Other geographical imaginaries are loaded with meaning but less obviously territorialised, such as development, inequality, social deprivation, world-class, or the banana republic. Many imaginaries are implicated in the biggest socio-political questions facing humanity, such as poverty alleviation, migration and climate change.

2.1.3 Making new knowledge by reflecting on geographical imaginaries

In its plural form, and building on insights from the cultural turn of the 1980s geographical imaginaries is a much more open concept that invites the possibility of diverse understandings and examination of how these might conjure up diverse worlds (Gregory, 1994). Further, if "Geography is what geographers do" (Le Heron & Lewis, 2011), how does this impact on public knowledge? In pluralising the term 'imagination', Gregory (1994) emphasises that geographers have multiple views of

both the discipline and its work, and the worlds in which geographers work. He points to how these have been more or less systematically framed or institutionalised through ‘disciplined’ practices of geographic knowledge production such as journal theming or teaching syllabuses in universities and schools. He uses the term ‘geographical imaginations’ for his website (<http://geographicalimagination.com>) which links his teaching and research to a public intellectualism confronting war, violence, terror, repression and inequality.

The notion of ‘geographical imaginaries’, then, is an attempt to capture not only that there are multiple geographical imaginations at large in the world, but that they do work in framing understandings of the world and in turn making our different worlds. It also foreshadows the possibility that particular imaginaries are wilfully put to work with political affect and effect (Hanson Thiem, 2009). While risking the reduction of the concept to perspective, Erena Le Heron (2008: 2) is more succinct in her description of ‘geographic imaginaries’ as ways that “people perceive places”. This interpretation must be elaborated upon through reflection that such imaginaries are socially constructed and in turn construct the social. They shape how people act and make their own places and relations with others (and thus other places) via consumption and investment decisions, voting patterns, and telling stories about who and how we are.

Two key points emerge from these observations. First, they point to how geographers and their imaginations do political work and how as a discipline, geography can shape worlds for better or worse. The overt production of geographical imaginations is a political act and defines a disciplinary politics that goes to work in the world and shapes geographical subjects who are political subjects. Second, any search for ‘the’ geographical imagination is not only forlorn and misleading, but is also political, colonial and colonising in a disciplinary sense. For Gregory, this work is highly political and directed at imagining and making new, post-terror worlds. It echoes geography’s colonising disposition, its relation to power, and its translation into material effect through technologies such as maps, cadastre, and military strategy.

In an educational context, working with geographical imaginaries therefore foregrounds socio-cultural understandings, text and narrative when thinking about relations between land and people and in helping them to develop sensibilities to landscape and nature. The term itself points directly to a centrality for geography in

education (see Lambert & Morgan, 2010; Morgan, 2014), while its adoption highlights insights derived from the cultural turn in geography, particularly the cultural construction of place and the implications of ‘othering’ in geographical understandings (Gregory, 1994). Such geographical imaginaries are constructions of the world, but are also “vitally implicated” in the material and discursive making of the world (Gregory *et al.*, 2009). Educational geographer Hanson Thiem (2009) is well attuned to both social theory and the materialities of subject formation in school classrooms and repeats Morgan’s (2004: 32) observations that geographical imaginaries elaborate upon and/or structure explanation of “who ‘we’ are collectively and individually, who ‘others’ are, and how the world works”.

2.1.4 Shaping geographical imaginaries in the 21st century

The influence and potential of geographical imaginaries on the discipline was examined by Howie & Lewis (2014). A more traditional view of geography is that there is a stable geographical perspective, geographical language, and geographical skill set. They argue however, that geographical imaginaries being crafted and released into the world, create a geography that is immediately far more exciting and potentially influential than traditionally conceived. The production and distribution of geographical imaginaries is everywhere and endless. It occurs far more routinely and influentially in film, television, art, tourist advertisements, books, magazine articles, newspapers, plays, photographic exhibitions, experiential encounters, and playground affray than it does in lecture theatres and geography classrooms. This presents an opportunity for public engagement and education, especially in an era of new media technologies. The capacity of the imagination to form mental images of unwitnessed experiences was understood by Cosgrove (1983). He glimpsed a sped-up future in which applying new digital technologies to make sense of our worlds simultaneously launched new meanings that began to make the world by shaping understandings and actions.

So where do the borders of the discipline lie if everything is geography, all narratives are geographic, and geographic imaginaries are continually produced and increasingly shifting? This limitless geographical imagining and its co-productive interplay with its own narration, makes the geographic cause and consequence of changing worlds in ways that can neither be apprehended nor stilled. The dilemma is

that a collective knowledge of culture and landscape is created over which geographers can have no privileged or proprietary claim, while geographers are positioned to claim a geographical insight that offers significant value to all participants in the world.

Two important factors need to be borne in mind when considering geographic imaginaries. The first is to follow Said (1978: 55) in his insistence that ‘geographical imaginations’ are “not a licence to endorse fanciful [and expedient] . . . representations of place.” For him the imagination is not a surrogate for fantasy. An imaginary must provide not only material substance to be durable, but it makes its own materiality and becomes a valuable object for study if its effects shape worlds in ways that can be identified and argued to be impactful—especially if they support or give power. Hence Said’s focus on the Orient. The second is to take prior or emergent objects of interest, in terms of geography’s established disciplinary speciality—the territorialised objects and subjects, the territorialisation of objects and subjects, and the spatialities of relations among them—and to think about the spaces that get made around them.

As one example, we might think about the teaching of the concept of the nation in New Zealand geography and our infatuation with an economic form of Lilliputian nationalism (see Shore, 2000). The point is that nation states are less pre-defined territorial configurations and more imagined communities made material by institutions; that is, they are quite literally constituted into being through struggles over the interplay between material interests and spatial imaginaries (Anderson, 1983). They become in themselves spatial imaginaries that are then performed and in turn influence the way in which we imagine and practise our worlds. As soon as we deploy geographical categories and descriptors, we frame material relations, including investment, within ‘geographical imaginaries’ and frame how we can or might want to understand or act on them.

Alternatively, we might see geographical imaginaries as politically and culturally productive objects of geographic inquiry in themselves. If May (1996: 57) is right that they “help shape our attitude to other places and people” and they can be identified and studied, geography classrooms become very important social spaces. In interrogating geographic imaginaries at work in the world, Wright (1947: 5) argues that we might identify “promotional imaginaries”, which are driven by the desire to promote or defend an ideological or material interest; “intuitive imaginaries”, which

are conservative and shape the world according to prior configurations and understandings; and “aesthetic imaginaries”, which give expression to desires to imagine, desire difference, and construct new worlds (materially and ideationally). He was seeking to build an argument for a balance between subjective and objective accounts of the world and disciplinary efforts to build these accounts. Yet, his reflection highlights the potential value of treating geographical imaginaries as objects of analysis and offered a schema for teaching them or even studying them in classrooms and lecture theatres.

If geographical imaginaries are not just socially produced but also socially productive, then this productivity can be both studied and shaped. Geographical imaginaries are much more satisfying objects politically and epistemologically than the alternative individualised conception of ‘perspectives’ that pervades the geography curriculum; however these may be grouped (Marxists, environmentalists, Māori, Libertarian, ‘breadheads’ or other). The idea helps us to convey to students that just as there is no stable, universal ‘geographical imaginary’, they are not reducible to individual or group perspective or interest. They are set in a social and cultural context, and like places themselves and experience of them they are situated, palimpsest and emergent (Le Heron, E., 2008). They are constructed within life course experiences, emotion, personal background and memory, as well as in social framings of education systems, class, gender, ethnicity, and overt political and textual constructions. Importantly, they emphasise that all social perspectives as commonly perceived are geographical and shaped by geographies; and that they shift over time.

Geographers frequently study the production of space but not the centrality of geographical knowledge in the production of space. Morgan’s (2004: 32) statement that “geographical imaginaries state who ‘we’ are collectively and individually, who ‘others’ are, and how the world works” is a compact and intuitive way to encapsulate geographical imaginaries. But how does geographical knowledge become public to make this space? The increasing interest in public geography suggests it is actively engaged in the production of geographical spaces through geographical knowledge. As Marcel Bélanger (1959: 70) concluded, if geography has a project, political or more narrowly framed in terms of disciplinary reproduction, geographical imaginaries “must be created anew each generation” as they shift in wider socio-cultural and political settings and the work that they might potentially perform in such settings shifts.

2.2 Disciplinary anxieties

The ability of geographical imaginaries and public geography to provide stimulus within the discipline needs to be placed in the day-to-day social, political and educational environment in which geography is operating. This section will explore the pressures on the discipline that are both visible and material and those that are bubbling below the surface. Vacillating perspectives within the academy regarding the institutional visibility of our discipline and the future potential of its academic relevance are revealed. The discussion is set against constantly shifting national and international funding conditions which, while diverse, emphasise institutional and individual performance metrics which contain the need to demonstrate and quantify the social ‘impact’ of research. These disciplinary currents give impetus and provide ‘challenging conditions’ to the performance of public geography.

2.2.1 A fracturing field

Livingstone’s (1992: 177) unrivalled text *The Geographical Tradition* details the “geographical experiment” and the affirmed collective belief, embedded in virtually every geographer of the late 19th and early 20th century, that the embryonic discipline strove to retain its identity “by keeping nature and culture under one conceptual umbrella”. Castree (2010a and 2010b) notes the difficulties the discipline encountered in these efforts to contain the diverging pressures but interdependent mutual reliance between the dualisms of nature-culture and society-environment. The end of World War II in 1945 and the subsequent expansion of higher education in the Anglophone world led to the emergence of individuals who were comfortable with the label of human or physical geographers, as opposed to geographer (see Johnston & Sidaway, 2015). This was driven partly by the increased desire and ability of individuals to specialise in smaller-scale events and studies, and the development of technologies that allowed this to occur, especially in the field of physical geography (Clayton, 1985; Dear, 1988; Thrift & Walling, 2000; Gregory *et al.*, 2002). The dispiritedness of those who viewed and argued that the discipline was greater than the individual sum of its parts was vividly revealed by Michael Hurst (1985) who authored a chapter in Johnston’s 1985 publication *The Future of Geography*. The chapter was brutally frank and provocative, as summed up by its title *Geography has neither existence or future*. The frequently discussed and bemoaned splintering between the human and physical

disciplinary realms was initially a small tear in the geographical terra which grew into a larger fissure. By the 1990s it had resulted in “a largely ‘pure’ form of [physical geography] and a largely nature-free form of human geography” (Castree, 2014a: 445). While not ignoring the differences between physical and human geography, Demeritt (2009a) questioned the need to reframe the argument as less of a divide and focus more on the heterogeneity present in the two geography camps. He suggests we consider the discipline as an “archipelago of specialisms” Demeritt (2009a: 5) tied to each other and other places in multiple ways.

The language of divides, fractures and fissures which has been employed to describe geography, exposed the discipline as a less than sturdy whole at a time when administrative managers and the language of cost centres were beginning to populate and drive increasingly neoliberal educational institutions. The visible singular ‘Department of Geography’ became ripe for institutional reconfiguration (Castree, 2011; Erickson, 2012) and both its human and physical intellectual credentials (Gregory, K., 2000; Thrift, 2002; Clifford, 2002) and institutional survival became matters of contention (Sidaway, 1997; Johnston, 2003).

2.2.2 Institutional visibility

The department has a role as a key site of disciplinary reproduction and institutional visibility (Gibson, 2007, Murphy, 2007; and Hall *et al.*, 2015). In this section I examine the changing visibility of geography—as the word, the discipline and the work of practitioners—at an international level within global organisations, and in the academy. Specifically, I consider the conditions within which ‘the’ geography department in educational institutions is now being rehabilitated after a period of dissolution.

The use of words such as ‘geography’ or ‘geographic’ denotes a presence of the discipline and confidence that the word carries meaning. Geography is an integral part of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) launched in 2000 by the then Secretary General of the United Nations, His Excellency, Kofi Annan. The UNGIWG is voluntary in nature and the overriding objectives are, “to promote the use of geographic information . . . for better decision-making” (see http://www.ungiwg.org/sites/default/files/UNGIWG_TOR.pdf). Four areas were identified where geography was seen as highly relevant: education; capacity building

in the developing world; the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment; and the establishment of the UNGIWG (Annan, 2001). Although the group focuses largely on geographic information systems (GIS), it is the visibility of the word ‘geography’ at a multi-national institutional level that demonstrates continued acceptance and common use of the word.

At the international scale, the discipline of geography is represented by two global non-governmental organisations: the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) and The International Geographic Union (IGU), which is a member of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and International Social Science Council (ISSC). The IGU is naturally geo-centric in nature and as such is more in touch with grass roots geographers. Its aim is the development of the discipline of geography through research and teaching. A former vice president, Singh (2014) commented on the attractiveness of the discipline to students because it provides the dual tenets of applied research and job opportunities. The IGU presents a public face of geography through its *Home of Geography* website, (<http://www.homeofgeography.org/>). Unfortunately, this simple yet highly visible and easy to relate to name is let down by the poor quality and dated information on the website, suggesting a missed opportunity to provide strong global awareness for the discipline.

Geographers as practitioners are also involved in global projects. In June 2012 the ICSU launched *Future Earth. Research for global sustainability*. This is a 10-year interdisciplinary project aiming to “provide a global knowledge and collaboration platform and deliver a step-change in the way science for sustainability is produced and used”(<https://www.icsu.org/current/press/future-earth-new-global-platform-for-sustainability-research-launched-at-rio20>). The promotion of leading research by the ICSU on topics such as the environmental humanities (see <http://www.futureearth.org/blog/2015-jun-3/unpacking-black-box-need-integrated-environmental-humanities-ieh>) presents a complementary place for geography in a multi-disciplinary global-focused organisation. Geographer Professor Karen O’Brian from the University of Oslo is a member of the Science Committee for Future Earth, which ensures the discipline has a presence in this future oriented project. The emergence of these global initiatives, which at first glance appear completely disconnected from the small-scale projects that human and physical geographers have retreated to, have proved

serendipitous to those geographers prepared to embrace interdisciplinary knowledge creation.

Geography has a visible presence in global organisations but in the academy both the visibility and identity of geography has been impacted by institutional changes such as departmental restructuring and/or renaming. This has compounded existing fractures within the discipline. As Gibson (2007: 101) contends, the “naming of units where geography is housed is critically important” because it helps academic and support staff to create allegiances to both their discipline and colleagues and creates a sense of identity for individuals. The depth of feeling generated by departmental closures and restructuring was demonstrated by the long-term impact on the discipline’s reputation when Harvard closed its geography department in the early 1950s which reverberated for a generation (Smith, 1987).

In a 2014 American Association of Geographers (AAG) presidential column, Winkler admits to a “particular fascination” (Winkler, 2014: 3) with the topic of renaming and rebranding geography departments. Accepting that departmental restructurings are “contested processes” (Hall *et al.*, 2015: 57) and that each decision has its own unique political context, she provides a personal summary of a meeting held with senior members of the AAG which debated the pros and cons of departmental renaming. The opinions ranged from those who dislike the artificially created nomenclatures such as Geographical Sciences, Geography and Environmental Sustainability, and Geography, Environment and Society to those who acknowledge that that departmental name changes are occurring across academia. The “heart tug” (Winkler, 2014: 1) of the name geography in a department title speaks to both the holistic view of geography and a doffing of the academic cap in deference to alumni and past staff members who contributed to the fabric of the discipline within each institution. The more recent closures of geography departments at Brunel University (2007) and Strathclyde University (2011) in the UK (Banksi, 2013; Wainwright *et al.*, 2014) and the Australian National University (Lahiri-Dutt, 2018) represent both a loss of geographers from our “academic tribe” (Becher & Trowler, 2001) and a loss of academic identity by individual geographers.

The visual and tactile promotion of the word ‘geography’ in institutional titles presents an opportunity to showcase the discipline’s shop window, which allows multiple publics to become familiar with and advance geography’s visibility. It is

acknowledged that the multi-sited nature of geographical knowledge production in the academy and schools, creates difficulties in corralling these knowledge spaces under a single unifying banner (Harvey, 2000). Yet Johnston (2011: 326) rightly warns of “public misapprehension, even ignorance, about what geographers do” when ‘geography’-free [regarding title] institutional spaces are forged.

Any perceived loss of visibility needs to be combined with the loss of the discipline’s administrative autonomy when merged with other disciplinary entities (Gibson, 2007; Li *et al.*, 2007; and Murphy, 2007). This raises concerns about both resources and disciplinary independence and reaches to the heart of the matter, i.e., geography’s “security within wider institutional terrains” (King, 2007b: 45). Johnston (2003: 422) noted that “winning and sustaining a place for geography involved political struggle” while Cooke (2002: 262) warned of the dangers of geography departments being “married to seemingly similar disciplines”. Gibson (2007: 101) sees a dualism at work where the ‘exposed’ geography department noted above has been seen as easy prey, whereas other disciplines “do not need to justify what they do”. He makes two pertinent observations. Firstly the neoliberal justifications of cost savings and teaching synergies can be framed more as “dissolving disciplinary identities altogether for convenient short-term financial savings” (Holmes, 2002; Gibson, 2007: 98; Wainwright *et al.*, 2014). Secondly, and closer to home, he suggests that “perhaps geographers have been less resistant than other disciplines” to enforced changes (Gibson, 2007: 101). This uncomfortable disciplinary self-reflection in relation to the “failure of internal coherence within geography” (Bracken & Oughton, 2006: 371) was bluntly reinforced by Sharpe (2009) and Demerit (2009a; 2009b).

So, does the inherent failure by neoliberal managers to know where geography can be situated need to lead to a gradual erosion of the visibility of the word ‘geography’ within institutions? Or is the subject’s inherent interdisciplinarity able to offer fresh opportunities in a more fluid interdisciplinary environment? Ruth Fincher (2004) has consistently argued for the desirability of geography as a discipline and suggested that the current interest in interdisciplinarity and the environment provides an opportunity to advance the discipline’s visibility. If one accepts that faculty and department naming are important in providing visibility to both current and future students then keeping the word ‘geography’ visible is important. Her persistent agitation for ‘geography’ to reclaim a singular departmental title has resulted in the creation of ‘The

School of Geography' in the Faculty of Science at the University of Melbourne in 2017 (<https://geography.unimelb.edu.au>). This was an important change, as for the last twenty years geography had been housed in the Department of Geography and Resource Management in the Melbourne School of Land and Environments. The School of Geography is the only university department in Australia dedicated to the study and teaching of geography.

Restructuring of departments, although acknowledging concerns over disciplinary visibility and identity, can also produce new partnerships between traditionally separate disciplines. An example of this is provided by The Department of Geography and Sustainable Communities at the University of Wollongong which was created in 2013, and teaches human geography with a focus on environmental management, socio-economic planning and urban and regional sustainability. Wollongong is also the home of 'The Australian Centre for Cultural Environmental Research' (AUCER), a cross-institutional teaching and research group that focuses on cultural and social aspects of environmental issues. Cultural research methods are applied with the aim of examining how large-scale institutions, economies and structures of meaning are created and applied. Although not specifically named, geography is embedded in and relevant to this work.

2.2.3 Relevance

The twists and turns of geography's past have often been entangled in debates about the relevance of geographical knowledge. The 'quantitative revolution', the 'cultural turn', and the 'pragmatist agenda' have all been tied up with questions of disciplinary relevance as well as deep epistemological critiques of existing knowledge production. Historically this has been equated with policy relevance. Geographers produced knowledge for policy as part of a social democratic politics that saw the state as the dominant political and economic actor, capable of and bound to address spatial inequities and socio-environmental change. 'Public policy'-oriented research as a vehicle for relevant geographies has been highlighted by both White (1972) and Berry (1972) as having the potential to contribute positively to addressing local and global issues. The state was positioned to address the mobilisation and allocation of resources. Prior to the Marxist turn, however, this politics did not address the structural power relations embedded in the state. In his article, *What kind of geography*

for what kind of public policy? Harvey (1974) questioned the structural powers of the state and the power relations embedded within. Despite this critique of the state, it remained the focus of geographers' concern with relevance, especially as nation states began to restructure themselves, divest themselves of their capabilities to direct resource allocation so as to bring about neoliberalising globalisation. Geographers were left with the contradiction of seeking relevance by engaging in informing and supporting alternative policy settings in states that were less willing and able to make a difference.

Some, for example Martin (2001) and Ward (2005), have continued to call for geographers to secure their relevance through policy; however, many simply withdrew to more distanced forms of critique, with the cultural turn frequently cited for geography's supposed lack of relevance (Markusen, 1999; Rodriguez-Pose, 2001). This led some prominent geographers to question 'the' relevance of the discipline if it was not going to actively seek political avenues to encourage change (Thrift, 2002; Dorling & Shaw, 2002). The latest turns, however, to participatory research, the co-production of knowledge and community-focused research agendas all centre on a politics of relevance. Not all this criticism is directed at the turn to culture as an object of research and the nature of the new geographical ideas themselves, such that Le Heron (2013), Lewis *et al.* (2013), Castree (2014a, 2014b) and Lewis *et al.* (2016) among others have explicitly sought to demonstrate how the challenges posed by post-structuralist thought can be directed into a new institutional politics as well as a community-focused relevance. Relevance, however, as the National Research Council (1997) and Ward (2005) have reminded geographers, is still a crucial concern.

Relevance, however, is not easily defined. The questions of why research is relevant and for whom, and how to identify and evaluate intended and unintended consequences and beneficiaries are all complicated. Michael Dear (1999) identified three dimensions of relevance in geography: pertinence, commitment and application. Building on his account, Staeheli & Mitchell (2005) suggested that intellectual centrality and educational reach were also important as well as providing additional sources and dimensions of relevance. They argued that relevance had both political and social dimensions and expression—relevance for whom and in what terms? Moreover, evaluating research as relevant or otherwise is a similarly social and political process. Relevance is contested and arguably, relevance is made from

political projects (Pawson, 2018). The ‘linear-rational’ determination that relevance equates to usefulness can misrepresent its dynamism, politics and sociality (Chisholm, 1971), as can the false binary between theory and practice (Castree, 2005).

At some level research has always responded to social pressures. These may be either pressures brought to bear on those designing and funding research via commissions, funding models or access; those that shape the use and non-use of scholarly knowledge; or more structural pressures registered through knowledge formation, disciplinary turns and dominant and critical schools of thought alike. Castree & Sparke (2000) identified a list of such pressures including: scholarly value; teaching needs; academic rewards structure; grant agencies; sponsors; publishing business pressures and corporate sponsors. Significantly, of course, these things are also the products of extant knowledge content and frameworks, which shape the social forces at work just as they are shaped by them. Relevance is a complex and unstable concept, deeply implicated in larger social forces, and itself a site of politics (see Harding, 1991; Demeritt, 2000). As a consequence, relevance emerges and may be consciously worked upon by disciplinary-scale political projects of knowledge production.

The questions of “**whose** relevance and **whose** geography” (Staeheli & Mitchell, 2005: 360) are crucially important, but can equally be seen as “Whose geography? Which publics?” (Crampton *et al.*, 2013). Cummings & Teichler (2015) argue that all disciplines, academics and researchers are challenged with remaining relevant in the context of new demands upon them for increased research productivity and demonstrations of the applied and commercial utility of their teaching and research. They suggest that disciplines must debate these questions and look to shaping their own futures, making the most of their capabilities and the generative difference across skill sets and political projects that lie with them. Geography is no different. In fact, with interventions from Castree (2005), Kitchin & Sidaway (2006), Ward (2007b) and others, it has been trying to build positively on its relevance challenge for more than a decade now. Castree (2005: 271), for example, calls for “situated understandings” on how to tackle this complexity and how to make research matter. He observes in effect that relevance is situated, as are the various structural contexts of its production, and that there is a politics to this production, and geographers can participate in it.

In his more recent work, Castree (2014a, 2014b and 2014c) has launched a political project to encourage geographers to forge a new relevance around their particular insights and capabilities and their potential value for encouraging new ways of living and governing in the Anthropocene. In the global sense he notes how the “Anthropocene’s onset can engender a new sensibility in geography” and highlights the interdisciplinary involvement of geographers in multi-national issues (Castree, 2014b: 456). He argues that the willingness for human geographers to bring questions of both nature and environment into their work provides the intellectual spark for their engagement with the Anthropocene concept. He foresees a new ‘relevance’ where geography can perform “valuable analytical and normative work” (Castree, 2014c: 471) without the need for the discipline to undergo another reconfiguration. In his opinion, the Anthropocene provides the potential for geography to utilise the members of its ‘academic tribe’ with their “unusually high intellectual bandwidth” (Castree, 2014b: 451) to be prominent in research collaborations relating to the earth’s future.

2.2.4 Shifting academic practice

Recently, Cummings and Teichler (2015) have argued that all disciplines face defining shifts in academic practice imposed upon them by new models of service, pedagogy, and research organisation. They suggest that in teaching, the academy is being shifted towards concerns with experiential learning, student-led learning, and ‘learning outcomes’, understood as competencies and employability as much as knowledge *per se*. From the perspective of teaching geography in schools this has led Morgan (2017b: 533) to lament that: “It is clear that those who argue for the importance of teachers as intellectuals, with a deepening and widening knowledge of their subject, are swimming against the tide of current educational opinion”.

In citing Young’s 2008 text, *Bringing Knowledge Back In: From Social Constructivism to Social Realism in the Sociology of Education*, Barrett *et al.* (2017) have titled their book, *Knowledge, Curriculum and Equity: Social Realist Perspectives*. They promote the case for a “social realist” view of knowledge which “recognises that all knowledge is ‘socially produced’, but this does not mean that it is indelibly shaped by its ‘social location’” (Morgan, 2017b: 540). This complements an emerging literature about the place of knowledge in education (Rata, 2012). Elizabeth Rata, Professor in the School of Critical Studies in Education at the University of

Auckland, won the 2012 British Educational Research Journal paper of the year for her article, *The Politics of Knowledge in Education* (see http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11120838). This debate has been continued by Biesta (2014), Wheelahan (2014), Deng (2017) and Harland & Wald (2018). In acknowledging this nascent literature, I will retain my focus on the question which is how knowledge is acquired rather than the knowledge that is acquired (Blömeke *et al.*, 2013), with specific regard to activities outside of the lecture theatre.

It is in this respect that experiential learning has been emphasised, especially with respect to undertaking activities outside of lecture rooms and university environments. (Fuller *et al.*, 2006; Krakowka, 2012; and Pawson, 2016). Geography's commitment to field trips, which allow both students and lecturers to interact in a different environment, has positioned the discipline well in this regard, as has the emphasis in geographical knowledge on difference and how others live their lives in different communities. Geography's engagement with lived, 'empirical' worlds around us as the basis for knowing as well as geographical knowledge itself (see Le Heron & Lewis 2011) has also positioned the discipline well to adopt pedagogical models that encourage student-led learning.

In addressing relevance, service and civic concerns are identified by Macfarlane (2005) as a third mission activity of higher education. This is a contested and on-going discourse and views from country to country differ. He identified five classifications of the nature of these 'third mission' activities: administration, customer service for students and business, collegial virtue, civic duty and integrated learning for students. In advancing Macfarlane's work, Culum *et al.* (2013) produced summaries for each category. The list is not intended to be inclusive and the term 'service' is often met with reluctance as some institutions include it as an output.

My main focus is on the civic duty, almost always unpaid additional work, undertaken by academics such as outreach to local schools, university societies and other community groups who benefit from the accumulated knowledge or connections the scholar or university has. The caveat is that this third function needs to be "clearly nourished by the knowledge creation, dissemination and preservation functions of higher education." (Cummings & Teichler 2015: 5). *The Changing Academic Profession* (2013) survey noted only 33% of academics have participated in outreach or community-based projects. In a New Zealand context Lewis (2015) provides a good

summary of some of the work undertaken by geography academics. This includes the bi-monthly 'Dialogues with Wine' at Auckland University where researchers have the opportunity to share their research with colleagues; the creation of the Women and Gender Geographies Research Network (WGGRN) in 2016; the re-emergence of the postgraduate network led by Mark Tadiki (see Network NZGS-PG, 2014) which has led to more frequent contact between early career researchers and webinars on the BRCSS (Building Research Capability in Social Sciences) network; the work of the Determining Volcanic Risk in Auckland (DEVORA) network, a collaboration between the University of Auckland and The Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Limited (GNS Science) who present demonstrations of current research at events both on campus to the general public and other non-core outreach events which will be detailed in Chapter 5. This does not disguise the fact that the pressures of performance matrices and teaching expectations frequently mean the civic function is easiest to discard due to its intangible nature.

2.2.5 Knowledge as product

Research output and profile have become important in an environment where, as both Etzkowitz (2001) and Scott (2006) argue, universities have moved from transmitting and preserving knowledge to producing knowledge. Additionally, there is an increasing requirement for researchers to evaluate and detail the social 'impact' of their work as a consequence of the integration and now embedded nature of performance matrices.

This has led Demeritt (2009b: 128) to warn "that our work [geography] largely fails to reach wider audiences" which he attributes to increased specialisation and the weaker grounding modern geographers received in both human and physical geography. This situation has arisen due to the reluctance of institutional geographers to identify and legislate for a "prescriptive conception" (Demeritt, 2009b: 128) that would aid the creation within geography of a "clear core" (Demeritt, 2009a: 9), which, he argues, regional geography historically provided. This opaque core has resulted in disciplinary struggles in promoting geographic knowledge to public audiences beyond the academy, who struggle to identify any unity in a sea of what appears nebulous geographic narratives.

One way for academics to promote their work, and demonstrate relevance and effect ‘impact’, are individual blogs that operate as platforms to publicise research and generate discussion. Gaining exposure to a large public, however, remains elusive for all but the very elite academics such as Dereck Gregory (see <http://geographicalimagination.com/author/derekjgregory/>), David Harvey (see <http://davidharvey.org/>) and Danny Dorling (see <http://www.dannydorling.org/>) who are already well established and known ‘names’ in geography.

A counterpoint to the individual blog are multi-disciplinary sites built through a co-operative approach between institutions which encourage researchers to pool their resources and engage with the public on a larger scale. One example of attempting to ‘link’ research with publics is the ‘The Conversation’. This is a not-for-profit media website launched in 2011 in Melbourne, Australia, with the stated aim of being an “independent source of news and views, from the academic and research community, delivered direct to the public” (see <https://theconversation.com/global/who-we-are> Jan 2018). It initially received government support; however, this stopped in 2015 and the website is now funded through a mix of contributions from universities, the research sector, businesses, foundations and tax deductible public donations. The site now has outlets in the United Kingdom (UK), the United States, France, Canada and Africa and a new global edition which was launched in 2016. A New Zealand pilot of ‘The Conversation’ with a full time editor was launched in June 2017 (<https://theconversation.com/new-zealand-joins-a-growing-global-conversation-79354>) with initial funding received from Waikato, Massey, Victoria and Lincoln Universities, and support from two media partners, The Royal Society Te Apārangi and the New Zealand Science Media Centre. Sophie Bond, Amanda Thomas and Gradon Diprose were the first individuals who identify as New Zealand geographers to publish an article in February 2018 (<https://theconversation.com/how-media-framing-limits-public-debate-about-oil-exploration-90747>). ‘The Conversation’ allows academics and researchers to share their knowledge and is an ideal vehicle for self-identified geographers to engage in current debates, raise their profile and share their ‘knowledge’ in the competitive academic market. Although the word ‘geography’ does not appear on the toolbar of the website, a search reveals 757 ‘experts’ in the field of geography.

A more specialised venture is The Australian Environment Humanities hub, in which geographers in both Australia and New Zealand are active. It was formed in 2014 and originally focused on events relating to environmental humanities. The hub aims to provide universities who teach environmental humanities with a single contact who will help co-ordinate local activities and play a “leadership role in interdisciplinary ecological or environmental humanities scholarship” (see <http://www.aehhub.org/about/>). The rapid development of the site means it now has a global reach and provides a platform for lectures, publications, employment opportunities, grant applications and other events in this expanding field. The site presents more of a disciplinary resource as opposed to the public engagement which is practised in ‘The Conversation’; however, it is freely available to the public and any non-academics who are interested in environmental humanities.

These contemporary platforms, along with the traditional journal, demonstrates how a more co-ordinated approach by academics is starting to drive the perceived need for a more noticeable public presence. The expectation of increased research visibility sits alongside an altering institutional funding and assessment culture.

2.2.6 Research funding, performance assessment, and social ‘impact’

The disciplinary anxieties of fracture and relevance have played out against deeper academy-wide anxieties, notably those generated by the relations among new models and practices of research funding, new performance assessment regimes, and new requirements to be able to demonstrate social ‘impact’ in research. Over the last twenty years geographers in the Anglophone world have become increasingly expected to establish global research reputations to secure themselves in more competitive and mobile career paths, attract external research funding as universities and public funding bodies have shifted from grant to investment mentalities, and to perform in line with metricised assessment regimes.

Academic performance matrices such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in the UK, the Excellence in Research in Australia (EAR) and the Performance Based Review Fund (PBRF) changed geography in western academies from the 1990s. They put in place fiscal incentives at the university level and career incentives at the individual level. Amidst broader neoliberalising restructuring that commercialised and

managerialised universities, reconfigured universities as businesses and educational outputs and qualifications as industrial outputs (Guthrie & Parker, 2014). This secured an audit culture which promoted self-government of the individual and tighter management of academics (Shore & Wright, 2015). Geography experienced the pressures of such regimes to create neoliberal (self-serving and self-governing) geographers in neoliberal academies. The metricised assessment regimes intensified the pressure on academics and locked in new competitive mentalities (Cupples & Pawson, 2012; Shore & Wright, 2015).

Prominent geographers such as Thrift (2002), Harvey (2005), Peck (2008) and Kitchin (2014) have engaged in debate on the power and ‘impact’ of metrication upon the discipline and how these shifts have altered the structural conditions for producing relevant, public-facing research. Beer, in his 2016 publication *Metric Power*, broadened the view to all aspects of the academy and examined the proliferation of measurement set in the context of the neoliberal policies that have been deployed over the last thirty years. The establishment of indicators, it is argued by Rottenburg *et al.*, (2015), provides a crucial part of contemporary governance, which has resulted in two countervailing waves which have reconfigured the focal point of academic endeavour.

The first wave turned the discipline inwards by creating expectations of higher rates of knowledge production, which incentivised shorter term, theoretically focused, and less publicly engaged research. In their article, *The Academic Speed Up* (Moten & Harney, 1999: 28) describe the academic as being captured in a world where they do “not so much have a special mission in a public sphere, as a common cause in a society of producers who are constantly seduced and abandoned by the market.”

A more practical example was provided by the Cavendish Professor of Physics at Cambridge University, Richard Friend, in his Royal Society of New Zealand (RSNZ) public lecture in 2012 on how to plan for scientific discoveries (http://www.metsoc.org.nz/sites/default/files/co-report-rsnz-govt-engagement-2012_0.pdf). He noted that discoveries frequently arose by accident. He cited the example of the increasing number of articles published annually in a leading physics journal (the size of which had tripled between 1960 and 2010) to argue that too much poor quality material is now published in an attempt to be seen to produce research. In geography this is manifest in an increased focus and output on the theory behind research and how the

research was conducted (Thrift & Dewsbury, 2000; Lorimer, 2005), as opposed to research that connected with or was valued by the public.

The second wave concerned the strengthening of participatory geographies, which was an unforeseen outcome of the inclusion of social ‘impact’ in performance metrics and funding investment parameters.

In their article, *Geographies of ‘impact’: power, participation and potential* Pain, Kesby & Askins (2011: 183) argue that, while the “marketisation of knowledge is to be deplored,” co-production of knowledge by universities and communities centred on a participatory research approach has a positive impact. This incentivises a new form of relevance and a new wave of public engagement, using platforms such as social media to connect to communities. Kitchin *et al.* (2013b) used social media to involve communities in their research, as documented by their work with the collective geographic blog ‘IrelandAfterNAMA’ (IAN) which sought to provide for commentary on the creation of the National Assets Management Agency (NAMA) which was created in the Republic of Ireland in 2009 after the economic collapse of Irish banks. The ability for research to take on a life of its own was commented on by both Pain *et al.* (2011) and Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) together with the observation of how the use of new media can both enable and surprise. While noting the promise in these new forms of engagement Smith (2013: 192) warns that this form of public engagement is not simply about creating “digital spectacles” but also “requires a more widely-shared sense of experiment, initiative and imagination” and that the research has depth.

The new performance regimes yielded new approaches to the production of knowledge and new knowledge. Metrication, however, is frequently wedded to these new approaches which has resulted in an increased focus on the status and ‘impact factor’ of particular journals as a source of reputation and career advancement. This has tended to reduce academic performance to being evaluated based on publication of articles in ‘high impact’ journals (Guthrie & Parker, 2014; Timothy, 2015). In human geography in particular, this yielded the faster production of more fly-in fly-out forms of research that incentivised geographers to jump between projects, sectors, and research settings. The lightly empiricised, theoretically-informed think-piece displaced the long-term situated engagement with place, field and relevance. As a consequence, the discipline came to value forms of knowledge that were less situated and publicly engaged. At the same time local, regional and domestic journals became devalued as

both human and physical geographers jostled to publish their work in international journals to demonstrate their global significance (Pawson, 2012; Lewis, 2015), initiating a downward spiral in citations and influence of lesser ranked journals. In accepting Lewis' (2015: 5) comment that "state of discipline and state of journal are intimately bound", an unintended consequence is that locally-engaged, focused and relevant research published locally risked becoming seen as a merely "parochial pursuit" (Lewis, 2015: 4).

With recognition of (perhaps unintended) consequences, the performance regimes have come under fire from a vast range of quarters for many different reasons (see Cupples & Pawson, 2012). In New Zealand, for example, Chalmers (2013) has argued that the PBRF incentivised only professional activities that contributed to the measure, thereby deprioritising the academic activities such as thinking, reading, thesis supervision, marking, attending seminars and collegiality that actually enhance the quality of universities. More generally, critics have observed that in common with all formulaic numerical-based performance metrics, various actors have 'gamed' the regimes (Burrows, 2012; Bogotch, 2012). Authors, editors and reviewers have sought to manipulate the metrics through altering the focus of their work, finding easy wins, citations networks, timing publications, invitation-only or commission-based publication practices, publishing citable review articles and think-pieces. Most significantly for governments running those regimes, however, the first rounds of measures intensified competition, surveillance and the disciplining of academics and universities, but did not necessarily lead to enhanced quality outputs or direct research effort into their preferred fields. They arguably damaged local knowledge production and redirected efforts in pursuit of global status rather than local relevance (Cupples & Pawson, 2012).

National funding bodies and committees began to address the matter. In 2008, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) was reminded by the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee that the duty of Research Assessment Excellence Panels was to assess the quality of articles published, not the reputation of the journal in which they were published. The (ICSU) Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in the Conduct of Science (CFRCS) issued a statement in July 2008 on publication practices and indices and in 2010 the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation) published guidelines which

aimed to evaluate only the articles and refused funding based on any bibliometric information. These various moves have culminated in groups of editors creating the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) in May 2013 which expressed concerns over the inappropriate use of journal ‘impact’ factors.

Internationally, authorities and government agencies sought reform and a second wave of performance assessment regime has now begun to reset the parameters to emphasise social ‘impact’. Reforms began in the UK in the mid 2000s with the introduction of social ‘impact’ measures to research funding applications. Social ‘impact’ was introduced into the new REF framework when the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) was remodelled in 2011. The REF 2011 guidelines define ‘impact’ as:

an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life beyond academia (REF 2011, paragraph 140).

‘Impact’ includes but is not limited to:

the activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding of an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals in any geographic location whether locally regionally nationally or internationally (REF 2011, paragraph 141).

By 2015 ‘impact’ had become fully “institutionalised” (Slater, 2012; Rogers *et al.*, 2014). The intent of the ‘impact’ agenda is to produce research that demonstrates its relevance and quality by being able to demonstrate ‘impact’ on the world, not just in the realm of disciplinary ideas but in those of public affairs, investment, and social change. Yet, Fuster (2017: 1,530) writes that ‘impact’ factor (IF) is a “flawed measure” and bemoans the fact that it is here to stay as many “deans, government agencies and employment panels use this as a performance measure”. Again, it has had significant ‘impact’ upon academic institutions and academic performance, although it has yet to be incorporated fully into the New Zealand PBRF.

In New Zealand, the concept of ‘impact’ has had greatest effect through the channelling of research investment into what is called ‘mission-led’ research, where the research questions are designed by funders in terms of their own priorities. In this context ‘relevance’ takes on new significance, but is far from simply guaranteed. Rogers *et al.* (2014) raise three issues that undermine any simple relationship between the impact agenda, as framed and delivered through performance measurement regimes, and impactful/relevant research. Firstly, ‘impact’ can’t be corralled into a

standard bureaucratic box-ticking exercise based on linear logics. Research and research careers take unexpected and unexplained twists and turns as research projects morph and form. Secondly, the timing of impact can't be diarised for a specific date; the temporalities of impact do not map simply onto those of funding timelines and assessment rounds. Finally, the social impact agenda has done nothing to release any of those who rely on the measures to escape the administrative burdens, the on-going pressures and anxieties associated with performance, or the incentives to game the altered regimes.

Perhaps more significantly, there is no guarantee that relevance will be achieved. Crawley (2010), for example, warns against the dangers of 'mission-led' research that specifies research questions too tightly or constrains inquiry, curiosity and critique of the present too closely to the objectives of funding authorities. Such practices are inherently conservative and serve existing powers by restricting knowledge production to questions that are only perceivable ex-ante and that they themselves set. Further, public engagement that is encouraged by professional box-ticking can also displace both more spontaneous or longer-entrenched forms of civic engagement with the wider community that may have significant but overlooked or understated value. Notwithstanding these concerns, spaces for meaningful and relevant public engagement do exist.

2.2.7 Impact agendas and pre-conditions for a new public geography in the academy

Various authors have taken up the question of how impact agendas might shift the balance of applied and theoretical geography. The impact agenda in the REF has been labelled by Slater (2012: 117) as a "politics of obedience" in which government funding agencies have conspired with the new corporate, managerialist universities to direct research to end user (or client) demands. It is, he claims, the latest move in corporatising universities. He directs readers to the language of economics and the keywords 'utility', 'consumption', and 'production' that dominate communiques from university managers, and their determination to decouple research and teaching and instead prioritise the former as work for research academics. He argues that a critical pedagogy requires mutual co-existence between the two as one informs the other, that students are the public most impacted by universities, and that academic research,

which helps to formulate questions, is different to commissioned research that seeks answers to pre-formed questions.

Gade (2011) in his book *Curiosity, Inquiry, and the Geographical Imagination* provides a compelling account of how curiosity and an inquisitive spirit are indispensable scholarly attributes. Curiosity may appear to be self-indulgent but is an essential platform for practically-oriented, relevant and impact-focused studies. In response to the UK government's call for research that "earns its keep", Phillips (2010a: 447) argues relevant research depends upon cultivating curiosity and encouraging a spirit of adventure. As opposed to considering the binary of curious or useful, Phillips (2010b: 4) argues that it may be more productive in speaking about "the curious and the useful." Just as research cannot be emotion-free and strictly objective, applied research requires academics to open up their imaginations and interrogate them. Phillips (2010b) and Kneal (2014), however, take a more generative approach to the challenge of 'impact' than Slater. Both contend that performance matrices have as yet not mortally wounded curiosity and that new spaces have been opened up for social engagement. Given that "impact' is here to stay", the better questions are how to navigate impact to support curiosity and how to recognise potential impact when the genesis of an idea arrives (Jump, 2010; Reisz, 2010).

In acknowledging that rankings can be useful, Altbach (2015) notes that the wrong things are often measured, "flawed metrics" are used to do the measuring and, "they privilege the already privileged and stress certain academic disciplines (mainly in the hard sciences) over others" Altbach (2015: 3).

The REF definitions of 'impact' are relatively broad. This has led to the dedication of specific resources to identifying and measuring 'impact', redirecting research resources towards generating it (including sensitising academics to it and incentivising them to pursue it) and inordinate amounts of gaming (Knowles & Burrows, 2014). Geographers have pointed to the potential to practise new forms of public geography under its auspices (Phillips, 2010a and 2010b, Pain *et al.*, 2011 and North, 2013). The definitional parameters allow academics to decide what kind of impact they are aiming for and the politics that they want to articulate.

While not totally embracing the "impact agenda", Pain *et al.* (2011: 184) suggest that it can be used to support a call for the co-production of knowledge between

academic and community. Co-production approaches, as opposed to the one-way knowledge transfer (Harney, 2010) from university, might now be seen as a new “zeitgeist for university/public engagement” (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 185) (see Fuller & Askins, 2010). In geography, the Royal Geographical Society–Institute of British Geographers (RGS-IBG) published a booklet in 2010 for geographers who want to communicate outside existing channels (Gardner, Dodds, Souch & McConnell 2010). Two special sessions were held at the 2012 RGS-IBG conference on the *Social and Cultural Geographies of ‘impact’* which translated into a special issue of *ACME: International Journal for Critical Geographers* examining new public geographies. The requirement to consider social impact has concentrated concerns about relevance, disciplinary fractures and future, into a discussion about the values of and need for public geography. The next section focuses attention firmly on the contemporary debate about public geography.

2.3 Naming and framing public geography

The challenge of naming and framing public geography for the new century was initially engaged with by Ward (2005, 2006) and Fuller (2008). They both resisted defining the term ‘public geography’, but named and called for a research agenda for a new public geography. Their willingness to initiate and contribute to the debate represents a therapeutic intervention in the disciplinary anxieties of relevance, fracture and performance measurement. They were also responding to concerns presented by Staeheli & Mitchell (2005) and Kitchin & Sidaway (2006) regarding how geographical knowledge is produced and the use and value of such knowledge, especially with respect to identity politics and various forms of community-focused research. Each of these pressures has provided impetus to the performance of geographies that demonstrate the societal benefits associated with the production of geographical knowledge and thus direct attention to the performance of public geographies at a time when Michael Burawoy (2004) was also issuing an influential call for a public sociology.

2.3.1 Public sociology: a cognate awakening

In noting that “geographers have for long explored along and across their frontiers with other disciplines” and are “more outward-looking than the academic neighbours

with whom they inter-act” (Johnston, 1998: 143), it is wholly appropriate that the term public geography is borrowed from the work of sociology. It was sociologist Michael Burawoy who in April 2003 at Boston College presented a series of seminars on ‘public sociology’. These were published in the journal *Social Problems*, in a paper entitled “Public Sociologies: A Symposium from Boston College” (2004), which detailed six autobiographical case studies on performing public sociology. Burawoy argued that sociology needed to be exposed to a wider non-academic audience and noted that,

The first step is to name it—public sociology—a sociology that seeks to bring sociology to publics beyond the academy, promoting dialogue about issues that affect the fate of society, placing the values to which we adhere under a microscope. (Burawoy *et al.*, 2004: 104)

The 99th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association was held in San Francisco in August 2004, with the theme of ‘Public Sociologies’. In his presidential address, entitled ‘For Public Sociologies’ Burawoy re-emphasised the argument and highlighted the need for a ‘public sociology’ to “engage with multiple publics in multiple ways” (2005a: 4). He emphasised a “multiplicity” (Burawoy *et al.*, 2004: 104) of publics and in an attempt to contextualise the potential for engagement noted that:

The variety of publics stretches from our students to the readers of our books, from newspaper columns to interviews, from audiences in local civic groups such as churches or neighborhoods, to social movements we facilitate. The possibilities are endless. (Burawoy *et al.*, 2004: 104)

In raising the awareness of ‘public sociology’, Vaughan contends that Burawoy’s principal contribution was to “confer it with legitimacy” (Burawoy *et al.*, 2004: 118). The phrase, however, was originally deployed by another sociologist, Herbert Gans, in his 1988 presidential address to the American Sociology Association. Gans had expressed concern about the divergence between professional sociology and what he termed people’s ‘lay sociology’, which he noted were, “the generalisations about society and its parts that all people – we included – start learning as children, long before knowing of the existence of professional sociology” (Gans, 1989: 5)”.

To complete the concentric ring Gans invoked the work of historical geographer Sam Hilliard (quoted in Winkler, 1986: 7) who described the geographical discipline as a wheel with spokes of knowledge, where the over-emphasis on specialisation has left those on the spokes less and less able to communicate with those on other spokes

with the ultimate result that “the wheel may become a doughnut, with a huge intellectual hole in the middle.” (Hilliard, quoted in Winkler, 1986: 7). Gans pointedly remarked that sociology needed to “find out if and why we are ignored or rejected” (Gans, 1989: 7). In reappraising the idea of ‘public sociology’ for a new generation, Burawoy wanted to examine how academics engage with the world and how this is reflected in disciplinary practice. He was particularly interested in what he saw to be the separation of engagement between an academic and an extra-academic audience in sociology, and identified two forms of ‘public sociology’. Firstly “ ‘traditional’ public sociology” (Burawoy, 2005a: 7) which used sociological knowledges founded on knowledge disseminated through conventional channels to the public, and secondly “ ‘organic’ public sociology” which carried “sociology into the trenches of civil society” (Burawoy, 2005a: 7).

In recognising the situatedness of his work within the discipline of sociology in the United States of America (USA), he attempted to identify how labour is divided. He started by recognising the difference between the production of ‘instrumental’ or ‘means-focused’ knowledge, which was directed towards specific audiences, and ‘reflexive’ or ‘ends-focused’ knowledge which was produced through conversations between the discipline and different publics. Table 2.1 sets out each of these forms of knowledge and identifies an academic or non-academic audience to whom this knowledge is directed, in the case of instrumental, and produced with, in the case of reflexive. He distinguished between four types of sociology and noted that each relies on the other and that “[n]one should get insulated from the others but nor should any colonise the others” (Burawoy *et al.*, 2004: 106).

Table 2.1: Burawoy’s division of sociological labour

Division of Sociological Labour		
	<i>Academic audience</i>	<i>Extra-academic audience</i>
Instrumental knowledge	Professional	Policy
Reflexive knowledge	Critical	Public

Source: Burawoy (2004)

Burawoy’s crucial intervention initiated a debate, initially within the American sociological academy then in the wider Anglophone sociology community on how sociological knowledge generated in the academy became political, and what kinds of scholarship were necessary for what kind of politics. It forced sociology to confront the politics of their own politics of knowledge. There was recognition that simply

generating self-reflexive critique at the edges of the discipline and/or releasing this knowledge into the world, may not constitute a particularly effective or affective public sociology. Recognition of this state involved addressing the nature of the knowledge produced, the nature of the publics that different knowledges encountered, the types of politics that might then be engendered, and the extent of academic agency: did academics write for or otherwise engage with public audiences; could they, should they and how should they do it?

Burawoy claimed that such questions were not being asked within sociology and attempted to awaken the discipline to the separation of their engagements between academic and extra-academic audiences (as shown in Table 2.1). He made a case for an instrumental public sociology that offered “solutions to problems that are presented” (Burawoy, 2005a: 9), as well as a reflexive public sociology that involved “bringing sociology into a conversation with publics, understood as people who are themselves involved in conversation” (Burawoy, 2005a: 7). The argument turned on identifying different publics (including policy professionals), multiple potential sites for engagement, and on-going sites for engagement and practices of knowledge production.

Alongside his later concern with public intellectualism, which I discuss below, and the responsibilities of academics to practise it, Burawoy’s work on the interplay between different sociological knowledge and different publics engendered heated on-going contests (see McLaughlin *et al.*, 2005; Holmwood, 2007; Nichols, 2011). The only success that Burawoy achieved with his presidential address, according to Brady (2004) was in rallying the sociological troops, while (Dutton, 2009) criticised him for failing to grasp just how diverse, dynamic, agential and differentially empowered the multiple publics he identified were. For Kitchin *et al.* (2013b: 68) his public sphere appeared “anachronistic” and very much derived from class-centred readings and experiences of American institutional politics. They pointed to the reworking of public worlds by digital technologies, and the extraordinary diversity of communities revealed by greater attention (post the cultural turn) to questions of identity and exclusion. These changed the nature of publics, the significance of different knowledges, and the field of possibilities for engagement.

2.3.2 Public intellectualism

I return in the next section to how Burawoy's notion of public sociology played out in geography, but it is also important to examine how Burawoy himself understood his project as one of public intellectualism, and to examine briefly the contested nature of public intellectualism. Whether Burawoy considers himself a 'public intellectual' is subjective and open to debate (Castree, 2005; Ritzer, 2006). His writing indicates that he envisioned 'public intellectualism' as part of an "organic solidarity" (Burawoy, 2005a: 5) between the four divisions of sociological labour (Table 2.1.) as opposed to a separate path that only elite sociologists have earned the right to walk down. He viewed professional sociology as the central tenet of the four and noted that

one would not have to be a public sociologist to contribute to public sociology;
one could do so by being a good professional, critical or policy sociologist.
Burawoy, (2004:17)

He encouraged all sociologists to engage in 'public intellectualism' which was focused on the important issues of the day.

The idea of public intellectualism was originally associated with the way that 'men of letters', namely the clergy, teachers and the university-educated few, pursued a living through cultural and intellectual endeavours. Academics have debated questions in relation to who a public intellectual is, the well of knowledge from which they draw, and with whom they are looking to engage. Ward (2007a: 1060) uses the term "definitional complexity" in relation to public intellectuals to demonstrate how definitions often fail to provide clarity.

Drawing on the work of Bruford (1975), who examined the German cultural formation of *Bildung*, Hobsbawm (2013: 196) seeks to demonstrate how *Bildung* when coupled with the increase in individual wealth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in European countries, provided opportunities for 'free intellectuals' to foster and engage in debates on important societal matters. A more bourgeois reading of the public intellectual viewed them as moral philosophers and the conscience of society (Benda, 1928). While Gramsci (1971) made a distinction between traditional intellectuals such as teachers and priests who think within pre-formed frames and reproduce the world by performing enduring social roles, and organic intellectuals who, in spite of being conditioned by their social class, seek to establish new thinking and impose new ideas on the world. The term 'public

intellectual' itself did not, however, enter the lexicon until the middle part of the 20th century. As Williams (1976) noted, the term began to be applied to thinkers who sought to challenge the dominant discourses of the time.

Burawoy entered a lively contemporary debate between these conceptualisations of public intellectualism (Gouldner, 1979; Bourdieu, 1988; Bauman, 1992; Eyerman, 1992; Collini, 2002; Warner, 2002; and Füredi 2004). The debate developed along three axes of contest over the nature of the public intellectual: radical or moral thinker; academic or non-academic; and discipline-bound or transdisciplinary. In reviewing Mills' (1959: 186) ambitions for intellectuals to "help build and strengthen self-cultivating publics" Simmons (2007: 4) contends that Mills (1959) viewed public intellectuals as "erudite and scholarly citizens" whose thoughts shaped and defined public issues.

Whereas for Jacoby (1987) they are more clearly based in the academy, and for Lightman (1999) the highest forms of public intellectualism are trans- or non-disciplinary. The public intellectual, according to Said (1994), brings to public discourse a detached and critical faculty for questioning existing structures and presenting a message. In each of these readings, however, public intellectuals look to comment, whether through writing or media performance, on issues that affect citizens and society at large (Shills, 1958). The public intellectual's work is counter-posed against both partial and narrowly interested commentary and mindless "fast thinking and instant gratification" (Debray, 2001: 60), but must always be delivered within the mediated societal environment of the day.

The crucial point of public intellectualism is to influence the public (Debray, 1981) but the challenge posed by the neoliberal-led diminution of civic virtues, social institutions, and collective thought and practice in society has threatened to eliminate public intellectualism (see Jacoby, 1987 and Füredi, 2004). Post-war social democracy created an era in which public debate over social change could be had in relation to pluralist politics and potential state action. Neoliberalism not only challenged the efficacy of state-centred political debate but eroded the potential for public debate as public discourses centred increasingly on self-interest and material acquisitiveness (Füredi, 2004). The humanist search for truth and public ideals, argues Füredi (2004), were both victims of a postmodern desire for consumption, celebrity and objective knowledge. As Hobsbawm (2013: 199) observes:

The road from the democratic idea of the Athenian agora to the irresistible temptations of the shopping centre has shrunk the space available for the great demonic force of the 19th and 20th century: the belief that political action was the way to improve the world.

Those willing to engage in performances of public intellectualism were forced to perform not only to publics who were conditioned to ignore social collectives but in spaces increasingly hostile to sustained argumentation. While the ability to transmit a message is easier in the technological age, the public sphere of engaged debate has arguably shrunk as media has increasingly become the message itself in ever faster circuits of self-gratification. While everyone can have a say through social media, which appears to democratise the communication of messages like never before, the opportunity to slow time and have a sustained and comprehensive debate about a clearly defined issue, led by informed, unemotive and non-parochial argumentation has diminished. At the same time the neoliberalisation of universities has led to the commercialisation and commodification of academic life and multiple challenges to intellectual autonomy. Specialisation, professionalisation and, as discussed above, performance assessment among other trends, have driven academics to produce and communicate knowledge for each other rather than publics, to take safe paths to career advancement rather than comment publicly and critically on broad and controversial issues of concern. As a result, the public is left with “facile pundits, think tank apologists and spin doctors” Füredi (2004: 26).

For Burawoy (2004), this is precisely why a new wave and spirit of public intellectualism is so crucial. Indeed, such a spirit does exist and multiple public intellectuals are now taking up new media technologies to exploit the potential of reaching new and different publics faster and more directly. In 2005 the British magazine *Prospect* teamed with the American magazine *Foreign Policy* to produce a list of the fifty most influential public intellectuals as voted for by readers of the magazines. The success of the list prompted the British based newspaper *The Guardian* to publish its own range of thinkers, many of whom draw their inspiration from the humanities and the arts (see <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2005/sep/30/highereducation.uk3> *The Guardian* 30/09/2005). Since 2009, an annual list of public intellectuals list has been produced by both magazines, generating a level of interest from a wide number of media outlets. The title of the list in both publications has altered from ‘public intellectuals’ to ‘global thinkers’ in *Foreign Policy* and ‘world thinkers’ in *Prospect*.

A brief examination of the disciplines and/or professions represented in the list gives an insight into who and what are considered public intellectuals (Table 2.2). This is done in awareness of the subjective nature of any list generated by votes from readers of magazines or lists compiled by a self-delegated committee of journalists. It is evident that there are scientists of various stripes, writers, political scientists, and sociologists, but ironically more economists than any other discipline. This seems to suggest that whilst matters economic are largely responsible for the issues considered pressing by various publics, it is to economists that the media habitually turn for answers (albeit often heterodox economists). However, it is the absence of some disciplines that is also noteworthy. No geographer features on the lists for 2013 or 2015. Indeed, the only geographer who has appeared on the list was Jared Diamond in 2005, probably as a consequence of his popular publication *Collapse: how societies choose to fail or survive*. Diamond self-identified as a geographer only later in a career which had seen him initially study anthropology and physiology.

Table 2.2: The top 50 public intellectuals by category in 'Prospect Magazine' 2013 vs 2015

Prospect Magazine 2013 Categories of World Thinkers			Prospect Magazine 2015 Categories of World Thinkers		
Physicist x 2	Historian x 2	Health Policy analyst	Physicist x 2	Historian x 3	Health Policy analyst
Biologist x 4	Journalist x 2	Sociologist	Biologist x 2	Journalist x 2	Sociologist x 2
Neurologist	Politician x 2	Investment Strategist		Politician x 2	
Artist	Psychologist x 2			Psychologist x 2	Comedian
Writer x 6	Anthropologist		Writer x 4		Privacy Advocate
Statistician x 2	Philanthropist		Statistician x 2		Psychologist x 2
Filmmaker	Political Scientist x 7		Filmmaker	Political Scientist	Diplomat
Economist x 16	Computer Scientist		Economist x 11		Feminist x 2
Philosopher x 5	Climate Scientist		Philosopher x 2		Social Theorist
Businessman/woman x 3	Activist x 2			Activist x 5	

Source: Prospect Magazine 2013 and 2015

In the context of the discipline of geography as a whole, the lack of any public intellectual who identifies as a geographer fuels debate about the visibility of geography to the public and the disciplinary presence in a public sphere. This against a backdrop where geographers have, over the last decade, become increasingly attuned to the significance of producing knowledge for and with various publics. It is to this emerging attention that I now turn.

2.4 Re-imagining public geography

In 2004, at the Association of American Geographers' annual conference, the then president, Alexander Murphy, organised a plenary session to address geography's relevance in public debate. This is coincidental with Burawoy's work on public sociology, but there is no evidence in the literature that one influenced the other at that time. The closeness of the dates, however, and similitude of the topics being debated indicates a degree of academic serendipity. Murphy had invited four distinguished geographers, H.J. de Blij, B.L. Turner II, Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Derek Gregory, to discuss the notion that:

Many geographers work on matters of great relevance for the issues facing society, but geography is rarely invoked in public debates over matters of contemporary concern (Murphy *et al.* 2005: 165).

In the final assessment, the group considered geography's performance to be anaemic relative to disciplines such as economics, history and biology. They addressed questions of public profile, the virtues and dangers of cultivating a high profile, and how to do so. While in some ways another convulsion in geography's ongoing 'angst' about its relevance, the intervention launched a new wave of concern with public geography.

2.4.1 What is a 'public geography'?

Burawoy's discussion of public sociology attracted the attention of geographers who picked up on the concept and started framing it in their own disciplinary terms. Historically the most significant public arena in which geographers were engaged was policy (White, 1972; Harvey, 1974). In speculating on what is meant by 'public geographies', policy geographer Kevin Ward (2005, 2006) highlighted the weakening link between geographers and public policy, which Martin (2001: 189) terms "the case of the missing agenda."

Ward (2005, 2006) initially suggested that a renewed emphasis on linking geography with public policy was required, but then, drawing on Burawoy (2004), recognised the need to connect geographers with a multiplicity of audiences and drew attention to subsets of geographic research 'users.' These included those who lie beyond the policy area, namely business and the voluntary sector in addition to the research subjects on whom research is carried out and those individuals and

communities who contribute to the research process. Ward (2006: 501) adapted for geography an expanded set of categories developed by Burawoy (2004) to elaborate more fully on each of the four different types of sociological knowledge to complement the varied and different “cognitive practices” (Burawoy, 2005a: 16) unique to each category (Table 2.1).

Table 2.3 shows Ward’s division of geographic knowledge. He argued for a differentiation between ‘policy’ and ‘public’ geography, to provide a more holistic and comprehensive representation of these two categories of geographical knowledge. A key point that Ward (2005) makes in his writing is that one audience is not more important than the other, which he emphasised by noting that the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ERSC) did not rank research users in any order of importance. In presenting the information, Ward (2006: 501) noted that both ‘public’ and ‘policy’ geographies, while different, were not mutually exclusive but complementary and emphasised how both “often feed off the other.” He challenged his readers to consider how “the public engagements of today might become the policy reform of tomorrow” (Ward, 2006: 501).

Table 2.3: Division of geographical knowledge: policy and public geographies

Division of geographical knowledge: policy and public geographies		
	<i>Policy geography</i>	<i>Public geographies</i>
Knowledge	Instrumental/concrete	Reflexive/communicative
Truth	Pragmatic	Consensus
Legitimacy	Perceived effectiveness	Relevance
Accountability	Clients and evaluators	Designated publics
Politics	Interventions in policy discussions	Public dialogue
Pathology	Servility	Fads and fashions

Source: Ward (2006: 501)

In the final section of the 2006 article, he explored the ways the discipline enacted with ‘the public’ and the idea of ‘the public.’ He proposed a series of seven “deliberately speculative” statements that “began the process of instilling with meaning” (Ward, 2006; 501) what public geography meant and how a space for the idea may emerge. This ranged from an acknowledgement that students are our “first public” (Ward, 2006: 500) and the importance of learned societies, to acknowledging differing national disciplinary evolutions and the need to be proud to champion our work as geography. The aim of the debate is encapsulated when he positions himself with Castree’s (2005: 297) “call for situated understanding of how to make research matter.”

Ward's examination of the initial debate and the upsurge in literature about the 'new' public geographies (Chilvers *et al.*, 2006) allowed other geographers to consider how they would perform and present their research. Fuller's (2008: 838) article 'Public geographies: taking stock' noted that "Public geographies are and will be about interaction *and conversation*." This debate was framed within a UK setting and the influence of what Ward (2005: 314) termed the "invisible hand" of the RAE within academia was prevalent throughout. It also occurred during a period of changing digital interaction and presentation coupled with the regression of state actors who viewed geographic research as relevant. The academic world where journal publication and student lectures sufficed was being challenged and the need to find 'new audiences' for research and enabling geography to engage with matters of public importance had arrived (Eriksen, 2006).

2.4.2 The disciplinary praxis of public geography

Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) built on the work of Ward and Burawoy. He adapted Burawoy's four categories (Table 2.1) with Ward's 'Policy and public geographies' (Table 2.3) to produce a more detailed view of geographical knowledge production and praxis (Table 2.4). In adapting these ideas to geography, Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) agreed with the theoretical assumptions underlying Burawoy's original divisions of labour, noting that:

Disciplinary praxis, Burawoy argues, is defined principally through the form of knowledge produced (instrumental or reflexive) and its intended audience (academic, extra-academic)" (Kitchin *et al.*, 2013b; 58).

Table 2.4: Forms of geographical knowledge production and praxis

Forms of geographical knowledge production and praxis		
	Academic audience	Extra-academic audience
<i>Instrumental knowledge</i>	<i>Professional geography</i>	<i>Applied (policy) geography</i>
Knowledge	Theoretical/empirical	Concrete
Legitimacy	Scientific norms	Effectiveness
Accountability	Peers	Clients/patrons
Pathology	Self-referentiality	Servility
Politics	Professional self-interest	Policy intervention
<i>Reflexive knowledge</i>	<i>Critical geography</i>	<i>Participatory and public geography</i>
Knowledge	Foundational	Communicative
Legitimacy	Moral vision	Relevance
Accountability	Critical intellectuals	Designated publics
Pathology	Dogmatism	Faddishness
Politics	Internal debate	Public dialogue

Source: Kitchin et al., (2013b: 58)

While peer-to-peer academic contact in respect of both professional and critical geography are “well established and mainstreamed,” Kitchin *et al.* (2013b: 59) reflect that in contrast there appears to be an apparent reticence on the part of academics to fully engage with extra-academic audiences. Interactions within the spheres of applied (policy) and participatory/public geography are “still contentious and much more open to critique and debate.” The contested nature of applied (policy) geography has principally been the direct result of the disengagement of state bodies in many western countries from geographical knowledge production (Massey, 2002). This has ensured that an extra-academic audience in this area has remained problematic (see Martin, 2001; Woods & Gardner, 2011).

The work of Pain (2004) and Pain *et al.*, (2007) alerted academics that “participatory geographies entail a direct and sustained political and social engagement with a community” (Kitchin *et al.*, 2013b: 58). The recent acceptance of participatory and public geography as a “legitimate and valued form of geographical praxis” (Kitchin *et al.* 2013b: 58) has facilitated a reunion between geography academics and communities. This still nascent audience needs time to evolve and its development will be dependent upon the ability of geographers to link community issues with public geographies that have a populist purpose, such as ‘The Day of Geography’ (see <http://www.dayofgeography.com/>) and the ‘People’s Geography Project’ (see <http://www.peoplesgeographyproject.org/>).

Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) attribute the disconnect between knowledge production for academic and non-academic audiences to the discipline:

still wrestling with questions concerning the use, value, morals, ethics, work practices and evaluation related to the form of knowledge, legitimacy, accountability, pathology and politics of extra-academic forms of geographical knowledge production and praxis. Kitchin *et al.* (2013b: 59)

This reasoning bears a striking resemblance to reasoning put forward by Burawoy (2005a) when warning of the difficulties that arise when academics attempt to connect the four different types of sociology. The difficulties arise:

because they call for profoundly different cognitive practices, different along many dimensions - form of knowledge, truth, legitimacy, accountability, and politics, culminating in their own distinctive pathology.” (Burawoy, 2005a: 16)

This suggests that geography the discipline has made progress, albeit slow, in identifying the publics with whom it seeks to engage. This leisurely pace has, however, put the discipline on the back foot as the new media environment has changed the rules of engagement from identifying different publics with whom to engage to “addressing multiple publics in the same instance” (Kitchin *et al.*, 2013b: 60).

This “reimagining of our audiences” (Beer, 2013: 92) through newer forms of electronic engagement has enabled both academics and non-academics to participate in increased conversations with wider audiences. This poses the question for academics as to how, when so much engaging work is being done by non-academics, they are going to compete in what Davis (2013: 83) terms our “digitally networked and rhizomatic times.” In an article titled “Public geographies through social media,” Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) detail and contend that the collective blog (IAN, referred to on page 40) provides an example of public engagement by academics with ‘a’ public. The article argues that each site of public geography resonates distinctive politics and that digital media merely complements, but does not replace, existing forms of knowledge production. In common with both Burawoy and Ward, they content that differing publics be viewed not as antithetical, but complementary.

2.4.3 We can identify the audience but how do we engage?

The IAN blog discussed by Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) presents one means by which geographers had a research-driven interaction with the public. The blog stimulated in excess of 500 newspaper articles, radio interviews and television appearances, and

invitations to speak to activists, professional societies and governmental departments (Kitchin *et al.*, 2013a). This highlights the success of creating visibility via social media given “the din” (Beer, 2013: 93) it creates. The blog, however, still represents only a single format of engagement not accessible to all (Graham, 2013), and in spite of the success of blogs in creating “tiny fissures in the mediascape” (Macgilchrist & Böhmig, 2012: 97), Davis (2013) alerts us that blogs are simply an extension of existing political forms and will not, on their own, change the world.

The concept of public geography proposed by Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) was argued by Crampton *et al.* (2013: 74) to be “too narrow” and they note that the media is “only one public in a world of many possible publics.” Meanwhile, Castree (2013) directs the discipline’s attention to a particular public, which is the student body—he notes that 20,000 tertiary students annually study geography in the UK—in the search to provide a consistent and settled public pedagogy. In challenging, from a radical scholarship perspective, the assumptions of the meanings of ‘publics’, Delgado & Habermehl (2013: 6) examined the process of engagement in research projects and what it means to “do public geography” or “make geography public”. They distinguish between two publics in the research process who are diametrically opposed. The first is an active knowledge creator and implies a public that drives and is actively involved as “knowledgeable co-creators” (Delgado & Habermehl, 2013: 9) in shaping the research and its findings. The second is a passive actor with whom knowledge is shared and suggests a public waiting for an academic epiphany resulting from research. They detailed seven actors in research design namely; academia, policy makers, private sector, general, public, community, mass media and non-human, and at what stage (either the preparation, research or dissemination stage) these actors became involved.

In a response to critiques, Kitchin (2014) noted that the IAN blog was not mutually exclusive and was informed by and enacted alongside other more participatory forms of public geography. Further, extending Burawoy’s taxonomy of forms of knowledge production, he makes the case for a form of geographical praxis which he defines as “the specific techniques of engagement” (Kitchin, 2014: 153), namely writing. He argues for the use of 10 different forms of writing (Table 2.5), across three of the potential audiences identified in Table 2.4, namely critical, applied (policy) and public/participatory geographies. He contends that as a discipline we need to embrace

each of these forms of praxis and that these can be used to create and engage public geographies.

Table 2.5: The ten forms of geographical praxis

Writing Praxis	
Fiction	Blog posts
Newspaper opinion	Email
Policy papers	Policy consultation
Television documentary	Academic papers
PowerPoint Slides	Grant applications

Source: Kitchin (2014)

In expanding the forms of public geography (Table 2.4), Kitchin (2013a, 2014) argues that individual geographers have the freedom to direct their research and position themselves to either an academic or extra academic audience, which is contingent upon where they would like the discipline to be located. However, the individual freedom of the geography academic to direct their research appears somewhat fallacious. Castree (2013: 165) writes of institutional mechanisms which promote tightly formatted and regulated “systems of progression, reward and recognition” while Graham (2013: 79) speaks of the “deep institutional embeddedness” in funding, research and dissemination. These forces, while initially implicated in framing the requirement for research to demonstrate social ‘impact’, have resulted in public geography being driven by the “need for ‘impact’” (Rogers *et al.*, 2014) and the next section will focus on this topic.

2.5 ‘Impact’ and public geography

‘Public geography’ and ‘impact’ have become tightly entwined as geographers attempt to guide the discipline in the direction of increased visibility and public relevance. Impact is the latest meter within the “panopticization of the university” (Amit, 2000: 218) and has led to an affective turn within the discipline towards the social ‘impact’ of research. In 2014, a special edition of ACME presented a thematic intervention on impact in which (Rogers *et al.*, 2014: 2) discuss ‘The Impact Agenda and Human Geography in UK Higher Education’, and set out how impact has been “understood, approached, engaged with or resisted by geographers.” A further twelve articles examined related subjects ranging from the politics of impact and the potential loss of curiosity to accidental impact and organic public geographies. While the forces of impact “chimes strongly with work on public geographies” (Rogers *et al.*, 2014: 3),

I argue that the ‘impact’ agenda’ has effectively subsumed debate around public geography. Nevertheless, geographers have been able to generate through participatory methods, spaces where impact has the potential to realise the increased visibility and research relevance that drives both the move for greater social impact from research and public geography.

The literature detailing public geography and its emergence from public sociology has been documented in Section 2.4 above. In recognising the emergence of impact and what she terms the “outward-facing” drivers within the discipline, Maddrell (2010: 150) issued a challenge both to herself and her readers to produce a minimum of, “at least one form of public engagement and one non-academic piece of writing a year” Maddrell (2010: 153). She differentiates between the academic and extra-academic publics which individual academics can challenge themselves to engage with. She has yet to lay claim to the label of academic clairvoyant; however, her comment that “we need to communicate in different registers for wider audiences and wider ‘impact’.” (Maddrell 2010: 152) predates by four years the intervention on the forces of impact by Rogers *et al.* (2014). These forces, however, need to be positioned in the broader context of the thirty year project that has gradually matched research funding to performance measures in higher education.

2.5.1 Matrices, matrices, matrices

The importance of metrics in higher education has been discussed by Strathern (2000), Howie (2005), Monatersky (2005), De Angelis & Harvey (2009), Burrows (2012) and Shore & Wright (2015). The consistent theme that emerges is the incremental use of measures within the academy and how the university is increasingly enacted through “complex data assemblages” (Knowles & Burrows 2014: 238) which include, but are not limited to, routine academic practices such as recruiting students, teaching, marking, giving feedback, applying for research funding, publishing and citing the work of others. Some of these, such as journal citations, are what Knowles & Burrows (2014: 239) term “digital by-products” of routine transactions whilst others are collected by surveys or other formal data collection techniques such as a national student survey. Additionally, the production of all this data requires the creation of bureaucratic positions that are tasked with channelling and managing the flow from this data tsunami into quantifiable units which are

designed to enable institutions to assess the quality of administrative, teaching and research work.

A detailed history of the evolution and the incremental deployment of metrics in the UK to determine the block grants awarded to universities over the seven iterations of performance measures is provided by Knowles & Burrows (2014). The REF is conducted every four to six years to “inform the selective allocation of . . . research funding” and to provide “accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment” and to “provide benchmarking information” (HCFCE 2011a). This plethora of institutional measures described above, was joined in REF 7.0 by ‘impact’, as the “restless machine of higher education governance” (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 184) continued with the latest iteration of government funding for research in the UK.

The six previous iterations of the REF were based on judgements by fellow academics about the “quality of individuals’ publications and of the institutional environment” (Rogers *et al.*, 2014: 2). The launch of REF 7.0 in 2014 differs from previous assessment systems as the concept of impact was introduced in an attempt to measure the ‘reach and significance’ of research beyond the university. The significance of impact is demonstrated by the fact that up to 20% of funding grant allocations in the future will be assessed on ‘impact case studies’, which are discussed below. The measure aims to quantify the ‘impact’ of academic research beyond the traditional peer-to-peer publication and academic network. In acknowledging this continued “corporatization of academia” (Bauder & Engel-Di Mauro, 2008: 729), coupled with the extension of “academic audit” (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 184), I set out exactly what impact is, how it will be assessed and any potential problems.

2.5.2 The what, where, when, why and how of ‘impact’

The word ‘impact’, despite its simple and linear definition, is a much more nebulous concept in terms of its deployment in the context of academic research. In discussing research funding, performance assessment, and social impact in Section 2.2.6 above, I included the wording from the REF guidelines issued in 2011 of how ‘impact’ would be classified. In summary, academics need to demonstrate that research and the output that results from it, possess both a degree of utility to non-academics and influence individuals or groups on a local, regional, national or

international scale. Universities need to “establish their social value in beneficial collaboration..” (HEFCE, 2010: 110) with industry, public and third sector organisations; therefore ‘impact’ is set to become a central feature of the algorithms used to distribute block grants.

The language within the REF is important as ‘impact case studies’ will be assessed on the basis of ‘reach and significance’ of the research. An ‘impact case study’ requires detailed, provable and auditable documented evidence, which Dunleavy (2012) highlights must itemise the pathways between research and impact to the ‘users and beneficiaries’ of the research. This more mercantile appellation has evolved from the descriptor of ‘stakeholders’, which was the ubiquitous term previously applied to those involved in all aspects of any research process. The term ‘reach’ allows for broad as opposed to deep social influence while ‘significance’ allows for influence to be concentrated in a small area or set of issues. Academic departments, or “units of assessment,” (Rogers *et al.*, 2014) having engaged with the appropriate criteria and terminology and identified the researchers and the potential ‘users and beneficiaries’ of any research, then decide which ‘impact case studies’ they submit to the REF panels for assessment.

Finally, the ‘impact case studies’ have a star ranking system which assists the panel in reviewing the research. The measures range from one star which is recognised nationally, to two and three stars which are internationally recognised and four stars which is considered world-leading. The panel assesses only case studies ranked two stars and above, which posits questions in relation to the ‘academic worth’ of national or one star impact case studies. The research needs to have occurred within a time frame of 2008-2013, although the research generative of impact could have taken place as far back as 1993. In establishing a system that orients research towards ‘users and beneficiaries’ (read ‘publics’) a framework has been constructed that promotes work that engages with ‘publics’ but only at a certain level (international not local).

2.5.3 ‘Impact’ and potential complications

The introduction of ‘impact’ as a component of an academic performance measure signifies a permanent digression from the variables in previous performance matrices. The introduction of any measurement will, as Pain *et al.* (2011: 184) note, “not simply record empirical facts but actively produce the very phenomena under investigation.”

This section will document five areas: curiosity, accidental impact, impact as a result of poor research, the timeliness of impact and the co-production of knowledge where the assessment of impact has the potential to prove contentious.

An argument is frequently represented by the basic dichotomy, curiosity-led research versus useful research. This debate centres on how the introduction of impact may present a threat to research driven by academic curiosity and autonomy. Curiosity, argue Phillips (2010a) and Gade (2011), is one of the key internal motivators for a large number of academics. The work of accounting matrices, audit imperatives and the compliance culture implicated by impact that exists in neoliberal educational institutions presents a threat to curiosity-led research. This form of research can be useful and Phillips (2014: 497), in referencing Edwards (2010), asserts the time devoted to the effective box-ticking of compliance distracts the energy for academics to have the “space to dream” and be creative.

The artificial polarity of the debate as noted here, needs to be viewed in the context of the results of research being predictable in contrast to more open-ended outcomes. There are those who are sympathetic to the notion of more ‘useful’ research being encouraged as some felt that an element of the curiosity shown by their colleagues verged towards “indulgent” (Phillips 2013: 39). In raising the debate above the jejune language of divide, Phillips (2010a and 2014) suggested that curiosity can be embedded within practical activity and also be a catalyst for social change. The dialogue then becomes “the curious and the useful” (Phillips, 2010b) as opposed to the binary of curiosity or impact.

Impact is an outcome and as Kneale (2014: 44) notes, “we can’t always anticipate when and how we will engage with others”. The case of accidental impact was engaged with by Kneale (2014) through his work on the historical geographies of drinking in the UK which unexpectedly led him to appear as a witness at the House of Commons Select Committee on health policy. While Cook *et al.* (2014) detailed their serendipitous research impact in relation to their involvement in a project titled ‘Follow the Things’. He noted that despite analytical data which revealed measurable hits on the website and related links, there was no evidence that the site had in fact “impacted upon anyone’s understandings or practices” Cook *et al.* (2014: 48). In contrast, the two papers he published on the research in 2000 and 2001 resonated with “unanticipated audiences” (Rogers *et al.*, 2014: 6). This generated some follow-up

contacts based on the academic literature and pedagogical principles in the articles, which ultimately led to the process of him becoming involved in teacher education and curriculum reform in the UK. As Pain *et al.* (2011: 186) note “impact can never, in any research, be guaranteed.” and any assessment measure that specifically seeks to plan for impact has fundamental flaws.

In contrast to the potential of accidental impact from research, Mendel (2014) examined how poor research can gain impact. She cites the example of a report completed for the UK government called ‘The Shape of Jobs to Come’, produced by Tawlar & Hancock (2010) for the Fast Future Consultancy. The report was backed by high level government support and attracted significant media attention, “178 pieces of coverage across regional, consumer and online media” (Mendel, 2014: 58). The report, however, contained numerous inaccuracies and questionable assumptions. Ironically, the criticisms of the report produced greater impact, as people questioned how such poor quality research was allowed to gain such a level of influence.

The term “futurology” (Knowles & Burrows, 2014: 245), applies to artificial constructs such as the REF who try to predict specific dates when impact will occur. The impact of the research undertaken by Cook *et al.* (2014) which is detailed above, was not fully recorded until 2011, over a decade later. This iteration of REF allows the research generative of impact to go back as far as 1993; however, this is an example of how attempts to align the temporality of research with impact are flawed as planning for impact from research is paradoxical. There is, however, the reasonable expectation from funders and colleagues to expect timely and accurate reports on the progress of any research.

Impact has the potential to produce conflict between the time and timeliness required to be able to undertake research in ethically appropriate ways. Pickerall (2014: 25) understands impact in terms of “helping those with whom we work” and advocates for participatory/ activist approaches. The slow, mundane participatory or activist work is reliant on the development of trust relationships that need time and space to enable useful work to be done with research participants. This time needs to be protected, not rationed. The timeliness of such approaches is reflected in a researcher’s usefulness to participants based on donating time, resources, being an ally and giving back in terms of goodwill. She contends that academic journal publications help only the academics and the policy changes which academics promote are

frequently aspirational. Pickerall (2014) argues that any political work she does in relation to her activist or participatory research is organically intertwined with her working week.

Participatory research is based on the co-production of knowledge between researchers and participants. Cook *et al.* (2014: 49) propose a “diffuse” appreciation of impact where academics listen as much as they speak, which they contrast with a great lecture. Proponents of participatory methods argue that research between universities and communities as well as the activities and resources within universities should be deployed with the aim of progressive social change. They argue that a key element in this is:

Processes of interaction between researchers, projects, knowledges and wider society should look very different to the producer/consumer business model increasingly encouraged by successive UK governments.’ (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 185)

Participatory research challenges the largely one-way uni-directional knowledge relationship from university to society. Impact is two-way (Kindon *et al.*, 2007, Fuller & Askins, 2010) where research design, conduct, and outcomes are profoundly shaped and informed by the participants, multiple users and public involved in the co-production of knowledge. This method encourages academics to listen AND talk and correlates with the findings of Delgado & Habermas (2013) who differentiated between geography for publics or geography with publics. These five specific criticisms of impact, however, do not answer how the introduction of impact as ‘the’ latest assessment tool has the potential to induce, either by design or accident, alterations in the way researchers and departments undertake research.

2.5.4 The tension between public geography and impact?

So how will impact shape research? As Pain (2014: 19) notes, if there was a global impact assessment for “agonising about the state of the discipline” then geographers could claim global excellence. The tension between impact and public geography stems from a series of debates which need to be detailed before expanding on more precise spaces of contention between the two ideas.

The impact debate in the UK was foreshadowed by that in the USA between relevance and utility (see Staeheli & Mitchell, 2005). In the USA, universities become engaged in community partnerships where there is an expectation that the institutions

help improve both the lives of local residents and contribute to the regional and state economies. Rogers *et al.* (2014) note that in Australia, while still being used in the area of policy, the metamorphosis of the ideas of public engagement and outreach to impact, are being driven by the Australian Research Council. In New Zealand, Lewis & Shore (2018) note that research funds have adopted an investment-oriented approach in their potential engagements with publics. There has been significant capital investment by the UK government in implementing the REF and given the history of New Zealand following higher education institutional trends from the Anglophone world, the assumptions of both Jump (2010) and Reisz (2010) that impact is here to stay, is pertinent.

In the debate about linking impact and funding, Rogers *et al.* (2014: 4) observe that the REF framework presents public engagement and relevance as “an inherently good thing.” The question is: good for whom? The framework would appear to offer promise to the idea of connecting academics to a public beyond the academy, which is the central tenet of my thesis. Although, once the “impact genie” (Knowles & Burrows, 2014: 245) is out of the bottle then, like other measures it will change the way that intellectual labour is reformulated. This is conceded by Saetnan, Lomell & Hammer (2010) who argue that the performative co-construction of academic life through multiple metrics is actively constituting the world. In this section, I will detail the potential threats the institutionalisation of impact presents to greater public engagement and then present an argument that geographers may profit from the shift in funding assessment that actively promotes engagement with multiple publics.

‘Impact’ is “messy and unpredictable” (Rogers *et al.*, 2014: 4) and potentially risky. The increased consolidation and recalibration of government influence over funding will lead to two, probably unintentional, pressures being exerted upon universities. Firstly, as Knowles & Burrows (2014: 245) note “cheap gains in public engagement are implicitly or explicitly constructed.” This has the potential for academics to engage with audiences with whom they are familiar such as students, other academics or research groups with whom they already have a relationship, as opposed to new and extra academic audiences which may be viewed as more risky. These groups are characterised by Knowles & Burrows (2014: 248) as providing a “soft infrastructure” as they are easy to work with, while they also raise the possibility of academics, who are blinded by the promise of indices, engaging in the “grooming” of more malleable

and friendly research participants. The (un)willingness of academics and departments to undertake 'risky' projects has been documented by Cahill & Torre (2007) in relation to the legacy of the RAE, which they proved resulted in a prevalence of theory articles as opposed to research articles. This focus on 'projects that count' mirrors the avoidance of projects that may take time and 'do not count'.

The lure of funding will exhort many departments to maximise research grants which will lead to departments looking at ways of impact that "readily lend themselves to clear demonstrations of impact" (Knowles & Burrows, 2014: 245). They contend that more speculative and overtly conceptually calibrated research will drop down research agendas. They provide the example of how research on assemblages, mobility and dwelling, while having a slower, more subtle and indirect impact on the public, will suffer as it is more difficult to line up with audit and influence. This leads to a default position where, as Cook *et al.* (2014) note, the safest REF papers and the most audit-friendly research becomes the single authored paper based on funded research where the public has been largely predetermined.

Secondly, Knowles & Burrows (2014: 245) warn of the danger that the "deepening utilitarian influence" of government presents to research which effectively links its usefulness to the policy and political agenda of governments. The potential power of impact rests not only with government funders but also the existing hierarchies that have formed as a result of previous funding and institutional environments. Ceuit (2009) notes that the potential of impact to challenge normative power structures may risk 'entrenching' the power relations between the academy and wider society, an argument with which Slater (2012) concurs, suggesting that impact may simply reinforce the existing academic hegemony. This creates a tension with public geography as the existing hegemony is still focused on one-way academic to public engagement. The dangers of coupling research and policy to the potential for future funding, opens the door for governments to ignore research if it does not fit their purpose. Thus, impact becomes enforceable.

The four star grading of impact case studies detailed above, evokes the descriptors local, national and international and creates an obvious avenue for "audit-orientated institutions" (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 186) to play to the rules. The decision to evaluate only impact case studies of two stars and above, privileges any international research over national or grassroots engagement. Yet, evaluation of what is world-leading is always

fraught with difficulty and if local becomes associated with ‘modest impact’ then the pressures of audit may force some institutions and academics to shy away from local research (Johnston, 2008). The need to demonstrate “all of this internationally recognised fabulousness” (Knowles & Burrows, 2014: 244) encourages what Dunleavy (2012) has predicted to lead to “inflated fairy tales of influence.” A further danger presented by scaling is that economic accountancy will trump social accountability, where both impact on non-academic partners in powerful institutions at a national and international level and impact that has been forecast to lead to higher economic benefits, will be graded more highly. So, are there opportunities for impact and public geography to carry equal weighting and produce greater disciplinary engagement beyond the academy?

2.5.5 The synergy between public geography and impact

Impact will affect all geographers at all career stages. Initially, given the weight of literature opposed to the introduction of impact, it may appear surprising that geographers, especially those involved with participatory approaches, cautiously welcome its introduction (see Pain *et al.*, 2011). Non-academics who collaborate with researchers help in shaping research agendas and play a role in directing both the processes and outcomes of any research (see Pain, 2014; Pickerall, 2014). This perspective is agreed upon by Cook *et al.* (2014: 47) who suggest that impact, from the viewpoint of radical geography scholars, presents, “new opportunities to exceed the apparent limits of the audit game in ways that allow geographical research to contribute to wider struggles of social change”.

Pickerall (2014: 24) in referencing Staeheli & Mitchell (2005) and the relevance debate detailed above, observes that geographers have for years been attempting to answer the “constructive request” that geography and geographers have impact beyond the academy. This can be achieved by focusing equally on both the input and output processes of the research process.

Participatory geographers emphasise the working ‘with’ rather than working ‘on’. They argue that effective knowledge co-production is portrayed by “a more diverse and porous series of smaller transformative actions” (Pain, 2014: 21) that arise through a collective understanding of what we are trying to achieve. The number, as opposed to the size of the engagements, invokes the work of Kitchin *et al.* (2013a) and the IAN

blog detailed above, which produced “tiny fissures in the mediascape” (Macgilchrist & Böhmgig, 2012: 97). The process of collaborative research with non-academic partners often generates impact and change which it is argued will be sustained as it is situated within the people, organisation and place. This speaks to Burawoy (2004) and his argument that publics are not exclusive, but overlap one another and was reaffirmed by a disciplinary kaumātua who, during his interview, noted that any research involves contact with the public which, however slight, has the potential to influence research. Participatory geographers want co-production of research to be more widely valued as opposed to a “tick-box of shallow public engagement” (Pain, 2011: 187).

Impact is not a fixed and settled measure. The willingness for geographers to assert that impact is about “exerting influence beyond the academy” Knowles & Burrows (2014: 237) presents an opportunity for participatory research, radical and activist scholarship to offer spaces where the discipline generally and individual geographers can engage with ideas and practices where public geography can be researched, produced and enacted. In attempting to promote organic public geographies, Cook *et al.*, (2007) details how writing critical, radical, scholarly papers that can be published in books and journals and are available freely on line, enables ‘publics’ outside the academy, such as teachers, journalists, filmmakers, to become engaged with geography and geographers. In addition REF panel members will shape “what impactful geography becomes” (Pain, 2014: 19) through grading of ‘impact case studies’ by negotiation with research users for impact element and measurability. While activist geographers such as Pain (2014: 21) contend that a series of “porous and small transformative actions” by all involved in the research process, whether offered by feminist, post-colonial or ‘other’ perspectives, add to the collective impact of research.

In positioning themselves from the perspective that ‘impact’ cannot simply be achieved by following standardised bureaucratic processes, Pain *et al.* (2011: 185) attempt to re-orient the debate, proposing three ways that the concept of impact may be reworked to produce “impactful and accountable geographic practices”. The first, that impact is a two-way agenda, has been detailed above and encourages academics to listen as well as talk to research participants. The second, also detailed above, refers to the dangers of scale usurping quality with the potential for work with small and local groups, which is a key ingredient in participatory research, being overlooked. Thirdly,

they argue that the processes involved in undertaking research “deserve a central place in the evaluation of impact” (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 186). This speaks to the debate that the results and output of research, which are simpler to measure, are prioritised over the means by which research processes are undertaken. This is in spite of any linear relationship between policy studies research and impact having “been widely discredited” (Meth & Williams, 2010). This complements the work of Johnston (2008) who demonstrated that the three grading criteria in the 2008 RAE were all open to subjective measure. The existence of a copious range of measurements over disciplines indicates that, as Pain, (2011: 186) contends, “softer measures of evaluation” can be deployed to include all the processes of research in future.

These three practices offer alternatives to the “gymnastics of audit” (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 184) and seek to reverse the fiscal impetus of funding models which rank accountancy before accountability. These methods of public engagement offer the discipline and researchers, faced with new forms of assessment and the need to demonstrate new forms of verification and new reckonings, opportunities to demonstrate what Shore (2000: 59) termed “new visibilities”. Academics, argues Pain (2014), have been culpable of working in assessment exercises that have been up-scaled in every iteration. She favours impact but warns that the collective needs to frame the impact agenda between the binary of “loud/public/one-way/high-scale/single-blow ‘impact’ versus quiet/two-way/local/iterative/processual ‘impact’” (Pain, 2014: 22).

2.6 The geographer as public intellectual

So can academics perform public geography and become more “outward-facing” (Madrill (2010: 150) within their own departments? Challenges exist and geographers and their HoDs and deans may interpret the difficulties inherent in performance measures as deprioritising public geography (in whatever form that takes), whether or not it actually means that. The last point is important because if they are right, then there is a major material impediment to performing public geography, which those who advocate it will have to address and develop strategies to combat. If it is not true, then there is more room to operate by persuading geographers and deans that this is not the case and simply beginning to do more public geography. An underutilised forum in geography is the public intellectual who, without attempting to draw parallels

with Jedi turned hermit Obi-Wan Kenobi from Star Wars, and despite a strong historical tradition in our discipline, appears to have become shy and elusive since the cultural turn.

The absence of any ‘geographers’ or anyone willing to claim the moniker of being a geographer in differing international and locally presented lists of public intellectuals is noticeable, but also presents a space and vehicle to illuminate geography’s ideas and narratives. The requirement in academic workplaces for public geography and an increased engagement outside traditional academic circles has yet to be occupied by individuals who are public intellectuals.

2.7 Conclusion: Finding public geography in New Zealand

The performances of public geography in New Zealand have not been examined or researched. The PBRF assessment round in 2018, while at a markedly smaller scale than the REF in the UK, has provided a rudimentary understanding amongst geographers that future research will involve an increased public focus. The beginning of the move to the ‘public’ in geography can’t be traced to a single conceptual article or argument; however, the institutional framework under which academics and researchers are managed and critiqued presents increasing challenges. Workplace intangibles such as teaching quality, student supervision and institutional collegiality have been upstaged by an “emphasis on metrics and output matrices” (Pain *et al.*, 2011: 120) observable through pressures of journal ‘impact’ and research innovation which influence funding and career development.

I have briefly attempted to engage with the literature which informs the debate on public geography. The backdrop of international interest in public geography coupled with on-going anxieties relating to the discipline’s relevance, provides a space for my thesis to investigate public geography in a New Zealand context and the multiple spheres in which people engage. Lewis (2015: 3) notes that the defining feature of New Zealand geography in the future will be, “the combination of critical scholarship, global connectivity, and engaged even enactive local research.” Public does not have to entail high media visibility: blogs, lectures, journals, public intellectuals, books, magazines, public meetings, policy engagements, and celebrity backers all provide ‘impact’ for the discipline in differing ways and to differing publics. The key point is that each public engagement can be viewed as an opportunity into how thinking

geographically can help address issues of concern to the different publics with which we engage.

In attempting to build on the idea of ‘multiple publics’, and drawing on the literature review relating to public geography in Section 2.3, I initially created Figure 2.1, which represents a basic structure detailing the spaces where public geography may be performed and produced. I presented this at the joint NZGS

/Institute of Australian Geographers (IAG) Conference in 2014 and acknowledge that it was prepared from a New Zealand context and a working diagram.

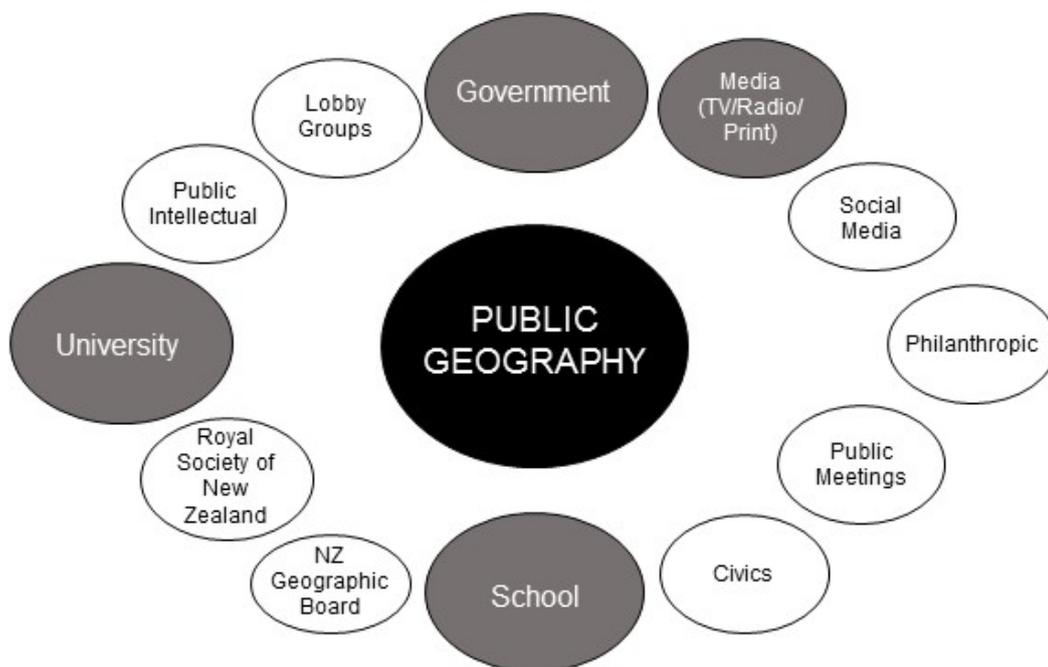


Figure 2.1: Differing geographic publics (Adapted from Howie, 2014)

The diagram aims to capture the full range of public geography practised by academic geographers. This diagram was based around the idea that public geography was a central theme as to how the discipline and its practitioners may conceptually frame the potential audiences to whom the findings of their research may be communicated. It also offers something of a set of target audiences that geographers may address to sharpen their impact and confront anxieties centred on relevance. The inclusion of schools and universities speaks to the institutional homes where geography the discipline is actively reproduced. The spaces of potential public geography indicate areas in which geographical knowledge could be generated, co-produced and deployed.

The next chapter details the ways in which I go about examining the nature and extent of public geography in New Zealand as the potential presented in Figure 2.1. above. The chapter sets out the theory which underlies the methods of data gathering I chose to employ and details the data sets I researched, the results of which I subsequently examine across three data chapters.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

My stated position as 'a geographer' at all points in my research did have some impacts. (Le Heron, E., 2008: 14)

3.1 A research journey

Research, like education, is more a journey than an instrumental process. Anderson & Arsenault (2005) characterise it as an immersion within a field of knowledge-making. This is a process of learning by reading and engaging with new concepts whilst simultaneously building upon encounters with the circuitous formulations of socially constructed discourses and the material practices and experiences of empirical fields. In one sense, my journey started in a college classroom in Auckland in 2012 with the *Landmarks* event that re-aroused my dormant geographical imagination. In another, however, it had begun much earlier with ten years of teaching geography in New Zealand schools. This rich, informal ethnography involved daily encounters with geographical imaginaries and their structured forms in school curricula, the challenges of geographical learning, and the values of the discipline and its potential to inform and affect. I lived through ten years of these encounters, the interactions that ensued, and the shifting priorities and fortunes of the discipline that shaped them.

In writing this thesis, I built on this rich, tacit and experiential knowledge of geographical imaginaries and their public work and follow my journey forward from 2012 and the new experiences and encounters that constitute it. I followed my own practice as a geographer and a new set of encounters with academic geographers as a fellow geographer for five years, as well as working with postgraduate colleagues and as a tutor with several cohorts of undergraduate students. These encounters extended beyond living geography and geographically in a different educational institution, to an on-going exploration of texts about the discipline, documents tracking its interests, priorities and internal debates. The research is both observational and participatory, both of which are key tools in the social geographer's tool kit (Pain, 2004). I also deployed more standard qualitative techniques which included semi-structured interviews with geographers across New Zealand, the structured analysis of

institutional websites and geographic documents, each geographer's curriculum vitae (CV) where available, and also questionnaires which were distributed to third-year geography students. In this chapter I outline my journey, the tracks I took and the key waypoints through which I passed.

3.2 Enactive research

Harvey's address to the IGU congress in Seoul in 2000 emphasised the multiplicities of geographic knowledge and the globalising world in which students, academics, businesses and private enterprises operate. Feminist geographer Gillian Rose noted that

subjugated and critical knowledges work from their situatedness to produce partial perspectives on the world. They see the world from specific locations, embodied and particular, and never innocent; siting is intimately involved in sighting. (Rose, 1997: 308)

For many New Zealand geographers, this observation points to a situatedness of knowledge production that takes seriously Carolan's (2009: 1) observation that "I do therefore there is." New Zealand academic geographers Le Heron & Lewis (2011) contend this means that methodology begins to shape worlds – geography is what geographers do, and geographers can create new worlds. They argue that grasping this insight has begun to create a new project for geography, new audiences, capabilities and purpose that demonstrate the enabling and performative opportunities provided by a geographical perspective. A prominent feature of this project has been the way geographers have carved new thought and research spaces for themselves as New Zealand geography's "perimeters of protective institution" (Le Heron, 2013: 379) have frayed around them. As I began to conduct research on geography and geographers in New Zealand, looking for the ways in which these new performances of discipline intersect with publics, I became increasingly aware of how my own research was also enactive and that I was working with my participants to imagine and enact a robust, resilient and relevant geography.

In my research journey, I have adopted an enactive disposition that begins from Le Heron & Lewis's call to perform geography in new ways. Working with other New Zealand geographers and informed by Carolan's (2013) concerns with research in the wild, Law and Urry's (2004) earlier attention to "enacting the social", and Greenaway's (2013) co-production of knowledge accounts which insist that knowing

emerges through an engagement in shared action, Le Heron & Lewis (2011) argued that geography is productive and involved in making the world. Enactive research begins by recognising this point and seeks then to make the world knowingly and politically in the process of researching it as much as by representing results and expecting others to act upon the representation. This may involve the co-production of knowledge with research participants and “engaging with others to produce knowledge through co-learning and constructive critique” (Lewis *et al.*, 2013: 189), or simply using the research process to plant new ideas and change the framing of knowledge in the course of interviewing participants. Lewis and Rosin (2013: 254) emphasise “methodological experimentation” in research as a way of revealing differing choices and possibilities that better represent the “potentialities of geography” (Le Heron & Lewis, 2011: 4).

In an environment where social scientists can no longer rely upon convincing state actors to deliver on their research findings to produce more efficient and just worlds, Carolan (2013) asks how enactive research might provide a politics of knowledge production for contemporary times. Le Heron & Lewis (2011) make this point in reference to a state-facing New Zealand geography under social democracy. They suggest that research was historically conducted in order to provide detailed, frequently empirical evidence and make recommendations to state actors, who may or may not act upon them. A complementary focus on enactive research and the co-production of knowledge allows geographers to develop more engaged methodologies, build different knowledge and practise a new politics of knowledge production.

In my research with geographers, not only did I work with colleagues to provide an account of their collective work that drew out its public dimensions and their potential, but in doing so I began to stimulate a deeper interest in it. My research became more and more overtly enactive as I grasped this opportunity as an alternative to my initial aim of conducting research that would somehow inform another *Landmarks*-like intervention in public geography for new times. I aimed to co-produce knowledge of public geography that would at the same time encourage geographers to value it and practise more of it. As an agent of the research process, I interacted directly with multiple actors in the New Zealand geography community, disrupting the world by my interest alone and demonstrating the generative capacity of research. The development of the framework of spaces of public geography was detailed in Figure 2.1 in the

previous chapter and it is this framework that provided the structure for the research project.

3.3 Identifying New Zealand's public geographies

The discussions in Chapter 2 locate the origins of public disciplinary knowledge and performance firmly within the academy. Whilst public intellectualism is something of an exception, with public intellectuals generally working as knowledge producers as well as knowledge translators and disseminators while not necessarily based in universities, discussion about public geography is focused on the work of academics. My research starts from this position, although I do pose the question of whether there are other sources of public geography in New Zealand, and whether public geographies might be co-produced with others in certain sites.

The research begins from the assumption that the academy and the production of academic geography in the form of research and the teaching of both research and undergraduate students lies at the core not just of disciplinary enterprise but of the production of geographical knowledge. Academic geographers are the discipline's full-time knowledge producers, the curators of its knowledge bases, and its custodians. It is their engagement with other sites of knowledge use and production that sustains flows around different sites, primarily in terms of flows from and to the centre. The work of public geography in all domains begins with this research, which may or may not be public-facing either in its design or in the practice of the geographers who produce and use it.

Geography is taught in six of New Zealand's eight universities, but in varied degree programmes and institutional structures (Table 3.1). The lack of a single consistent faculty or college in which the discipline is sited, coupled with the fact that two of the six named schools/departments do not have 'geography' in their title, makes identifying geography the discipline and geographers in the New Zealand academy challenging. It also makes self-identification problematic and means that different geographers in different locations produce their geographies in different conditions, under different pressures and for different audiences. This has implications for their attitudes towards and practice of public geography, both of their work generally and in terms of specific pressures with respect to performing public geography. Interpreting

their expected roles and practices is complicated by the institutional fracturing of the discipline which was detailed in Chapter 2.2.

Table 3.1: Academic teaching sites of geography in New Zealand in 2016

University	Faculty	School or department title
Auckland	Faculty of Science	School of Environment
Waikato	Faculty of Arts and Social Science	Geography, Tourism & Environmental Planning Programme
Massey	College of Humanities and Social Science	School of People, Environment and Planning
Victoria	Faculty of Science	School of Geography, Environment and Earth Science
Canterbury	College of Science	Geography Department
Otago	Division of Humanities	Geography Department

Assessing the nature and extent of the public geography performed in New Zealand is further complicated by uncertainty as to what is meant by the term. In this situation, the research is guided by the proposition that any knowledge-making directed to audiences beyond those involved in the reproduction, elaboration and extension of geographical knowledge is public geography. This proposition holds whether the knowledge-making which is seeking to transform worlds through policy, activism, citizenship, education or other, is viewed as intentional or coincidental. I tested this assumption by discussing the meaning of the term with research participants. Whilst I found that very few thought deeply about the definitional quandaries, most recognised that geographical knowledge does perform in various social worlds. Questions of relevance and impact were important to both academics institutionally and politically, as well as those in wider public spaces

In short, my approach was to use various methods, discussed below, to identify the practices of public geography in New Zealand. These methods assisted with the development of the forms of public geography, which was informed by the work of Ward (2006) (Table 2.3) and Kitchin *et al.* (2013b) (Table 2.4). A new and situated typology of spaces of public geography that is practised in New Zealand was developed and is represented by Figure 2.1.

I formulated an initial hypothesis that these spaces shown in Figure 2.1 would include the university, government, schools, the popular media, public meetings and the cross-cutting realms of public intellectualism. The working diagram and its spaces

was subsequently developed and eventually became Figure 6.1. These spaces are those to which geographical knowledge might be disseminated and then applied in New Zealand and where academic geographers might conceivably perform publicly, co-produce knowledge with others, or generate social impact.

3.4 Research methods in outline

The 'spaces of public geography' framework allowed a four-strand approach to be employed to examine the production of geographical knowledge as it might pertain to public geography. This involved:

1. Interviews with academic geographers.
2. Examination of an academic geographer's personal profile on their institutional websites, departmental curricula and CV.
3. Reading and document analysis of the works of academic geographers.
4. Media analysis of examples of public geography produced by (or co-produced with) professional geographers for public consumption.

The challenge was to identify the range of knowledge generating engagements performed in public spaces by academic geographers in New Zealand. This was achieved by examining secondary data and by conducting interviews with academic geographers and a range of professional geographers and other actors in public spaces where academic geography is commonly deployed. The decision to use interviews as my primary source of data collection was driven by two principal factors. Firstly, face-to-face semi-structured interviews allow both parties the freedom to pursue areas of interest and tangential concerns in conversation, which precipitates richer conversations. It offers potentially richer data. Secondly, the clustering of the majority of geographers in larger urban centres, combined with the small geographic scale of New Zealand, meant that interviewing geographers from across the whole of New Zealand was logistically possible.

The recorded interviews were transcribed and then manually coded based on the nine areas explored during the interview. The decision to manually code and not use software allows the researcher to become more engaged with the three forms of the interview (the recording, the transcript and the personal meeting) and represents a more holistic understanding of the subjects discussed. Manual coding, while more

time consuming, facilitates an engagement with the whole of the data while eroding the inclination to reduce the conversations to single measures.

3.4.1 Setting up the study

Academic geographers

To identify academic geographers, a database of those who worked within each university geography department was initially compiled on September 1st 2014 and updated on a six-monthly basis to account for staff movements, retirements and deaths. March 1st 2016 was chosen to be the base marker in determining a time when academic positions are most settled as it signifies the commencement of the academic year. The duration of this research witnessed variations within the academic geography population as people left, took on new jobs, and restructuring meant changes of direction for some schools and departments.

The aim was to identify a selection of academic geographers to interview, analyse their CVs and examine their public engagements. Geography's "nomenclature" (Finlayson, 2015) and the visibility of the title 'geography' and whether it is a department or school presented an initial dilemma and was discussed in Chapter 2.2.2. The problem was to identify the population of New Zealand geographers; however, not all geographers work in the units where geography is housed, and not all those working within those units are geographers. A senior geographer coined the phrase, "geographers in drag" (Interviewee 35), to identify the significant population of geographers who do not work in a 'geography' department but inhabit other departments within the university sector.

To identify this cohort and also eliminate from the database those individuals who, while working in a geography-named department, were not geographers, I needed to refine my research criteria. To achieve this I formulated, in conjunction with my supervisors, eight categories with equal weighting in an attempt to develop a set of criteria to identify academics as geographers. These criteria were that they:

- were positioned in geography-named department,
- taught a geography-named course in 2016,
- held a PhD in geography,
- self-identified as a geographer,

- published in an academic geography journal 2005-2016,
- attended an NZGS conference 2010-2016,
- were the recipient of an NZGS Award, and
- were an NZGS member between 2014-2016.

I was already in the process of compiling the information for the first of these criteria which is detailed in the first paragraph of this section. The base year of 2016 was decided upon as I had two and a half years of data for individuals who worked in geography-named departments and was in a position to identify individuals who taught on geography courses. I have not shown this data as an appendix as it has the potential to reveal some of my interviewees.

To identify those with a PhD in geography and also individuals who self-identified as a geographer, I researched three different sources which had the potential to contain the information. Firstly, I searched the web-based personal profiles of each individual on their institutional profile page to learn if the information in relation to their PhD qualifications and their self-identification was present. This was supplemented by searching for the individuals on the LinkedIn website, which frequently contained information relating to the educational history of the individual and how they positioned themselves professionally, for example as a geographer or an environmental scientist. Finally I did a search of the academic websites “ResearchGate” and “Academia.edu”. These sites provided further detail as to the personal positioning of the individual and also a more detailed catalogue of their publication outlets.

To ascertain the publication history of each individual I identified nine journals, eight of which are New Zealand-based, which I contend are the primary journals for New Zealand geographers. These were the *New Zealand Geographer*, *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, *Kotuitui*, the *New Zealand Journal of Geology and Geophysics*, *The Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, *New Zealand Population Review*, *New Zealand Journal of Education Studies*, *Mai Journal* and *Geographical Research*. The last journal, while based in Australia, is a primary journal for those physical geographers in New Zealand. I researched the back catalogue for each journal over the period 2005-2016 to identify individuals who had authored and co-authored papers in the respective publications.

To find out who had attended any of the four NZGS conferences held between 2010 and 2016, I researched the NZGS website which contained details of both the delegates attending and those presenting at each conference. I note that there may have been some individuals who attended conferences but were omitted from these documents or others who were noted as in attendance but who did not physically attend. The details of those who had received an award from the society dating back to 2002 were detailed on the society website. The final criterion of membership required me to contact the board of the NZGS and request permission to use a list of members from 2014-2016, which I gratefully received.

The final three criteria in particular identified a significant number of academics who worked in other departments within New Zealand universities but whose individual actions suggested a strong personal and disciplinary affinity as a geographer. The decision was made to categorise such individuals as geographers if they were identified in four of the eight categories.

The decision to expand the criteria from those who worked solely in named geography departments to include individuals who satisfied at least one of the further seven measures, increased the initial number of 'geographers' from 115 to 204. The introduction of the four out of eight criteria reduced the final number of academics in New Zealand who identified as 'geographers' to 109. In order to avoid accidentally excluding any 'geographers' from the list, I re-examined the details relating to each individual who had satisfied either three or four of the criteria.

The rechecking of my data confirmed the number of 109 academic geographers and I interviewed 54 of them (Table 3.2). I had initially interviewed some individuals based on the criteria that they worked in geography-named departments; however, a problem surfaced with seven of the interviewees failing to meet the four out of eight criteria which I had deployed to identify geographers. Of these, five did not self-identify as geographers, another who had co-authored a geography book satisfied only two of the eight criteria with another satisfying three criteria. This left my population at 47 individuals whom I interviewed from a population of 109, which represents 43% of the identified geographers in New Zealand based on the criteria I designed. I made the decision to exclude any interview comments or other information from these interviewees in the data chapters of this thesis.

Interviews were requested with academics and discussions were held with key geographers. I analysed their details from university websites which highlighted publications, courses taught, positions on editorial boards and university committees and students supervised and, when available, their CV. The interview consisted of a range of questions designed to record the practices of academic geographers, their experience of the discipline and their views of its trajectories (past, present and future), and the place of public geography in their work and the discipline more widely (see Appendix 3).

Differentiation was enabled by recognition of academics by career sub-disciplinary field, career stage and gender (see Table 3.2). This allowed representation of the physical and human sides of the discipline. Also, interviewees were identified at different career stages where ‘early-career geographer’ was attributed to those who were tutors or lecturers; ‘mid-career geographer’ was attributed to those who were senior lecturers; ‘senior geographer’ was attributed to those who were associate professors and professors and ‘disciplinary kaumātua’ was attributed to those who carried with them long careers within the discipline, administrative experience, and deep institutional knowledge.

The Māori word ‘kaumātua’ is given to individuals who have worked with their family and tribal groups over a sustained period and have earned respect and generated the wisdom of long-term engagement that allows them to both teach and guide in addition to preserving intergenerational knowledge. In the New Zealand context this designation for New Zealand academic geographers of long standing is appropriate.

Table 3.2: Career stages of interviewees

Interviewee career stages	Number of interviewees	Female	Male
Disciplinary kaumātua	9	1	8
Senior geographer	20	5	15
Mid-career geographer	10	4	6
Early-career geographer	8	5	3
Total	47	15	32

Interviews were conducted face-to-face which I contend facilitated deeper, more personalised and broad-ranging discussions than would be available through a phone interview via a questionnaire or interviewing using digital technologies, for example

Skype. The interviews, when combined with the background research I had undertaken into the interviewees' work, allowed a depth and flexibility of questioning along with the ability to react to changes in posture and mannerism, which are absent with other forms of engagement. Face-to-face meetings also allowed an opportunity to explore ideas which arose as a direct result of comments made by the interviewee, which may relate to individual knowledge they gained while working in geography departments in different institutions or the histories of the discipline. The ability of interviewees to identify and offer contacts with potential interviewees based upon their academic network resulted in a degree of snowballing, which arose organically through the less fixed environment of a semi-structured interview as opposed to a rigid and fixed set of interview questions or a questionnaire.

To provide more detailed information relating to geography academics as public knowledge disseminators, I created a matrix based on the individuals I had interviewed. I then further examined the CV and where available the academic CVs of those I interviewed. When added to the information obtained from the interviews I was able to create a public engagement table from 2006 to 2016 for each of the 47 individuals which provides a more robust set of data showing the public geography enacted by these academic geographers in New Zealand.

Professional geographers in public spaces

I expanded the field of enquiry to interview geographers who worked under different institutional conditions. Potential interviewees in Crown Research Institutes (CRI) were identified as a result of my participation on a panel session on public geography at the 2016 NZGS conference. The conditions of employment for these individuals differs from academic geographers in that they are not responsible for the reproduction of the discipline through research, disciplinary service, or teaching. Instead, their institutions require a financial return from their research in the form of predominantly government research contracts (structured commercially or as public-good research), which means their research differs in nature from their academic counterparts. I interviewed four geographers based at two separate CRIs and questioned them about their practice, the knowledge they produce and their relationships with academic geographies generated within the discipline. I also asked them about their disciplinary identity and whether it in any way shaped their work, as

well as asking about their public geography practices and views of the future potential of public geography.

I raised similar questions with geography teachers, conducting a total of 23 interviews with teachers (Table 3.3 and Table 3.4), each of whom was either an active member of the New Zealand Board of Geography Teachers (NZBoGT), which is the subcommittee of the NZGS and/or a member of the Auckland Geography Teachers Association (AGTA). The two organisations represent both teacher and school views and have responsibilities for supporting geography teachers and fostering the discipline at national and regional levels. The NZBoGT is also responsible for disciplinary matters in schooling and for liaising between regional school associations, the NZGS and the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). The MOE owns the National Curriculum of Educational Achievement (NCEA) standards at levels 1, 2, 3 and scholarship. The NZQA has responsibility for marking and ensuring consistency in the marking of standards. The NZBoGT routinely engages with these bodies on assessment and curriculum matters respectively. Members are often senior teachers who might be expected to carry significant institutional knowledge about geography in schools and to be engaged in wider on-going conversations about disciplinary knowledge.

Some of the interviews were short, lasting no more than 15-20 minutes, but some lasted for more than an hour. I asked interviewees about relations with academic geography and their work as public geographers. I also attended two conferences and one teacher development day in Auckland which was co-facilitated by both organisations. These gave me added opportunities to talk to teachers and the opportunity to observe and engage with the work of disciplinary bodies, the shaping of curriculum and pedagogy, and the geographical imaginaries of teachers in action (see Appendix 4). This also allowed me to engage in casual conversations about my research and to approach other geography teachers for interviews.

I also approached individuals within the MOE and NZQA who have named responsibility for 'geography' to ask them the same questions about the geographical imaginaries embedded in the curriculum and the extent to which a public geography was being practised in schools. The MOE representative declined to be interviewed but gave a detailed written response to each of the questions in addition to an 'off the

record' conversation; NZQA provided a written response to the interview questions relating to areas in which they had direct responsibility.

I also sought to engage with those working in the media in New Zealand. The aim was to ascertain the extent to which the media engaged with academic geography and what geographical research and knowledge might potentially provide content that could be utilised in different broadcasting media. The example of *Landmarks* had demonstrated the potential for translating academic geography into public spaces, while the film *This is New Zealand* by Hugh Macdonald for the 1970 World Expo in Japan and contemporary programmes such as *South* (JAM TV, 2009), *Coast* (South Sea Pictures, 2016), *Our Changing World* (Radio New Zealand) and *Te Araroa: Tales from the Trail* (Māori Television, 2016) all relied heavily on geographical imaginaries to make television or radio shows in different geographic contexts. I identified six individuals within separate media organisations who operated within the geographic realm, and approached them for interviews. In part I sought to ask whether geographers had missed opportunities to practise public geography through the media, and whether new opportunities existed. I was interested in whether the label 'geographer' carried any hidden meanings (disparaging or otherwise), and what those might be.

In wider state spheres I approached 14 professional geographers or professionals dealing with geographical imaginaries in diverse public policy spaces (Table 3.3). I also interviewed two individuals who were employed by private organisations that had worked with public sector organisations. The public policy spaces approached were: officials at the MCH; the website *Te Ara*; the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (who run the National Science Challenges); The Nation of Curious Minds Challenges, and the Office of the Prime Minister's Science Advisor. Each of these spaces is one where geographic knowledge producers are both involved and are able to influence programmes and initiatives that receive funding from the government. Contact was made with each of these organisations, and individuals who had a geographical background or who had done geographical work within each of these settings were approached. Again I asked these individuals about the extent of their on-going contact with academic geographers and the place of geographical imaginaries in their work, and sought to ascertain their views and experiences of geography as a knowledge project.

'Public intellectuals' are a specific type of public actor who engage publicly in knowledge-making and dissemination that crosses state and media spheres. It is a label that many New Zealanders find uncomfortable, yet the emerging category of public commentators within traditional media and social media is creating new spaces for public intellectualism of more specific and targeted form (Simmons, 2007). While there are no obvious examples of public intellectual geographers who enter broad public debates, geographers such as Associate Professor Ward Friesen, Professor Richard Bedford and sociologist Professor Paul Spoonley (a geographer by training) have routinely commented in the media over the last 10-15 years on the pivotal geographical knowledge field of migration. I argue that significant potential exists for geographers to perform more public geography in this way. I interviewed three geographers who have performed public intellectualism through specific expertise commentary in the media. I also interviewed one established public intellectual from another disciplinary background to discuss the practice and potential of public intellectualism and public geography in the New Zealand context.

Student geographers

Finally, I distributed a questionnaire, to be completed in writing, to third-year geography students. I contend that this is a time in their geographical education when they can be assumed to have begun formulating an independent view of geography and what it contributes to wider understanding and engaged debate. Both Burawoy (2004) and Ward (2006) agreed that students are one of the most important publics with whom academics engage, but we have little knowledge or understanding of how geographical imaginaries are received by students and their possible transformative effects. In total, 59 human geography and 65 physical geography students completed questionnaires designed to elicit their understandings of geography and its potential.

A summary of interview and questionnaire data sources

Table 3.3 provides a numerical breakdown of the interviews that were conducted between November 2014 and May 2017. The table allows a comparison to be made with Figure 2.7 and identifies the categories which I deployed to organise the different 'publics' with whom geographers seek to engage.

Table 3.3: Total number of interviews and questionnaires conducted

Interviews conducted	
Groups	Numbers
University academics (includes seven who did not meet the criteria of being a geographer)	54
Crown Research Institutes	4
School teachers	23
Media	6
State actors	10
Private organisations	2
Public intellectuals	1
Total from groups	100
Written responses	
NZQA	1
Questionnaires	
315 Human Geography students 2014	44
315 Human Geography students 2015	15
330 Physical Geography students 2017	38
351 Physical Geography students 2017	27

Non-interview material

The interview provided an important source of information and was complimented by documented material drawn from a variety of locations. This information assisted in two ways. The first was that it allowed the researcher to establish who satisfied the criteria of being a geographer, as has been detailed in the paragraphs above. The second way was that it provided evidence of the public performances of geography that many of the interviewees overlooked, principally as they view such engagements as an extension of their job. The material is largely embedded within Section 3.4; however I highlight some key sources of material and the work that they enabled me to complete.

The ability to view the academic CVs of eleven of the interviewees provided me with the opportunity to compile an extensive database of ‘inward’, ‘inward-outward’ and ‘outward’ performances of public geography. These terms are expanded on in Chapter 4; however, the detail in the CVs was more comprehensive and detailed than I was able to establish during the interviews. This included commissioned research from local and central government in addition to any research for private organisations.

I also read the *New Zealand Herald* to research any opinion pieces or media-related work completed by geographers. I also regularly checked the websites of each of the

geography departments at each university to research media releases that were being used in promoting their research within their university as a resource. This enabled me to detail four geographers who wrote op-ed articles in national and local papers, and three who were the subject of media articles. Another example is the film *Christchurch: Resilient City* which was made in 2013 by Visiting Erskine Fellow, Professor Peter Newman (Curtin University, Perth), with assistance from Canterbury University Geography department. This is an obvious example of public geography but one which none of my interviewees at Canterbury University spoke of during their interviews.

The quality of the information on the NZGS website and the ability to engage with the NZGS committee to check membership details was pivotal in enabling me to extend the criteria of identifying geographers. This allowed me to confirm those who had attended past conferences as well as identifying award winners. The ability to add to the information I received from the interviews has been instrumental in providing a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the different forms of public geography that academics perform. The interview, however, was the primary resource and I will now detail how they were designed, piloted and conducted.

3.5 Participant recruitment and the conduct of interviews

3.5.1 Ethics approval

All interviews were conducted under agreed terms, as approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (UAHPEC) (Approval 001529, May 12th 2014 for three years). Accordingly:

1. Interviewees were invited to participate in an interview and were sent via email a consent form (Appendix 1), participant interview sheet (PIS) (Appendix 2), and the interview questions (Appendices 3 and 4).
2. The teacher interviewees required a PIS and consent form to be sent to the school principal. This in addition to an individual PIS, consent form and interview questions.
3. The interviewees who worked for government departments required a PIS and consent form to be sent to the head of their department to gain permission for

the interview. They also required an individual PIS, consent form and interview questions.

4. Separate interview questions were created for the different groups of public geographers as part of the ethics process.
5. Two separate groups of third year university geography students were invited to complete a questionnaire. The course co-ordinator was approached to gain permission to circulate the questionnaire amongst their students. He received a PIS and consent form. The students were each given a PIS and consent form prior to completing the questionnaire.

3.5.2 Design of interview questions

As described above, the perceptions and experiences of selected New Zealand geographers were collected through the use of semi-structured in-depth interviews. This format of interviewing provides greater flexibility than a structured interview. A greater degree of direction from the interviewer with regard to the research question combines neatly with the flexibility to explore areas of interest. A semi-structured interview illuminates an individual's experiences of places and events, whilst allowing both divergent and convergent opinions to emerge which can highlight areas of both difference and consensus. This is important when considering the number of interviews and the different research and work trajectories that each interviewee follows.

When designing the questions I was cognisant of Minichiello *et al.*'s (2008) advice to build a rapport between myself and the interviewees. I hybridised funnelling and pyramid interview methods, commencing with general questions focusing on the individual's work and research, before moving on to examine issues relating to their perception of public geography and how the discipline of geography could respond to the changing institutional environment. I adhered closely to guidance provided by Sudman & Bradburn (1983) in relation to discussing questions on potentially contentious issues until late in the interview.

Interviews were adjusted to accommodate different workplaces and roles within and outside of the academy. The educational space occupied by teachers for example differs from academics, thereby necessitating different questions for the two groups. The interviews conducted with those who work outside of the academy initially

focused on storytelling in relation to an organisation's history and the individual's work within the organisation. The primary locus of these interviews centred on how geography informed their work and further identifying any knowledge (latent or otherwise) they imagined geography could do to improve decision making within their organisations.

3.5.3 Piloting the interview questions

To test the suitability and scope of the interview questions, a pilot with four participants was undertaken to highlight any misunderstandings created by either the questions or the questionnaire. Two of the participants were lecturers, one a former geography teacher who is now a geography PhD candidate, and a Masters geography student.

Initially, the interviews had 12 questions. However, in response to the answers I received from both the lecturers and the former teacher I reduced the number of questions to nine to allow the interview to flow more freely and give the interviewee greater latitude to express opinions (see Appendix 3). As the changes I made were minimal and the initial number of interviews projected was around 30, it was not necessary to reapply for ethics approval. With the final number of interviews reaching 100, this allowed what Valentine (1997: 112) observed as the "common properties and general patterns in a population as a whole" to become more transparent. In this case the need to incorporate the answers from the pilot project has been diminished and eliminating these interviews does not damage the integrity of the project.

3.5.4 Interview process

Participants were selected and contacts with those who identified themselves as geographers were initially facilitated with the assistance of my supervisors, and then snowballed. In accordance with the ethics application detailed in Section 3.5.1, each interviewee who agreed to participate in the research project was sent, via email, a copy of the PIS, a consent form and the interview questions. This was done one week prior to the interview.

As discussed above, I conducted all but one of my interviews on a face-to-face basis as I felt this was important in providing a level of personal interaction with the project that electronic communication cannot replicate (Turkle, 2015). This meant

spending intensive periods, normally five days, where I could complete a number of interviews with people who were in close geographical proximity. I organised my data gathering in blocks which allowed me to travel to the main population centres and carry out 10-15 interviews in a week. This allowed my research funds to be used efficiently and precipitated less continual travel. On occasion, when I was in a specific location, an interviewee would suggest that I approach one of his/her colleagues for their views. In these situations I decided upon a minimum of 24 hours between introduction and interview, with the same process in relation to PIS, consent forms and interview questions being followed. I assumed that more considered and reflective responses would emerge when individuals had time to consider the questions.

The setting of the interview, as detailed in the literature, is of significance with respect to the nature of the responses. I drew upon the work of Oldenburg (1989) and his identification of three individual spaces that he argued enhance an individual's healthy existence. I aimed to interview subjects in their place of work as my topic deals with knowledge production and I felt that this space was conducive to them considering aspects of their work and discipline. All face-to-face interviews were conducted in an informal manner around a table, often over a cup of coffee or tea. Fifteen of the teacher interviews were conducted at the SocCon Conference in Nelson of which ten were conducted in a hotel office, four in a hotel lobby and one in a café. In five cases interviews were conducted in an office in the School of Environment in Auckland, each at the request of the interviewee who stated that they did not want the interview to take place in their work environment.

I had a schedule for each interview that enabled me to focus on key points that were pertinent to my research interest. I was keen to engage in conversation with the interviewees but concentrated on their message and asking supplementary questions to the answers they gave me. The interviews ranged in length from 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes with teacher interviews largely accounting for the shorter interviews. It is of note that although meeting times had been agreed upon, what had happened to the interviewee in the hours preceding the interview was not controllable and may have affected his/her responses. I aimed to interview academics at times of the year when their student engagement was reduced, largely towards the end of a semester. My previous ten years as a teacher allowed me a detailed insight into the work schedule of high school teachers; thus I attempted to interview them at the end of the academic

year or during school holiday time. Many of the interviewees commented that they enjoyed the time, during which they were able to consider questions of wider significance to the discipline rather than their specific knowledge niche.

All interviews, with one exception, were recorded for transcription; one interviewee requested that the interview was not recorded and gave written responses to my questions. Recordings allow hesitations, voice tone and emphasis given to particular statements to be noted (Cragg, 1997). The process of listening to the interviews later in the study allowed certain points to emerge which had not been so noticeable during the interview. Digital recording gave me the reassurance that everything being said was being recorded, so any notes written down during the conversation could be compared against the respondent's answers. Contextual elements of interest such as mannerisms, body language and elements of interest in their workspace that related to my research could be noted whilst recording took place. The end of the recording process often signalled some further questions to me about my research and occasionally some points of interest arose that the interviewee had forgotten to talk about. These were then noted by me.

3.5.5 Schools teacher interviews

Attending the 2015 SocCon conference in Nelson and the 2016 NZGS conference in Dunedin allowed me the opportunity to interview teachers who may not be on the committee of either the NZBoGT or the AGTA but who, by attending the conferences, demonstrate a commitment to geography. I placed an advert in each of the conference handbooks asking for volunteers.

There were five main aims when seeking interviewees:

1. Teachers who were prepared to be interviewed for the research
2. A split between male and female teachers
3. A geographic spread of schools where the teachers worked, based on the NZBoGT regions
4. A range of types and sizes of schools
5. A range of school decile rankings where the teachers taught.

I conducted interviews with 23 teachers over the period of my thesis (Table 3.3). The aim was to learn how geography, the subject, was positioned in secondary

schools, any communal challenges faced and also how any research and interaction with the academic community was viewed.

My attendance at the conferences in Nelson and Dunedin also enabled me to interview teachers who worked in more rural locations who I would otherwise have found difficult to interview. This assisted in enabling me to obtain a national geographic spread and I was able to interview a teacher from each of the six NZBoGT regions (Table 3.4). No specific data exists of the exact number of female and male geography teachers and so I am unable to ascertain if my split is representative of total teacher numbers; however both perspectives are represented. In addition, I have been able to cover the three principal ways in which schools are governed in New Zealand, namely state, state integrated or private; as well as co-educational and both single sex boys' and girls' schools. New Zealand employs a decile funding system to allocate funding to schools, ranking from the highest 10 to the lowest 1. A low decile indicates a larger number of students who come from deprived socio-economic areas and as a consequence the school gets a larger allocation of funding from the government. The principal aim was to find geography teachers who wanted to engage and I did not actively go searching for a school's decile. The fact that I managed to interview teachers from eight of the ten decile rankings adds to the integrity of the data.

Table 3.4: Breakdown of teacher interviewees

Interviews conducted	Total
NZBOGT Branch	
Auckland/Northland	8
Waikato/BOP	3
Central	2
Wellington	5
Canterbury	2
Otago	3
Total	23
Gender of teacher	
Male	8
Female	15
Total	23
School type	
Co-educational	15
Single sex boys	2
Single sex girls	6
Total	23

Interviews conducted	Total
State or private school	
State	17
Private/integrated	6
Total	23
School decile	
Decile 1	1
Decile 2	2
Decile 3	0
Decile 4	2
Decile 5	0
Decile 6	5
Decile 7	2
Decile 8	4
Decile 9	2
Decile10	5
Total	23

3.5.6 Designing and distributing student questionnaires

To gain insights to geography from a student's perspective I focused on third-year students who had been exposed to at least two years' study of academic geography. I assumed that the students had developed a sense of the discipline and were beginning to formulate individual views of what geography might contribute to public debates. The questionnaire was designed with the aim of assessing how students reflected upon the discipline and how it compared to their initial comprehension of what geography was, is, or could be when they commenced their studies.

In conjunction with my supervisors I drafted a set of questions and then piloted the questionnaires on four geography Masters students. The pilots demonstrated that there were too many questions and that three of the questions covered the same area of research. This resulted in an alteration to two questions and a reduction in the total number of questions from 15 to 12 (see Appendix 6).

I made a strategic decision to produce paper questionnaires with blank spaces directly below the question, which required the students to provide written answers. I deliberately excluded set answers from which the students could select, as I wanted a data set where each student provided a personalised response. This allowed a broader range of data and opinions to be collected and although collation of this data was more time consuming and involved subjective judgement, I argue that the richness of the information provides deeper understanding.

My initial proposal envisaged distributing questionnaires to 300-level geography students in each of the six New Zealand universities. Lecturers would be provided with the hard copies of the paper questionnaires which they would distribute to students at the start of the lecture. The students would then be given 15 minutes in which to complete the questions before the lecture commenced. They would keep the questionnaires during the lecture, thus allowing them time to add any extra thoughts and then place the completed questionnaires in a box located at a convenient place at the end of the lecture.

This proved both too ambitious and too complex due to matters of engagement with a large number of lecturers, voluntary student selection and the logistics involved in distributing and collecting questionnaires from different sites around the country. As an alternative, students were selected from Auckland University's core human and physical geography third-year papers, namely GEOG 315 "Research Design and Methodology in Human Geography"; GEOG 330 "Research Methods in Physical Geography" and GEOG 351 "Coastal and Marine Studies". I then decided that as each of these courses ran compulsory field trips, the potential to produce a greater number of considered responses lay with the students completing the questionnaires during their field trips. There would be fewer distractions and they would be operating within an environment which was more focused on geography.

For the purpose of my research, the GEOG 315 sample offered the added advantage that the course involved teaching data collection via interviews and questionnaires. I surmised that the students had a degree of understanding and empathy as to the process involved in the study. The GEOG 315 course co-ordinator was approached and he agreed to distribute the questionnaires at the start of the field trip. The students completed the questionnaires and handed them to him at the end of the field trip. The length of the research project allowed me to complete questionnaires with two student cohorts of GEOG 315 students, one in 2014 and then in 2015. The location and logistics of this field trip changed between 2014 and 2015, although the required assessment did not. The 2014 field trip saw the full cohort of GEOG 315 students attend a week-long field trip in the Napier/Hastings area, allowing the questionnaires to be given to the full cohort of students on the same field trip. In 2015 the location of the field trip moved to Whangarei and the cohort of GEOG 315 students was divided into two separate field trips, with groups undertaking their research in the same

location but in two separate time frames. The assignments set for the students were, however, the same although the course co-ordinator forgot to distribute the questionnaires to the first group of students in 2015. This resulted in questionnaires being distributed to only the second group of students. As a consequence, this resulted in a smaller population sample in 2015 with the response rate dropping from 44/120 (37%) in 2014 to 15/55 (27%) in 2015.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, both the GEOG 330 and GEOG 351 questionnaires did not get distributed in either the 2015 or 2016 academic year. A decision was reached between my supervisors and myself that the research needed balance and any failure to include physical geography students who were studying for a Bachelor of Science (BSc), risked producing a biased data set. It was resolved to distribute the questionnaire at the start of the second lecture in each course in 2017, with the GEOG 330 students being surveyed in Semester 1 and the GEOG 351 students being surveyed in Semester 2. The questionnaires were distributed in the manner originally envisaged, at the start of the lecture by the course co-ordinator and placed in boxes at the end of the lecture.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed both the qualitative and quantitative methods I have adopted in respect of both my research subjects and the data I have sought to discover. Research, like education, is not a permanent state but one which Anderson and Arsenault (2005: 38) characterise as an “evolving dynamic” that may result in a seemingly routine problem assuming chameleon-like properties and presenting itself as new and different.

I have presented evidence which identifies my research as enactive within the academic geography community of New Zealand. On each stage of the research journey, be it attempting to identifying potential interview subjects, creating research questions or engaging with those geographically-inclined individuals outside of the academy, I have been able to respond to changing situations by allowing my methods to evolve without compromising their intent. The chapter provides a detailed account of how I have navigated along the waypoints of my research journey. In producing a framework which has allowed a reliable set of qualitative and quantitative data to

emerge, I have been able to examine the quantity and format of public geography that is undertaken in New Zealand.

The following chapter provides an empirical and detailed account of the institutional framework in which New Zealand geography and geographers are situated and operate. It seeks to build on the data that has been produced from my research and starts to evaluate the new pressures that exist to make research public-facing and determine whether academics have altered their practice to engage in the new environment.

CHAPTER 4: GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

To depict New Zealand as it is rather than as we presume it to be (New Zealand Geographic, Issue 144: 32)

4.1 Introduction

In his book *Geography 50*, New Zealand geographer Joe Fagan (2016: 5) notes how even though he self-identifies as a geographer, he adopts a chameleon-like public profile, because introducing himself as a geographer can “create mirth and confusion”. If academic geography and the academic geographers that produce it lie at the heart of geography’s enterprise (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.1), then this professional ambivalence raises important questions. It suggests that if there is not a crisis, then there is a serious set of concerns about New Zealand geography. In this chapter, the first of three empirical chapters, I ask:

- What is New Zealand geography?
- Where is New Zealand geography performed?
- What are the factors that have come to bear on institutional geography that have led to the changing disciplinary landscape?

4.2 The institutional structure of New Zealand geography

4.2.1 The universities

Geography has been positioned differently within New Zealand’s universities over time. Hammond (1992) and Trafford (2012) provide a detailed and concise chronology of the development of the discipline in New Zealand, with the latter updating the work of the former. The University of New Zealand existed from 1874 until 1961 and was the only university that granted degrees during this period. This federal system meant that colleges at Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury were referred to as ‘university colleges’ while Otago was the only institution to retain the title ‘university’, although they awarded degrees from the University of New Zealand. Geography had been taught in the University of New Zealand since 1904 (Gorrie, 1955) and by the late

1930s the subject was being taught in either the Economics or Geology departments at Auckland, Victoria, Canterbury and Otago.

The first geographer appointed in a separate geography department was George Jobberns in 1937 at Canterbury University. There was no objection to setting up and defining geography courses; however, resistance came from both the Physics and Chemistry departments and the systematic sciences in general concerning the admission of Geography into the Faculty of Science (Cumberland, 2007). The task of establishing a new department was both ambitious and time consuming and to assist him with the practicalities of teaching, Jobberns hired Kenneth Cumberland from the UK in 1938. Cumberland was initially responsible for the practical and map work course as well as a Stage 2 course on the regional geography of Europe. This enabled Jobberns to concentrate on the Stage 1 course and his work in cementing the foundations of the new department.

In addition to establishing the courses at Canterbury, Jobberns and Cumberland sought to modernise the geography syllabuses, not only at the University of New Zealand but also in schools. The challenge in the latter was to redress the balance between physical and human geography which Cumberland (2007: 65) described as a “ticklish business,” given the opposition of administrators and teachers who knew what they taught and feared change. He details the subsequent success that he and Jobberns had in creating a “pent up demand” Cumberland (2007: 65) for secondary school geography teachers, driven partly by educating eight years of geography teachers schooled in regional geography as well as the “insatiable appetite” Cumberland (2007: 65) from New Zealanders for reliable information on places that had come to the fore as a result of the theatres of war in which New Zealanders had fought and served in during World War II. Jobberns and Cumberland had demonstrated that geography in the university was not the ‘capes and bays’ subject promoted by the gazetteers of the time or the dry physiography and mathematical study of maps, tides and latitudes and longitudes.

Cumberland felt vindicated that by 1945 the three other university colleges in New Zealand—Auckland, Victoria and Otago—had resolved to introduce the teaching of geography. The department at Otago was established in late 1945 with lectures starting in 1946 when students could major in a Bachelor of Arts (BA). In Auckland, geography classes also started in 1946; and at Victoria, following a part-time

appointment in 1945, the first full-time geography lectureship in the Department of Geology was established in 1946. A fully fledged geography department was later established in 1953. The importance attached to the training of geography teachers at each institution was illustrated by the respective heads of department. At Canterbury, Jobberns was a former school teacher and lecturer at the Christchurch Teachers College; Ben Garnier at Otago was a former school teacher and taught at Wellington Technical College before taking up his post at Otago; and Cumberland considered the training of geography teachers of great importance, which he spelt out in his inaugural lecture at Auckland in 1946. The success of their work rests in the knowledge that during the 1950s, 90% of geography graduates were employed in teaching (Holland & Johnston 1987). Geography departments were subsequently established at Massey University in 1960 and at Waikato University in 1964, meaning that since that date academic geography has been practised at six New Zealand universities.

Moving to more recent events, the last 25 years has witnessed pressure being applied to geography in two areas. Firstly, one of the discipline's core strengths, its inter-disciplinarity in institutional organisation, has become a major weakness as middle management via faculties has seen departments placed in either one or other of the science or arts faculties, with significant implications for disciplinary integrity. Le Heron (2013) intimated that there existed concern within the discipline that the years of restructurings, detailed by Sidaway & McGregor (2008), had become a corrosive force which was affecting the future visibility of geography.

Secondly, the amalgamation of cognate, or not so cognate, disciplines into multi-disciplinary schools has compounded the challenge for geography to retain a strong and institutionally meaningful identity. At different sites across the country geography has been combined into schools with geology, planning, environmental management and/or science, development studies, and other established disciplines, or been reduced to a 'programme' in conjunction with an 'environmental' speciality. While the names given to these entities has been described by Finlayson (2015: 119) as "tautology," the reality is that the discipline of geography is no longer coterminous with its teaching programmes, its teaching/ research faculty, or its administration. The "widely recognised human:physical split" (Johnston 1998: 141) which has been widely written about, has been augmented by increased disciplinary specialisation and an increase in the number of academic geographers, each seeking their own academic identity.

Different departments have fared more or less well as a result of these two processes, but all have felt the pressures of trying to hold the discipline together. During his interview a senior geographer remarked: “I think separation [of physical and human geography] is the death knell” (Interviewee 10). He argues that exposing the students to the thinking of both physical and human geography provides opportunities for students to meld the different forms of thinking, thus making their skills more marketable. Another senior geographer agrees, arguing that exposure to both physical and human geography and exploring the relationship between ‘man’ and his environment is “at the core of holistic and inter-disciplinary understandings of the world” (Interviewee 13).

How name changes at both Auckland and Victoria Universities have affected geography has been discussed by both Smith (2005) and Crozier (2006) and when combined with other changes (Table 4.1), it demonstrates the difficulty associated in clearly identifying geography in today’s New Zealand universities. Among the more recent institutional redesigns, geography at the University of Auckland was taken into the Faculty of Science in 1992, led by Professor Warren Moran who shortly thereafter became Dean of Arts. The department then merged with Environmental Management and Science in 2002 and later the Geology Department in 2006. The merged entity became the School of Environment in 2009, thus removing ‘Geography’ as a visible departmental title. The most recent re-organisation occurred at Massey University in 2012, which resulted in human and physical geographers being separated into different schools/colleges in different physical locations on campus. The human geographers are located in the School of People Environment and Planning, while the physical geographers are in the College of Sciences, in the Institute of Agriculture and Environment.

Table 4.1: The situating of geography and geographers in New Zealand, September 2016

University	Faculty/college/division	Academic unit	Physical and human	Number of geography academics ¹	Number of professors ²
University of Auckland	Faculty of Science	School of Environment	Y	28	5
Auckland University of Technology	Faculty of Culture and Society	Hospitality and Tourism		2	1
University of Waikato University	Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	Geography & Environmental Planning	N	9	2
Massey University	College of Humanities and Social Sciences	School of People, Environment and Planning	N	16	1
Victoria University	Faculty of Science	School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences	Y	15	4
University of Canterbury	College of Science	Department of Geography	Y	24	2
Lincoln University	Faculty of Environment, Society and Design	Department of Environmental Management		5	
Otago University	Division of Humanities	Department of Geography	Y	17	4

¹: Academics identified as geographers (see Section 4.2.1)

²: Professors identified as geographers (see Section 4.2.1)

The physical location of geography departments or schools differs in each institution as detailed in Table 4.1. At both Auckland and Victoria University (Wellington), geography is positioned in the Faculty of Science, the former in the School of Environment (SENV) and the latter in the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Science. The Victoria School also includes academics who are employed to work in the Climate Change Research Institute, and the Antarctic Research Centre. In September 2016, SENV was relocated to a new science building, co-locating all schools in the Faculty of Science and combining both human and physical geographers under one roof, although on different floors. Canterbury University (Christchurch) has a Department of Geography positioned in the College of Science, which is physically relocating to the new Regional Science and Innovation Centre in early 2018, as a result of rebuilding after the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. The Department of Geography at Otago University (Dunedin) is positioned in the Division of Humanities. In each of these four institutions human and physical geographers coalesce in the same place and space.

At Waikato University (Hamilton), geography is located in the Faculty of Social Sciences, in the ‘Geography & Environmental Planning Programme’. Its publicity

material observes that those interested in a more 'traditional' mix of geography, containing both physical as well as human geography, (<http://www.waikato.ac.nz/fass/about/social-sciences/geography>) are very welcome. The programmes have close teaching and research involvement with physical geographers in the nearby School of Science and Engineering (especially the Department of Earth and Ocean Sciences) and in the International Global Change Institute. Waikato is also home to the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis (NIDEA). The situation at Massey University (Palmerston North and Albany) was detailed in a previous paragraph. The identification conundrum facing geographers is clearly visible at both Waikato and Massey where some of the displaced physical geographers continue to self-identify as 'geographers' as opposed to earth scientists, geo(something)-ist or other.

The word 'geography' does not appear on any departmental titles at Lincoln University (Christchurch) or at Auckland University of Technology (AUT). The former never had a formal geography department but some geography papers were taught in their Land Management and Planning Department. Geography is currently not offered as a degree programme at AUT. The word 'geography' has not occurred in any of its departmental naming, although two academics who work there mention geography in their profile description. Prominent New Zealand geographers have been employed at both institutions: the current president of the NZGS (as at January 2018), Professor Harvey Perkins, held the position of Professor of Human Geography at Lincoln until 2012; tourism geographer Simon Milne has been the Director of the New Zealand Tourism Institute at AUT since its inception in 1999; and Richard (Dick) Bedford is Professor Population Geography/ Emeritus Professor at AUT. His title changed as of November 2017 to Professor of Migration Studies/ Emeritus Professor (<http://www.aut.ac.nz/community/pacific/pacific-research/regionalism-and-security/pacific-migration/professor-richard-bedford>)

Given this institutional complexity, which I referred to in Chapter 3, it is challenging to identify precisely the number of academic geographers at work in New Zealand universities. Other geographers work as academics in other administrative units within the universities. At the University of Auckland, for example, three academics who still engage in geographical debates and attend geography conferences work in the School of Population Health, the Business School, and the School of

Architecture and Planning respectively. The employment landscape is also consistently shifting in response to appointments, promotions, retirements and changes of employment status. As detailed in Chapter 3, I took a snapshot of the geographic academic landscape on March 1st 2016 and identified 109 practising geographers at work in New Zealand universities who satisfy at least four of the criteria detailed in Chapter 3. If the University of Auckland sample of geographers working in other departments is an indicator, we may expect up to 20 additional academic geographers located in units beyond those who work specifically in geography-named departments.

4.2.2 Geography in New Zealand secondary schools

Geography became a core offering in schools after the Thomas Report of 1944. It quickly became a highly popular subject (Macaulay, 1988) and remained the top options subject from 1952 to 1968.

Geography is initially taught to students in New Zealand secondary schools as part of social studies in Years 9 and 10 and then as an integrated discipline, from Year 11 to Year 13. Figure 4.1 shows the numbers of students studying economics, geography and history over a 20-year period. In 2016, there were 29,480 geography students in New Zealand Secondary Schools (<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/schooling/student-numbers/subject-enrolment>).

These three subjects are all option subjects, which means that students choose to study them from Year 11 onwards. Geography has remained relatively stable over the period with student numbers ranging from 34,670 in 1999 to 28,063 in 2005, and dipping below 30,000 again in the last two years. History over the 20-year period increased from 22,891 students in 1996 to 30,666 in 2016, and of specific note to geographers is the fact that history has outnumbered geography for the last three years. The introduction of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) in 2003 indicates the starting point for the rise in history numbers and the disparity in credit value and the difficulty in achieving this, as noted by Evans & Evans (2016), is something that I will address later in this chapter.

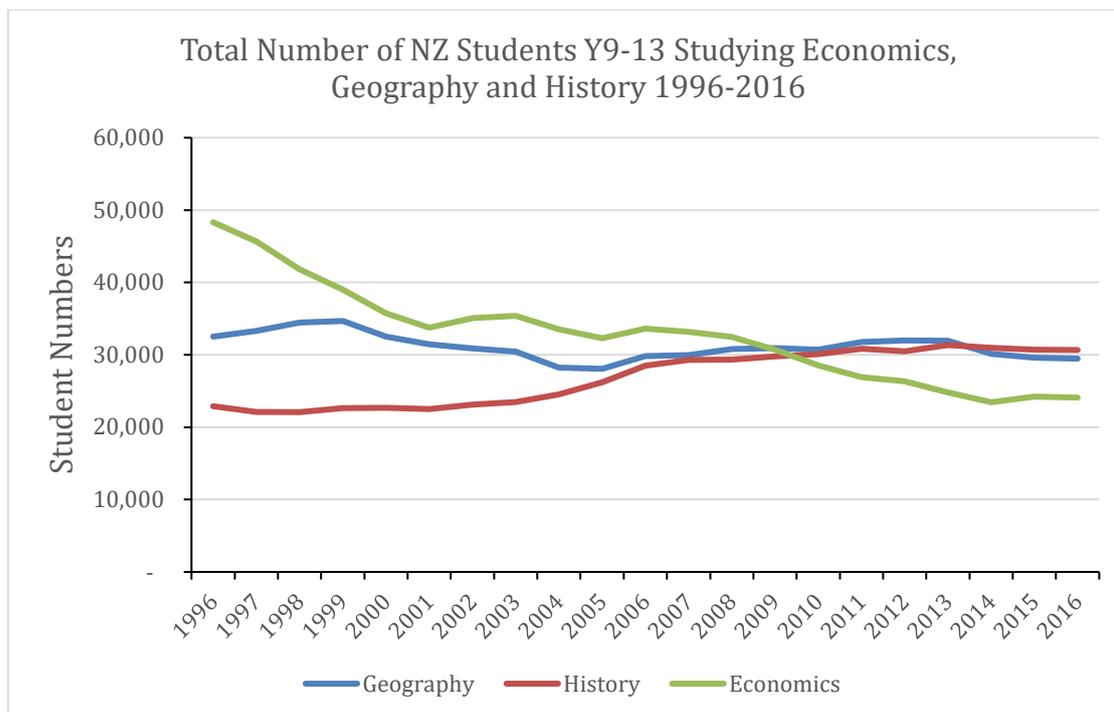


Figure 4.1: Number of New Zealand students Years 9-13 studying geography and history 1996-2016

The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) (2007), which is taught in all New Zealand state schools, is a non-prescriptive curriculum that is designed to allow teachers and schools to pursue key learning concepts in eight distinctive ‘learning areas’. Geography is situated in the social sciences learning area, where eight levels of achievement objectives (AO) are identified. Levels 1-5 are grouped under the generic title ‘social studies’ and aim to establish a foundation for the separate disciplines of economics, geography, history and social studies which are offered in senior school. Levels 6-8, which are taught and examined in senior school, are divided into the four subjects. Geography is an elective that builds on both general science and social studies educations in Years 9 and 10. It provides students a pathway through senior schooling to tertiary education that sits outside the humanities and the core preparatory maths and sciences.

Each of the eight teaching levels contains a set of more specific AO, which require students to develop “knowledge, skills and experience” (<http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/Social-sciences/Geography>) that enable them to integrate concepts from one or more of four conceptual strands: Identity, Culture and Organisation; Place and Environment; Continuity and Change; and the Economic World. The curriculum guide lays out a particular role for geography, stating: “the

emphasis is on the 'place and environment' strand but some concepts from the other three strands are also relevant” (<http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/Socialsciences/Geography/Achievement-objectives>).

The four subjects at levels 6-8 each have two AO. In geography, these are:

- Level 6: Understand that natural and cultural environments have particular characteristics and how environments are shaped by processes that create special patterns; and understand how people interact with natural and cultural environments and that this interaction has consequences.
- Level 7: Understand how the processes that shape natural and cultural environments change over time, vary in scale and from place to place, and create spatial patterns; and understand how people’s perceptions of and interactions with natural and cultural environments differ and have changed over time.
- Level 8: Understand how interacting processes shape natural and cultural environments, occur at different rates and on different scales, and create spatial variations; and understand how people’s diverse values and perceptions influence the environmental, social and economic decisions and responses that they make.

The curriculum teaches towards key concepts, or “the big ideas in geography” (<https://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/Social-sciences/Geography/Key-concepts>), which are derived directly from the Level 6 to 8 AO for geography. In understanding a concept as a general thought, idea or understanding then conceptual understandings are what learners know and learn about a concept. The AO in the NZC are based on conceptual understandings which allow for the exploration of relationships and connections between people and both natural and cultural environments. They provide a framework that geographers use to interpret and represent information about the world and they have a spatial component which refers to how features are arranged on the Earth’s surface. The key concepts are: environments, perspectives, processes, patterns, interaction, change, and sustainability. Māori concepts such as kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga and hekenga are understood to have specific geographical purchase, and are increasingly being added to this list. Additional concepts such as location, distance and region are found in the NZC and, combined with a full list of Māori concepts,

provide a wide range of conceptual pillars on which the AO are based and can be used in course design.

The *Teaching and Learning Guidelines* (TLG) aim to complement the NZC at Levels 6-8 and have been designed and written by experienced secondary teachers, school support services advisors, and other curriculum, teaching, and learning experts, often with input from interested sector organisations, such as the NZBoGT. The guidelines are to be viewed as “resources rather than syllabuses or prescriptions” (<http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/About-the-guides>) and they can help teachers create quality teaching and learning programmes. The geography guidelines are grouped into eight areas of teaching assistance: rationale; key concepts; pedagogy; achievement objectives; connections; learning programme design; skills and concepts; and resources. Each area can be utilised by new teachers in helping to plan programmes, while experienced teachers have resources which assist them in refocusing their teaching and linking it to the wider curriculum.

The majority of New Zealand’s secondary schools offer geography as part of the NCEA assessment, while roughly 60 schools also offer the Cambridge International Examination (CIE) (http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11514787)¹ and 13 schools offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) (<http://www.ibschools.org.nz/schools.html>).

The NCEA is the recognised New Zealand-based school qualification. It was introduced into New Zealand schools between 2002 and 2004. The 1990 geography Forms 5-7 syllabus (Ministry of Education, 1990) was superseded by Achievement and Unit Standards which ushered in new methods of assessment. The new curriculum was driven by a logic of internal assessment, a change from what Hattie (2008) terms a “one-shot on one day at one examination” assessment to one in which students have a mix of internal and external assessments from which to select, and one that allows them to approach assessment on a gradual basis knowing the standard that is required. The NCEA is governed by the NZQA and assessment takes place at Levels 1, 2, 3 and scholarship, corresponding roughly with Years 11-13 and Levels 6-8 of the curriculum. The AO set the parameters in which the ‘achievement standards’ (AS) are

¹ Schools may choose to offer both Cambridge and NCEA assessment regimes, and many do.

set. The AS are the assessments that the students sit and they detail the skills and outcomes a student needs to know, or what they must be able to achieve, in order to meet the standard. Assessments measure what a student knows or can do against the registered criteria of a standard in courses they study. Each standard has a defined credit value from 3 to 5 and if students pass the assessment, the standard is achieved and they will gain credits towards a national qualification. Students are awarded one of four grades: Not Achieved; Achieved; Merit; or Excellence.

Geography has eight AS at each level which are detailed in the 'Geography Matrix' (Appendix 5). They are assessed by either internal or external assessment. Internal assessments are used to assess skills and knowledge that cannot be tested in an exam, e.g. speeches, research projects and performances. The assessments are marked by their class teacher with a random selection of the grades awarded by each teacher selected for moderation by NZQA. This aims to assure consistency of marking across schools. External assessments are sat in a single end of year exam or by a portfolio of work and are marked by examiners appointed by NZQA.

When designing a course for students, the curriculum is highly permissive which allows a great deal of freedom for each school. In effect, as a senior geographer stated during his interview, schools become "curriculum makers" (Interviewee 44) which allows the schools and ultimately individual teachers to design courses that align to the strengths of each student cohort. In May 2016, teachers and NZBoGT committee members Jane Evans and Jane Foster gave a presentation to the NZGS Auckland branch which detailed how there is no imperative on schools to offer every standard and they are free to decide which mix of standards they offer. They explained how this leads to complex, often school-specific, calculations of what and how many standards to offer and what material examples or settings to use to populate the teaching material for those standards.

The teaching of geography in New Zealand secondary schools is undertaken, in theory at least, by specialist geography teachers who have been trained at teacher training institutions. There are nine institutions where individuals can train to become a teacher, five of which offer geography. These are Auckland, Waikato, Massey, Victoria and Canterbury. Formally framed as teacher training institutions, they are now positioned as faculties within their larger institutional partners which were re-organised to allow for a combination of general pedagogical and other forms of

training to be complemented by subject-specific expertise drawn from the disciplines. Individual institutions have the freedom to set enrolment standards. In the publicity material for prospective entry to the Graduate Diploma, Postgraduate Diploma and Masters programmes for Initial Teacher Education, each faculty quotes the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand policy, which states that “the entry qualification will have papers to 300 or 400 level in a teaching subject appropriate to the secondary curriculum” (2013). As the specific subjects are unspecified there is, therefore, no guarantee that once in schools those teaching geography will be geography graduates, or that even then they will have appropriate grounding in different parts of the discipline to teach all the AS effectively.

4.2.3 National institutions: The New Zealand Geographical Society

The NZGS was founded in 1939 and is the professional organisation for geography education and research in New Zealand. It also affiliates with other professional bodies in New Zealand and overseas.

The society’s aims as stated in its constitution are:

- to foster the study of geography in secondary and tertiary educational institutions across New Zealand;
- to promote geographic research in tertiary educational institutions, the private sector, Crown agencies, and community organisations;
- through its serial and any occasional publications, to make available to interested individuals and parties in New Zealand and abroad the findings of original geographic research; and
- to respond effectively and in a timely manner to calls from the private sector, Crown agencies, and community organisations for informed submissions (<http://www.nzgs.co.nz/new-zealand-geographical-society/administration/nzgs-constitution>).

Membership of the NZGS is voluntary, which means that varying levels of commitment to discipline and disciplinary service are a feature of the membership. Thirty of the academic geographers who were interviewed, either currently serve on various national or branch committees or have served in previous years. Sidaway & McGregor (2008) commented on how a New Zealand geographic identity remained

aspirational as the PBRF competition-oriented environment incentivises academics to privilege overseas networks over local. They suggested that an identity which stemmed from a community built on “camaraderie and collegiality” (McGregor & Sidaway, 2008: 2) provided an opportunity for disciplinary identity to flourish. The NZGS is involved in six areas which are: conferences, the New Zealand Board of Geography Teachers (NZBoGT), the journal, webinars, branch activities and awards. This range of formats demonstrates the different methods used to engender the collegial spirit while addressing the contemporary requirement for differing levels of public geography.

The society holds a bi-annual conference, the most recent of which was held in Dunedin in 2016. The conference serves the dual purpose of keeping both researchers and teachers updated on developments in the discipline and as an opportunity for collegiality and fellowship. The society has a close relationship with the IAG and holds a joint conference every four years with the destination alternating between countries; the last joint event was in Melbourne in 2014 with the next conference being hosted by Auckland in July 2018. The dominating presence of human geographers at the 2008 Wellington conference was commented on by Trafford (2012), who also drew attention to the lack of funding for postgraduate students to attend and the scarcity of geography teachers in attendance. The society has sought to improve in these areas. A postgraduate workshop held at the 2008 conference in Wellington discussed the formation of a postgraduate network (Mitchell, 2008). Two years later, the formal creation of the NZGS Postgraduate Network at the 2010 conference in Christchurch heralded the start of the NZGS postgraduate day. This event has become firmly entrenched as part of the conference, and takes place prior to the first official day of conference. Grants are now awarded through the local NZGS branches to postgraduate students who would like to attend the event.

The 2016 conference in Dunedin had 18 sessions, of which five were classed as physical geography. The consensus amongst delegates was that improvements had been made in this regard, although more work needed to be done. The conference was held prior to the start of the school year in an effort to attract more teachers but the location of the conference in southern New Zealand meant that the large northern centres were not well represented. The conference attracted some local media coverage, (Otago Daily Times, 3rd Feb 2016, p.5) and following on from the success of

the 2012 conference in Napier, the pattern of holding conferences in smaller centres has proven popular. The theme of the 2016 conference, “Geographic Interactions” hints at the society’s awareness that increased links with the public are the modern day reality for geographers working in educational institutions. The increased potential for spontaneous interactions in smaller centres between geographers and the local public through field trips, hotels, meals out and taxi rides, offers opportunities which conferences in larger metropolitan centres are unable to provide.

The Science Media Centre was invited to the 2016 conference to encourage delegates to produce a 30-second video clip of their research, which demonstrates the increasing importance placed on outward-focused engagement. Looking outwards was one of the messages from keynote speaker Alan Kinder, the Chief Executive of the United Kingdom Geography Association, who detailed the steps taken by his association which focused on, and has been successful in, helping an increase in the uptake of the subject in schools (Kinder, 2016).

The school arm of the NZGS is the New Zealand Board of Geography Teachers (NZBoGT), which was founded in 1978 to provide professional oversight. It is volunteer-led, organised by geography teachers, and based upon school subscription membership. The organisation lists three visions on its website which are:

- To support the teaching and learning of geography in secondary schools;
- To raise the profile of geography through events such as the Maatangi Whenua quiz, photographic competitions, Geography Awareness Week and the Geography Olympiad;
- To promote links between the secondary and tertiary sectors.

Member schools, of which there were 162 in 2016, receive a copy of *The Network*, the NZBoGT newsletter each term, and support activities and professional development programmes for teachers and students at the local level through either subject associations or NZGS branches. Arguably the most political engagement is the board responsibility, as recognised by the MOE and NZQA, to consult and advise on matters of interest to New Zealand geography teachers and students. Evans & Evans (2016) detailed how protracted this has been, taking six years for the board to get agreement from the government agencies on the importance of credit parity for geography standards. She noted that the extra credits required to achieve a standard in

geography as opposed to the subject with which it competes most, history, disadvantages the subject as students will often make informed choices based on the number of credits available. This relationship, she suggests, will be more important with the disestablishing of subject advisors by the MOE which means the vacuum of upskilling geography teachers on assessment and curriculum changes will fall on the shoulders of subject associations.

The society journal, which is discussed below, includes a GeoEd section specifically aimed at classroom teachers. Teachers are encouraged to attend the NZGS conference; however, there has been an increased attendance at the bi-annual SocCon teacher's conference, which is held in alternate years from the NZGS conference and which teachers have come to view as more relevant. The conference organisers have followed the lead of the NZGS by taking the event to smaller centres, with the last three events being held in Hamilton, Nelson and Napier. The absence of tertiary geographers from this event has been marked; however geographers Professor Regina Scheyvens and Associate Professor Juliana Mansvelt of Massey University were keynote speakers at the 2017 event in Napier.

The official journal of the Society, the *New Zealand Geographer*, was first published in 1945. There are three publications each year and in 2015 the journal became available online only, hosted by the Wiley online library. The journal's quality meant it was accepted as part of the Social Science Citation Index in 2007, (Kearns & Nichol, 2007), with its first impact factor released in 2009. In 2016 it had an impact rating of 0.455 which placed it 72nd of 79 geography journals on the ISI Journal Citation Reports © Rankings. The journal details how its published academic articles primarily focus on disseminating geographic knowledge on topics of interest to the geographic and wider community which address "aspects of the physical, human and environmental geographies of its region" (New Zealand, Australia and the Asia Pacific). The journal also includes an editorial, the Geo-Ed section mentioned previously and book reviews. The journal works together with the RGS-IBG and Wiley's open access journal, *Geo: Geography and Environment*, to enable rapid publication of good quality papers that are outside of the scope of the journal. In relation to public dissemination of their research, publication in high-ranking journals, as endorsed by the PBRF matrix, is the predominant objective for the majority of academics. This means that a low-rank local journal may not attract publications.

The NZGS Early Career and Post Graduate network (ECPG) aims to strengthen geography and build future capacity by belonging to the wider New Zealand Geography network. The workshops at the biennial conference have become established and links with the RSNZ-funded eSocSci networks which built on the BRCSS project, have been strengthened. This has resulted in seven contemporary theme-based webinars in 2017, which have included presenters from Waikato University reporting on their experiences at the 2017 AAG conference in Boston as well as seminars on public scholarship and choosing the appropriate journal for research. These events are more collegial than deliberately public-facing.

The six local branches of the NZGS (Auckland, Waikato, Manawatu, Wellington, Canterbury and Otago) represent what Binns (2011: 3) termed the “sharp end” of the NZGS. Each is charged with bringing together fellow minded geographers in a collegial atmosphere to share knowledge and research, provide lecture programmes and school activities. The events range from the national to the local. The annual NZGS awards ceremony is a very public expression of celebrating and honouring those who are to be recognised for their contribution to the discipline in a number of different facets. An award from each discipline’s professional body clearly indicates a disciplinary affiliation. At a local level, in Auckland there is a bi-monthly newsletter and ‘Dialogues with Wine’ seminar which, during 2017, introduced speakers who have discussed a range of topics from ‘temporary housing in caravan parks’ to ‘the academic’s responsibility as critic and conscience’. The space for New Zealand geographers to listen, debate, discuss and celebrate contemporary geographic topics is important as it allows geographers a place to be with geographers, which has been encroached upon as departmental identity has been eroded.

Historically, the most recent publicly-facing collective geographic work was *Changing Places in New Zealand: A Geography of Restructuring* which was published in 1992 by the NZGS and edited by prominent geographers Steve Britton, Richard Le Heron and Eric Pawson. The book was the culmination of a collective commentary by 50 geographers on the processes of economic restructuring that were reshaping places in New Zealand and New Zealand’s place in the world. The book was deliberately constructed so that it contained interlinked chapters which could be read individually or as a whole. The book went through two printings and the success of the project coupled with the need to update sections due to the rapid pace of change

resulted in a further publication, *Changing Places: New Zealand in the 1990s*, edited by Le Heron and Pawson, which was published in 1996 by the NZGS. This time the number of collaborators expanded to nearly 70 and the focus of the book, unapologetically geographic, was that change in the world is locally situated. In 2013 geographers Russel Prince and Erena Le Heron promoted the idea of the 'Living Geography Text'. They hoped that such a text would provide a web-based collaborative project which would give current New Zealand case studies and insights to contemporary geographic issues. The project is in hibernation which means that twenty one years have elapsed without a deliberately publicly-focused geographic initiative. If geography has a project whether it is political or more narrowly framed in terms of disciplinary reproduction, then as Canadian geographer Marcel Bélanger concluded, it "must be created anew each generation" (Bélanger 1959: 70) as the shift in wider socio-cultural and political settings and the work that geography might potentially perform in such settings shifts. Lewis (2015), in an editorial in the *New Zealand Geographer*, encouraged geographers of another generation within the NZGS to seize the opportunity to practise social impact and assist in revitalising the discipline for the 21st century.

The NZGS is one of the constituent members of the RSNZ which aims to advance and promote science, technology and the humanities for all New Zealanders. The RSNZ is organised into three discipline-based electoral colleges with the NZGS situated in the Humanities and Social Science Electoral College. The RSNZ is an important site at which geographers can practise public geography. They can use it to advocate for particular knowledge and political positions in respect of its various 'position papers' on key public science questions, through which it informs ministers and parliamentarians independently of their departments of state. They can also utilise its public education platforms such as the Science Media Centre to reach media commentators as well as the public directly. Geographers have played a significant role in recent years in the restructuring of the RSNZ with Professor Richard Bedford elected president in July 2015 and Professor Wendy Larner succeeding him as president from July 2018. These prominent geographers are using their particular insights and disciplinary history to broker relationships across the science-humanities-social science boundaries.

4.2.4 Geography in professional fields

Outside of the academy and secondary schools, geography is not a body of knowledge practised by a specific and identifiable body of professionals. Little has been written about geographers beyond the academy and schools, and the discipline's custodians within the academy and in the national body (NZGS) have failed to systematically track the careers of graduates. Trafford (2012) detailed the two unsuccessful attempts to professionalise geography in New Zealand, led by Richard Le Heron in 1995 and Albrecht in 1999, which would have resulted in former graduates having the opportunity to join a dedicated professional organisation.

Geography graduates take up the full range of occupations imaginable of any liberal arts or general science graduate, although the actual details are imprecise. We do know that they have gone on to play prominent roles in government, especially local government, and in private sector organisations and knowledge-making consultancies. They perform multiple public roles and become involved in the production of knowledge that may have the potential to affect public debates and practice. The immediate past-president of the NZGS, Anne Pomeroy, had a successful career in central government, and now acts as a knowledge-making consultant for government and other clients. Ross Bell is the Executive Director of the Drug Foundation New Zealand and has a significant public profile in relation to looking for healthy alternatives to drugs and alcohol. Chris Laidlaw was an All Black captain, civil servant, politician, and broadcaster and is currently the chairman of the Wellington Regional Council. In Auckland the last two CEOs of the Auckland Regional Council were geographers, while geography graduates are at work in management, law, engineering, planning, and economic consultancies. Many graduates join local and regional councils in operational and strategic roles.

Several doctoral trained geographers also work in the CRIs, which operate as the government's own quasi-independent research entities, conducting publicly funded research for public benefit. These numbers have increased recently as the government has followed international trends to incorporate social science into national and international science programmes. Hence, there are, or have been over the last ten years, geographers at work producing public knowledge in at least five of the seven CRIs. This knowledge is a directly public geography produced 'within' government for the purposes of government. Several of these geographers are now playing roles in

the National Science Challenge (NSC) programmes, an explicitly government-funded and directed exercise in the production of public knowledge predicated on national futures, the shape of which the public were both invited to influence and made part of via various advisory or governance boards.

4.2.5 The collective that is New Zealand geography

Aotearoa/New Zealand geography, similar to geography in every nation that is embedded in a national framework, possesses its own unique identity. This thesis has identified 109 ‘geographers’ at work in New Zealand universities; however, the observations of Sidaway & McGregor (2008: 2) that “a collective New Zealand geography research identity remains diffuse” still remain relevant a decade later.

In terms of disciplinary visibility, Section 4.2 in this chapter provides a detailed analysis of where the discipline is reproduced and the activities undertaken by the NZGS to promote both the discipline and geographical community collegiality. The 2016 conference in Dunedin saw increased representation from physical geographers, and a strong cohort of postgraduate students. The ‘geography community’ came together, celebrated the multiple strands in which New Zealand geographers are involved and left revitalised and committed to the task of keeping the discipline relevant in the increasingly competitive and interdisciplinary environments in which they work. The 2018 NZGS/IAG conference was held in Auckland in July, with the theme of the conference being ‘Creative conversations, constructive connections’. This speaks to the current academic environment which encourages research collaborations ‘between’ academics as opposed to transmission of research findings ‘to’ academics and wider audiences by individual researchers

The opportunities for collective action, however, are tempered by the increasing demands of the PBRF and the individual excellence it promotes and privileges over a collective disciplinary identity. The 2018 PBRF research portfolio will reveal self-identified New Zealand geographers who are internationally recognised in fields as diverse as feminist geography, river geomorphology, health geographies, alpine landscapes, participatory research, coral reef geomorphology and indigenous knowledge. The approach adopted by many academics seeking an international research profile, however, requires individuals to privilege overseas networks over

local ones meaning that individuals become “global academics who just happen to live in Aoteroa” Sidaway & McGregor (2008: 3).

In disciplinary terms Lewis (2015: 4) notes “that the journal [New Zealand Geographer] requires greater commitment from New Zealand geographers”. He proposed that if senior geographers and domestic professors commit one of their four Nominated Research Outputs (NRO) from their PBRF portfolio this “demonstrates domestic leadership . . . and is a measure of deep commitment that demonstrates to others a healthy national geography and reanimates the core values of discipline – place and engagement” Lewis (2015: 5).

Achieving scale, given the comparatively small number of geographers in New Zealand, is difficult to create, although the coastal management group in Auckland has grown significantly and in 2016 were awarded a grant of \$4.5M for research in that area. A senior geographer noted how Auckland has employed individuals “who can span social science through to hardcore modelling” which is what “the university wants to see” (Interviewee 23). The creation of the WGGRN in 2016 through the eSocSci portal, when added to the acknowledged strength of feminist geography at Waikato University, has strengthened the collective voice of feminist geographers in New Zealand.

The ability to think and act as a collective (albeit on a global scale a small one) exists. The example of the Auckland coastal management group, the feminist geographers and Lewis’ proposals, signify ways to unlock the full collective potential of New Zealand geography. I am not advocating a single research area in which New Zealand leads the world but groups of research collectives with international standing as opposed to a collective of individuals each with individual research priorities. The opportunities exist to move beyond what Sidaway & McGregor (2008: 2) observed as the “‘camaraderie’ and collegiality” of New Zealand geography towards a “diversity” (Kitchin & Sidaway, 2006: 489) of ways to demonstrate the relevance of New Zealand geography.

4.3 The pivotal trajectories of change in New Zealand geography

The small but deeply informed literature on the changing nature of the institutional form of New Zealand geography identifies five practices driving change: neoliberalism; reprioritising of work; institutional restructuring; the human/physical divide and the decoupling of the school/tertiary relationship. Those within the discipline who advocate for a continuation of the status quo are inadvertently writing our discipline's epitaph, which may read; 'Geography—the 20th century discipline that fought evolution, and lost.' In accepting the need for generational renewal (see Bélanger, 1959), I would like to engage initially with the literature that reveals the most significant stresses on geography in New Zealand, before engaging with each of the five identified practices.

4.3.1 Disciplinary challenges and opportunities

The call by Johnston (2011) to encourage geographers to continually engage with funding bodies and actively promote the credibility of their research was co-opted by Lewis (2015). He reminds New Zealand geographers of the dangers of disciplinary stagnation, and encourages his colleagues to “initiate and embrace” (Lewis 2015: 2) practice-oriented debates within geography in the face of continued and relentless neoliberal restructuring. Despite our geographic isolation and our disciplinary nexus with the Anglo-US centre of disciplinary dominance, Binns (2011) acknowledges that New Zealand geographers punch above their weight on the international scene but, like Johnston's (2009a) concerns regarding lack of media coverage of the discipline, warns that demonstrating the vibrancy and significance of geography to the wider community is an on-going process. A sobering assessment of the institutional degradation that New Zealand geography has been subject to was presented by Le Heron (2013), although he puts forward an argument that new practices of co-learning and co-production of knowledge between geographers and others has created an outwardly-focused and mobilised research community.

The potential for spaces of co-learning and co-production of knowledge have been noted by Le Heron, Baker & McEwan (2006), Sidaway & McGregor (2008), Lewis (2009) and Le Heron & Lewis (2011). The emergence of disciplinary knowledge production can be seen through the work of Tadaki and Fuller (2014: 4) who, while

acknowledging the “fracturing” of the geography department as an institutional entity as a result of competing “norms and values”, accentuate the opportunities available for new projects with new institutional partners, citing their work with freshwater in New Zealand. The need to improve the empathy between educational institutions was commented upon by Binns (2011) who also notes the potential for the pooling of geographical research resources to present informed viewpoints on topical debates. The challenges for geography and geographers to gain a “comparative advantage in knowledge production” (Winder & Lewis, 2010: 98) in an interdisciplinary funding environment are not theoretical, but structural and real. The principal driver of institutional change in New Zealand has been state-driven neoliberalism, which geographers have been thorough in examining but surprisingly slow to adapt to both the challenges and opportunities in personal and disciplinary contexts.

4.3.2 Neoliberalism and New Zealand geography

Geographers have described, examined and theorised the changing economic, social, environmental and institutional landscapes generated in New Zealand by the neoliberal project, making perhaps the most far-reaching disciplinary critique of neoliberalism. The works of Franklin (1985), Britton *et al.* (1992), Le Heron & Pawson (1996), Larner (1997), Lewis (2003), Larner *et al.* (2009), Lewis (2009), Thomas & Bond, (2016), Pawson & Perkins (2017) and Fougère & Bond (2018) detail a challenging and protracted engagement by geographers with neoliberalism. They often centred this critique on place, but also made significant contributions to our understandings of changing governmental, economic, social, political and cultural processes. Collectively, however, the discipline did less thinking about what these changes meant for geography and what needed to be done to rework the discipline in advance of the institutional changes that have since engulfed it. The discipline failed to fully adjust and comprehend the altered research landscape. Thus, rather than quiet evolution, geography needed a jolt to reset its research trajectory. Read largely through the lens of Auckland’s academic geography, Le Heron (2013) presents a detailed account of how this jolt became experienced, and how a group of geographers grasped opportunities to begin rethinking the discipline, its potential, and how it might conduct research.

The BRCSS framework, which derived from a New Zealand Tertiary Commission project seeking fresh directions in social science (Bedford, 2009) provided a space in which geographers could engage in inter-disciplinary research. This removed the disciplinary shackles from many geographers who were constantly defending what geographers do, to one in which the generative potential of co-learning and co-production of knowledge are identified as geographic process. Binns (2011) and Le Heron, E., Le Heron, R. & Lewis (2011) engage with greater detail on the individual elements that provided the change. A neat taxonomy of the five spaces of knowledge production in which geographers are prominent: BRCSS; Biological Economies (BE); He Waka Tangata, a social science leadership group; Social Science Delegation Report (2010) following New Zealand's first overseas delegation of Social Scientists, and the NZGS is provided by Le Heron & Lewis (2011). Individually, each of these initiatives has edged New Zealand academics away from the rigid ideas of command and control towards individualistic knowledge production.

The Biological Economies project, which brought together geographers from four universities to explore the making of new value relations in New Zealand's rural spaces, can be argued to represent more than a decade's work of engaging with Post Structural Political Economy (PSPE) and enactive research. The project involved nine researchers from different disciplinary and institutional bases with differing research trajectories. The project has resulted in two books. The first, *Biological Economies; Experimentation and the politics of the agri-food frontier* (Le Heron, R., Campbell, H., Lewis, N. & Carolan, M. (Eds) 2016) was unreservedly theoretical and designed to be 'mind-melting'. It details how co-learning and knowledge construction can lead to engaged public geographies in multiple spheres. The second book, *The New Biological Economy* (Pawson, E., 2018), offers up a different reading of New Zealand regional and economic futures to those proposed by science-oriented academic commentators and deliberately targets the book-reading and media-engaged public of New Zealand.

Both publications contrast with current models of producing a paper for an international journal, or earlier models of a geographer (single or collective) producing a technical report and a set of recommendations based on his/her research for an audience that will make decisions, most notably the command and control social democratic state. This collaborative space provides a template from which geographers can act and be actors in the world and seek to effect change.

This Auckland and BRCSS-led reworking of geography extends also to the co-production of work by human and physical geographers. The work of Le Heron, Brierley and former Auckland Masters student Marc Tadaki, along with multiple colleagues, see Blue *et al.* (2012), Salmond *et al.* (2014), Tadaki & Fuller (2014), Blue, Brierley *et al.* (2016), have drawn on geography's various traditions to build a new enactive geography that tackles questions that only geographers, in close association with various publics, can tackle. Given that all of these projects associated with BRCSS and the critical physical geography emerging from Auckland involve multiple researchers, the enactive turn at Auckland is embedded in its own collaborative turn. This matches the new requirements of funding agencies for collaborative and cross-disciplinary research. These geographers have effectively established a research agenda based on collaborative knowledge creation that is running ahead of a changing institutional framework.

4.3.3 The changing priorities of work

The rise of the PBRF has led to a significant reprioritisation of the work of academic geographers. Performance monitoring technology increasingly shapes the production of knowledge in New Zealand universities and the social realities that get made from this knowledge, shape reality (Baker, 2017). It attaches greatest value to research contributions at the leading edges of science which are published in leading global journals, and arguably deprioritises the social impact and public work of academics, including lecturing. In this regard, technology is argued to have directed more and more attention to inward-looking research and high quality outputs (Cupples & Pawson, 2012).

In practice, academics have been incentivised through status and promotions criteria to steer their scholarship and their daily practice away from public engagement in any of the spheres identified in Chapter 2, Figure 2.1 towards publication on largely conceptual issues in leading disciplinary journals (see Table 4.2). This table contains figures showing where the publication output of some of the 109 identified geographers has been focused between 2005 and 2016. I selected Auckland and Otago universities as the former has the highest number of individuals within the institution who were geographers and the latter as the geographers all work in the Department of

Geography. This allowed me to include 44/109 (40%) of the total number of geographers identified.

Table 4.2: The publishing of research papers, 2005-2016

	Auckland University		Otago University	
	Domestic Geography ¹	International ²	Domestic Geography ¹	International ²
None	9	0	5	1
One	5	2	3	1
Two	2	3	4	4
Three	2	3	2	4
Four	0	2	2	2
Five	3	4	1	3
More than five	6	13	0	2
Total	27	27	17	17

¹. The nine journals used as criteria to identify ‘geographers’

². International journals

There are two main findings from the table. Firstly, the small number of individuals (six) who have been regular contributors to local journals. The time period includes two PBRF exercises and allowing for the pressures of writing for international journals and other academic work, this represents less than one paper every two years from these six individuals. This is not a criticism of their collective efforts as in total these individuals have produced 52 papers over the nine journals. The concern is the small gene pool of New Zealand geographers who regard local journals as a significant priority; which confirms Lewis’s (2015: 4) observation that there exists a real risk of local journals becoming “parochial pursuits”

The second finding is the number of individuals (14) who have written no papers for local journals. There are potential reasons for this high number, such as having only been in an academic position for a short time. Nevertheless, there appears to be a large number of New Zealand geographers who are failing to contribute to the principal source of academic output, the journal. Although this table focuses only on journal articles, the high number of individuals with zero and single publications (22) raises questions surrounding the individual depth of commitment to geography in New Zealand and the ability to produce a collective disciplinary voice. The challenge to UK-based academics to produce “at least one form of public engagement and one non-academic piece of writing a year” (Maddrell, 2010: 153) needs to be considered in a New Zealand context to bolster the number of geographers contributing articles to local journals.

4.3.4 The rise of the competitive university

The move towards a competitive market-oriented university education in New Zealand was highlighted by geographers Larner & Le Heron in 2005 and their work has been updated to cover the 30-year period since the mid 1980s by Auckland University Professor of Social Anthropology, Cris Shore, in his chapter ‘After Neoliberalism?’ The Reform of New Zealand’s University System (see Learning under Neoliberalism: Ethnographies of Governance in Higher Education (2015) edited by Hyatt, Shear and Wright). He details the successive reforms that have been driven by governments since the 1980s in New Zealand and describes how universities are the meat in the sandwich between competing government policy visions. Universities are increasingly seen as both investors and developers of human capital, whose development facilitates closer relations with businesses operating in a competitive global knowledge market. Such engagements are viewed as pivotal in enabling the social and economic transformation of the country. In addition, universities are obligated to fulfil their roles as guardians of cultural history and forgers of national identity and citizenship. These competing pressures have led to academics feeling ‘bewildered and demoralised.’ (Shore, 2015).



Figure 4.2 Banner in new science building promoting geography ranking

Source: Author's own, October 2016

A manifestation of the emergence of the New Zealand ‘Knowledge University’ in a global education environment is the increasing population of international students, as detailed by Auckland University geographers Francis Collins and Associate Professor Nick Lewis in Sidhu *et al.*, (2016). This material reality of increasing numbers of students seeking globally competitive qualifications is in part endorsed by nebulous rankings promoting universities and their subjects. The new science building at the University of Auckland opened in September 2016 and as you walked through the main entrance for the remainder of 2016 you were greeted with a series of banners (see Figure 4.2), one of which advertises that the geography and psychology departments are both ranked in the top 50 in the world in their subjects (<https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2017/geography>). This is based on the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings which are compiled using four sources. The first two are QS’s global surveys of academics and employers, which are used to assess institutions’ international reputation in each subject. The second two assess research impact, based on research citations. Obviously there is a degree of subjective judgement in the rankings but, on the whole, the results at the top are not too different from what a casual observer might expect. Note, however, there is little in the assessment of the quality of teaching other than, perhaps, the implicit conclusions of employers. In New Zealand, geography in Auckland has risen from 44th in the 2015 rankings to 34th in 2017. Otago and Victoria universities have maintained their position between 51 and 100, with Canterbury and Waikato ranking between 101 and 150. Massey is the lowest-ranked with a placing between 151 and 200. The rankings are not individualised after 50.

The hierarchy of metrification in New Zealand starts with the university, continues to individual departments and is completed by the individualised PBRF. I have provided a detailed account of how academic behaviour can be influenced by these pressures in Chapter 6 and Roche & Holland (2017) in their introduction to the 70th anniversary edition of the *New Zealand Geographer* note how the PBRF is inclined to privilege the frontiers as opposed to the foundations of the discipline. The PBRF does not purport to assess the quality of teaching which can vary from research quality; however, the measure does encourage the individual to focus on their core roles of research and publication. This can lead to the unintentional exclusion of activities such

as student quizzes, field trips and collegiate discussions which are explored by Cupples & Pawson (2012). The potential for the QS rankings and the PBRF to shape academic reality was explored by comparing the university rankings.

Table 4.3: QS and PBRF rankings of New Zealand universities

University	QS Rankings	PBRF Rankings	Geography Department Rankings
Auckland	81	2	34
AUT	441-50	8	
Waikato	324	5	101-150
Massey	340	6	151-200
Victoria	228	1	51-100
Canterbury	214	4	101-150
Lincoln	343	7	
Otago	169	3	51-100

Source: <https://pundit.co.nz/content/international-rankings-of-new-zealand-university-subjects-2017>

Table 4.3 above surprisingly demonstrates that the QS and the PBRF rankings for overall New Zealand university performance are almost exactly the same. The exception is Victoria University which does far better in the PBRF ranking when compared to its QS international ranking. The individual geography departments show a strong correlation between the PBRF and their department ranking, with Victoria and Auckland swapping places. The use of these rankings to recruit students internationally and nationally is now pervasive and questions relating to the value of these rankings are pertinent but not within the scope of this thesis.

The aim of this section is not to promote the strength of New Zealand geography but highlight the environment in which academics operate. In his book, *Metric Power* (2016), sociologist David Beer examines how almost every aspect of life has become influenced by metrics from the most liveable cities to top girls' and boys' names. The diffusion of the irresistible force of metrics into academic institution is a *fait accompli* and only academics can rail against their work being judged solely by the blunt instrument that is citation-counting.

4.3.5 Institutional restructuring

Geographers responded to the widespread restructuring of the 1980s arguably by engaging in the debates of the time in greater number and with more academic verve than other disciplines. The *Changing Places* books, the first of which was concerned with the dismantling of the state and the second with exploring the emerging new

interactions, were described by a disciplinary kaumātua during his interview as having made some “heroic (and we didn’t realise it at the time) assumptions” (Interviewee 22). The fact that five of the six universities still had a ‘Geography Department’ at the dawn of the new millennium provided academic geographers with what Le Heron described as a “perimeter of protective institutions” (Le Heron, 2013: 379). The future was assured; however, a perceptible degree of self-ingratiation became conspicuous. A disciplinary kaumātua admitted that his generation “missed the plot” (Interviewee 22) as while geography’s natural audience had been policy-makers as opposed to a wider public, the discipline had failed to notice that the same policy-makers to whom they spoke had been swept away by the neoliberal policies that geographers had written so instructively about.

By the middle of the first decade of the new millennium there existed two geography-named departments in New Zealand, the others having been amalgamated with other disciplines. In schools, changes to the curriculum with the introduction of the NCEA meant that geography as an options choice subject was facing stiffer competition from a greater range of subjects. The failure to hold a geography conference in New Zealand between 2003 and 2008 has been described by Le Heron (2013: 380) as a “strategic mistake” and despite individual academics in both physical and human geography performing well in the first PBRF round in 2003, the institutional perimeter had been breached and collective action was required. In a 2005 editorial titled *Repositioning Ourselves* (Kearns *et al.*, 2005) the focus of the *New Zealand Geographer* was reoriented to one which stood out in the academic and educational landscape and an editorial role was established and taken by Professor Eric Pawson. The success of this move is commented on in a 2011 editorial acknowledging the handover from Professor Pawson to Etienne Nel. Separate from but coterminous was the emergence of the BRCSS network as a knowledge space which, accompanied by conventional initiatives such as a special issue of *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* in 2009, allowed geography to edge towards a new geographical imagination. Some initiatives went nowhere, such as an attempted partnering with *New Zealand Geographic* (Johnston, 2009b) and the two attempts to professionalise geography in New Zealand led by Le Heron in 1995 and Albrecht in 1999 (see Trafford, 2012). The ambition of the NZGS on three fronts (reinstating the annual heads of department meetings, a strategic planning process and a living website) has

helped set the landscape where the society has a political project and geography has privileged a research agenda.

4.3.6 The human/physical archipelago

The rift between human and physical geographers and the knowledge bonds that historically bind them, is in part associated with the institutional restructuring, the individualised focus of the PBRF and the situating of physical and human geography in separate panels in both the PBRF and Marsden Fund. The PBRF Panel-Specific Guidelines for the 2018 Quality Evaluation produced by The Tertiary Education Commission/Te Amorangi Mātauranga Mātua detail the 13 peer review panels which assess individual academic portfolios. The physical sciences panel has two areas: chemistry and physics; and Earth science. Physical geography is included with 26 other categories in the Earth sciences area. Human geography is included in the social sciences panel which has eight areas, in which geography is individually named. The guidelines clearly state that researchers have the ability to cross-refer, without detrimental effect, to different panels. It is of note that the Earth Science panel is not included in the ‘anticipated’ range of cross-panel referrals for social science with the same caveat applied to the ‘anticipated’ range of cross-panel referrals for Earth science. This clear delineation between human and physical does not mean that interdisciplinary research between the two areas cannot occur, as Blue *et al.* (2012), Tadaki *et al.* (2015) and Blue & Brierley (2016) have demonstrated. It does, however, visibly divide and situate geography separately as a senior geographer noted:

I was in the School of Social Science but with a background as a geomorphologist and I just missed the coffee table conversations over the latent theory in braided rivers and stuff like that which was all normal.
(Interviewee 35)

Institutional separatism produces often involuntary barriers to co-operation through a systematic moulding of an individual’s modes of thought with regard to the potential for human/physical geography collaboration.

The second aspect of the divide is the historical effect that the cultural turn accompanied by the later turns to science, technology and studies have had in undermining some of the overly-simplistic arguments about the integrated nature of geography. The oft-quoted strength of geography, its inter-disciplinarity, has been eroded by the new cultural geographies of feminism, governmentality,

environmentalism, political economy and indigenous knowledge. Harvey's IGU address in 2000, in which he identified the multiple sites of geography, has had a profound effect on the discipline. These new areas of study have also attracted students as well as causing reflection on geography's role in the failed progress narrative of national development and colonial practices.

In reflection on the divide, it is worth considering the views of a disciplinary kaumātua and a senior geographer when asked if they viewed the lack of physical and human geographers in the same space was a weakness. The disciplinary kaumātua noted that,

because there wasn't that contestation between the human and the physical going on, it enabled a discursive space to emerge . . . I think that would have been difficult had we still been with colleagues who were working out of a much more rigid scientific paradigm. (Interviewee 15)

The senior geographer, who initially trained as a physical geographer noted that having separate human and physical departments has both positives and negatives but noted that

having had the particular set of colleagues in human geography, there has been more stimulation of the intellectual environment which we work in at university that I don't think would have occurred in a department that had necessarily physical and human geography. (Interviewee 14)

Each expressed the view that the lack of contestation between human and physical geographers, who work out of a more rigid scientific paradigm, has allowed space for other perspectives such as radical, feminist and Māori geographies to emerge.

4.3.7 The decoupling of the relationship between the academy and schools

The link between schools and universities has long been a recognised strength of the discipline. The halcyon days of Cumberland and Jobberns in the early 1950s were marked by the strength of this relationship and the expectation that a key role of geography academics was to educate future geography teachers. The establishment of full teaching departments in several universities in the 1940s was premised on training geographers, in part as teachers (Anderson, Kearns & Hoskin., 1996).

During his interview, a disciplinary kaumātua reflected upon the importance of teaching geography in schools as he views the school students of today as the future university students and the "citizens of tomorrow" (Interviewee 26). This observation,

he suggested, ought to guide academic geographers to commit to forging and sustaining strong links with schools as a way to discharge their critic and conscience roles under the Education Act as well as to sustain their livelihoods by securing a supply of tertiary geography students.

However, the tectonic shifts in the educational landscape in the early 2000s disrupted the institutional homes of geography in both schools and universities and the defining strength of relationships between school and academy. In universities, pressures on academics to research and to publish at the cutting edge of the discipline in global journals distracted them. This led them on a separate path, away from the local, which is the nature of geography in schools, and the responsibility of working with teachers to produce the citizens of the future and the geographical imaginaries that might guide them in actually making those futures. In schools, the NCEA saw curricula emerge to serve assessment and in geography led teachers to assemble resources around particular settings. The change from a prescriptive syllabus with specified subject knowledge, skills and contexts to a selective curriculum fractured the shared understandings of the discipline and its teaching that held school and academic geography together and allowed for the two communities to converse and support each other. It also intensified the fracture between physical and human geography as they were taught largely as different units with different assessment tasks under the NCEA (Fastier, 2016). While the pre-NCEA 1990 syllabus offered a balanced focus on the interaction between both natural and cultural elements, a range of contexts from global to local, a bank of skills to be mastered at each year level, the NCEA assessment units compartmentalised geographic knowledge. Freedom from prescription to develop place-specific and place-focused curricula came at the price of the progressive erosion of content as shared production of agreed knowledge waned and the focus of teachers turned to assessment and all the demands on their time and creative energies that it entailed (Morgan, 2017a). The focus on geography as a body of knowledge gave way to the teaching of multiple packets of information accumulated as credits in the wider NCEA structure.

In acknowledging that good teachers can attract students with engaging lessons, I contend that this alone is insufficient in a league table environment where final grades outstrip the value of intellectual rigour and coherent disciplinary content. The sales role of the teacher means that they have to promote their subject in relation to its

engagement, the number of credits attainable and the value of the subject in relation to entry to higher education. The peddling of one's geographic wares requires skills and support that some teachers struggle to master. The combination of a new curriculum, credit-focused students, designing more individualised courses, grade-inspired league tables and an increased focus on justifying one's teaching subject have left geography teachers less time to engage with their principal passion, geography. Rather, the connection between teachers and academics took different forms. A senior geographer lamented the loss of the direct connection between schools and geography academics in the early 1980s when academics would sit and consult with teachers on examination boards and curriculum committees. They would also visit schools and were heavily involved in producing books and resources for the classroom which enhanced the teaching of the subject. There were also regular meetings between teachers and academics at regional NZGS events. Almost all of these activities were voluntary but were viewed as disciplinary promotion which academics were happy and keen to engage in. Since then the landscape has changed and is perhaps best encapsulated by the comments of another senior geographer who, when asked if he had any connection with school geography, replied, "Why the hell would you?" (Interviewee 10). This is evidence of discord. A teacher interviewee was especially indignant in regard to the inability of Victoria University to communicate with the NZBoGT and host the Year 11 geography quiz in 2015. This demonstrates that disciplinary goodwill needs to exist for this relationship to flourish.

There are, however, scintillas of hope that a new common approach to promoting the work geography does and the academic foundations that the discipline promotes are sprouting. A past president of the NZBoGT noted that his eight years of involvement since 2008 had seen a reconnecting of the bonds between teachers and academics. A mid-career geographer, when commenting on his first meeting with a regional branch of the NZBoGT in 2014, expressed confusion at the way the school exam system worked and acknowledged that this meeting was wholly taken up with him attempting to grasp the fundamentals of NCEA. This reconnection was noted by Evans & Evans (2016) during their presentation to the NZGS Auckland branch on how NCEA operates. She evidenced the series of NCEA scholarship workshops which are run for students annually at Auckland, Massey, Victoria, Lincoln and Otago and aims to assist scholarship students.

In addition, geography has been awarded the label 'literature enriched' by universities. This will aid students in selecting subjects that will assist with their admission to university which presents an opportunity for the discipline. There has also been a renewed emphasis from the editors of the *New Zealand Geographer* to encourage a larger number of contributions from geography teachers to the GeoEd section. There continues to be a number of local branch events and in Auckland, the annual geography teachers' field trip in November regularly attracts over 50 teachers and is highly anticipated by both academics and teachers.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to answer the three questions posed in the introduction by providing a detailed synopsis of the places, performances and disruptions which distinguish geographers and the discipline of Geography in New Zealand. Geography has a multi-layered institutional structure – it is taught in schools as part of the national curriculum, and is offered in as a degree programme in six of the eight universities, albeit no longer embedded in a standalone disciplinary administrative structure. It is also supported by the NZGS, which is dominated by academic geographers but also represents teachers and professional geographers and is a constituent society of the RSNZ. The chapter provides an overview of the significant institutional and disciplinary pressures that have come to bear on the discipline and its practitioners. Arguably, the collective that is New Zealand geography has been slow to adapt to this changing institutional landscape.

Having set out the disciplinary parameters and landscape in which new geographers work, the following chapter will examine the reality of the multitude of ways and multiple settings in which geographers perform geography. This is frequently not understood by either themselves as individuals or by the discipline as public geography. The interviews with 47 individuals whom I have identified as geographers in New Zealand present a strong empirical platform from which to start building the detail of the public geography that is actually enacted as opposed to the rhetoric that has surrounded it.

CHAPTER 5: PRACTISING ACADEMIC GEOGRAPHY IN NEW ZEALAND

...the job of a professor in geography or indeed in any academy is not looking inward only... (Disciplinary kaumātua, Interviewee 22)

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I outline the work performed by academic geographers in New Zealand, exploring what geographers do, and the different values they see in this work. As Kitchin (2014b) emphasises, much of this work is writing, which takes a range of forms that frequently define academic practice. New Zealand academic geographers, however, also perform an extensive set of non-writing tasks and produce different forms of non-representational knowledge. This chapter uses material from the 47 interviews that I conducted with academic geographers and an analysis of a selection of CVs and academic profiles to describe and categorise the work of New Zealand geographers. The chapter prepares the ground for rethinking the nature of public geography in New Zealand in the following chapter, and for identifying any as yet unrecognised or unutilised potential for deploying geographical knowledge.

5.2 The different forms of work practised by academic geographers

The range of work performed by academic geographers in New Zealand extends from the staples of undergraduate lecturing, institutional service, research and publication to various forms of public engagement. Writing makes up a large proportion of the work of all geographers (Kitchin, 2014b). This can commonly involve careful attention to writing craft as well as to apparently mundane reporting of research findings for different audiences or presenting cases to research funders or university administration. Human geographers are uniquely attuned to the subtleties of register and argumentation associated with postmodern and postcolonial social

theories, where discourse can be both the object and tool of analysis, and cause and effect are embedded in discursive configurations. This space can inadvertently proselytise both writing craft and the construction of narrative to become central to the task. This was exemplified by an early-career geographer who was so incredulous about my questions that he felt the need to candidly remind me during the interview that “writing is my job” (Interviewee 39).

In Chapter 2.4.3 I discussed how Kitchin (2014b), in extending Burawoy’s taxonomy of forms of knowledge production, makes the case for writing as a form of geographical praxis. By identifying 10 forms of what he designates writing praxis (Table 2.5), he emphasises how each of the categories has the potential to capture not only different forms of writing but also the type and purpose of that writing. He argues that if the discipline adopted each of these forms of practice, there exists potential to engage with three of the identified potential audiences, namely: the critical, applied (policy) and public/participatory geographies. The reference to Powerpoint slides directs attention to teaching, while academic papers and grant applications refer to discipline-focused academic research and emails to a mix of administration and outreach. The other forms listed in the table point explicitly to public geography and the different audiences, political purposes, and narrative structures that this might take. Significantly, seven of those forms of writing praxis sit outside the performance of any conception of an ‘ivory tower’, reflecting Kitchin’s own particular interest in public geography, but also reflecting the emphasis he places on outlining the range of writing performed by geographers.

The proposed forms of an academic geographer’s writing praxis is not exclusive and does not capture the full range of writing carried out by geographers, or the non-written work of academic geographers for purposes that may focus inward toward the academy or outward towards the multiple range of publics. Nor does it capture the New Zealand context in which geographers are increasingly required to carry out research that is at best extra-academic if not more narrowly framed by the instrumentalities of government or private funding.

The singular praxis of writing contrasts with Table 5.1 which attempts to capture the full range of practices undertaken by academic geographers. It reveals a diverse set of practices which are categorised in terms of their focus. The categories are derived by assembling and classifying the types of work identified during the interviews, their

public profiles and, when available, their CV. The initial categorisation starts by distinguishing between inward and outward focused production, representation and performance of geographical knowledge. This highlights two distinctive fields of work, the first of which is between knowledge-making and other work carried out to reproduce the discipline. The second categorisation refers to academic work dedicated to having a more direct impact on the world through claims made about the nature of human and geo/bio-physical worlds and/or the demonstration of geographical values and effects.

These two fields of work and sets of practices inform each other and occur simultaneously, and are not easily separated, even hypothetically. This is especially the case with respect to work that reproduces the institutions of the academy or shapes conceptualisations of public good, and the work of teaching and supervision which is always at once about building the discipline and shaping public imagination (this is the work of making geographical imaginaries at their most productive). In the practical worlds of academic geographers, I distinguish between eight forms of work within the three general categories of inward, inward-outward and outward focused work.

Table 5.1: Modes of knowledge-making practice by New Zealand academic geographers

Inward facing	Inward/Outward facing		Outward facing				
Internal academic	Outward academic	'Impactful' research	Traditional media	Social media	School focused	Community outreach	Consultancy
Individual research agenda	Undergrad lecturing, marking	National Science Challenges	Television	You Tube	Talks at schools	Community pro-bono research	Central government
Writing articles, chapters, books	Graduate supervision	Research outreach	Radio New Zealand	Facebook	Running teacher field trips	Iwi Boards/ expertise	Local/ regional government
Research networks	RSNZ work	Policy-focused research	Local access radio	Twitter	School/ university liaison	Local boards and trusts	Iwi
International research consortia ¹	eSocSci events	Participatory research	Newspaper articles	Instagram	School exam workshops	Public lectures	NGOs
PhD supervision		Problem-based learning	Newspaper op-ed pieces	LinkedIn	Activities such as quizzes, competitions	Service international bodies ²	Industry and other lobby groups
Conference addresses and presentations			Letters to newspapers	eSocSci website		Public symposia, workshops (community, government, industry)	

Inward facing	Inward/Outward facing		Outward facing				
Internal academic	Outward academic	'Impactful' research	Traditional media	Social media	School focused	Community outreach	Consultancy
NZGS regional or national (Early-career, women's research networks)			Popular books: fiction non-fiction, poetry	Science Media Centre		Voluntary Service Abroad	
International geographical						Formal outreach groups	
Journal editorial work						Public exhibitions	
Journal reviewing							

1: e.g. IPCC, Metropolis; 2: IGU Commission: UN Commission on Social Science, UN Habitat Service Committee, UNESCO, International Organisation for Migration

5.3 Inward-facing knowledge-making practices

The heading of 'inward-facing' reflects how a significant proportion of academic endeavor is devoted to 'progressing' disciplinary knowledge and building individual research status. This includes publication in disciplinary, cognate and relevant interdisciplinary journals, publishing books for academic consumption, making conference presentations, doctoral supervision, research practice and participation in research projects and networks, and academic service in building or reproducing disciplinary institutions and organisations.

The work performed in this sphere of academic practice in contemporary universities tends increasingly to define the role of the academic geographer and the dominant form of their practice. At its core lies the individual research agenda of academics, albeit always a relational construct developed in relation to the work of others, the state of the discipline, the possibilities of funding environments, and often tight connections to more outward-looking academic practice. The academic-focused work of academic geographers builds a knowledge base, a discipline, communities of practice, and the individual and collective disciplinary reputations necessary for making wider contributions that might then be both informed by, and taken seriously by, others.

The publication of academic papers, book chapters or books is the primary method through which geographic knowledge is produced and disseminated, and is central to the work of academic geographers. Interviewees emphasised the priority of the journal

as a vehicle for publishing their work and reaching other academics. This emphasis on academic publication, and the journal in particular, is confirmed by the prominence of journal articles in the academic profiles of geographers, which I explore in Chapter 6.

Books, monographs or edited volumes are also a prominent part of the inward-facing knowledge-making project. These are a different and more detailed form of narrative engagement and are frequently positioned at a specific audience ranging from international academic communities of practices to undergraduate classes, as well as to works that seek an audience outside of academia (see 'outward-facing' work below). Thirty-six of the academics interviewed have been involved in writing chapters for books, with thirty having contributed to more than one book. Unusually, when compared to other disciplines or academic geographers in other countries, only two interviewees, both of whom are emeritus professors, have written sole-author books. This points to the time needed for such an endeavour which may be hard to find when working full-time within the academy. The contemporary method for academic book production involves co-authorship or chapter contributions and such a model of book writing has opened a space for younger early-career geographers to engage in writing.

All those interviewed pointed to work reviewing papers for journals. This is an expected part of academic work and geographers commonly review for a number of domestic and international journals, with the journals relying on their work to offer peer review as quality control. A higher than anticipated number (31 of the 47 interviewed) intimated that they had performed editorial work for journals, either serving as an editor or editing special issues.

Alongside publishing and reviewing, conferences and symposia are important venues for the presentation of papers and dialogue amongst geographers. Most academic geographers present at least two papers a year at conferences, and attend at least one international conference every second year. Many attend international conferences much more frequently and 17 interviewees suggested that they gave at least twenty international presentations over the six-year PBRF census period from 2012-17. The presentations may include invited talks at departmental seminars and field-specific symposia, as well as disciplinary conferences. The production and dissemination of geographical knowledge is frequently developed in these spaces, aided and abetted by face-to-face interaction. New Zealand geographers emphasise

participation in international conferences as critical to their inclusion in key debates, and their ability to communicate their international standing to their universities, their students, the PBRF moderators and other audiences. New Zealand academic geographers are surprisingly well internationalised and cite conversations that accompany conference participation as an important part of their work. A mid-career geographer commented enthusiastically about conferences as they

force them [delegates] to have dinner together and have conversations together and really meaningfully participate in the same scholarly community . . . And we don't do that very much in our universities any longer and any structure [annual conferences] that does that I think is a good one and geography still does it more than most. (Interviewee 6)

Importance is also attached to more localised and focused dialogues that develop through smaller symposia as key parts of geographical knowledge production. In this respect New Zealand geographers report that they face disadvantages in attending the more routine field-specific sub-disciplinary symposia that increasingly characterise the production of geographic knowledge in the UK, Europe and North America. Nonetheless a number of geographers still manage to attend such meetings of geographical communities from time to time. This includes participation in international research networks (Table 5.1) (often concretised in the form of research groups or consortia working on specific projects), and participation in local, national and international disciplinary bodies.

Participating in domestic and regional conferences points to their importance as a platform for developing geographical knowledge and translating it into New Zealand conversations which may produce domestically and locally relevant public knowledge. This kind of work extends to conference organisation and building and maintaining conferences. As detailed in Chapter 4, the NZGS hold a bi-annual conference, where the responsibility for hosting rotates through the six branches which span the country. The last conference was held in Dunedin in 2016, with the next in Auckland in 2018. This event will be a joint NZGS/ IAG conference, which occurs on a four-yearly cycle, with the last joint event being held in Melbourne in 2014.

Academic geographers also invest time in reproducing the discipline through the NZGS, and a significant number (30 of my interviewees) have been or currently are office holders in NZGS national or regional bodies. In noting that active involvement is an important part of disciplinary citizenship there are a number of ways that

geographers can get involved. This might involve attending seminars, participating in schools' outreach activities (see below), publishing in, or reviewing for, the *New Zealand Geographer*, attending the biennial disciplinary conference, or participating in the NZGS ECPG network or the WGGRN. These two research networks have become highly active in the last few years, offering geographers support and building a wider geographical knowledge base. The ECPG network, for example, has 81 members as at the start of February 2018, and held seven webinars during 2017; while the WGGRN has 84 members as at the start of February 2018, and held six webinars during 2017. These two networks routinely discuss problematic boundaries within the discipline and between it and various publics, while both have stimulated writing projects that explore dimensions of geographical knowledge and knowledge of geography the discipline.

Disciplinary leaders emphasise the significance of the NZGS to the discipline, especially the journal, which continues to offer opportunities for the publication of geographical knowledge of New Zealand, and the annual awards, which provide an opportunity to celebrate the discipline. Low membership rates amongst academic geographers, however, attest to the challenge of sustaining the scholarly identity of New Zealand geography as the divisions within the discipline are institutionalised. In restructured universities, academic geographers increasingly look to international publication and communities of practice, as academic work becomes busier and squeezes out opportunities to participate in NZGS activities. Thus, while many geographers give significant time to reproducing the discipline, a significant number do not. As one disciplinary kaumātua reflects, “if we had a strong active membership, we could do more” (Interviewee 42).

For some this extends to administrative roles on the International Geographical Union (IGU) and its working commissions. The IGU is the global organisation representing geographers and five interviewees currently occupy or have previously occupied positions on different committees of the organisation. For others, it can mean participation in IGU scholarly activities via the commissions and their global and regional conferences. Participation in IGU activities maintains the international profile of New Zealand academic geography and its prominence in the geographical world. This often translates into administrative work, on-going active exchange with colleagues overseas, and opportunities for individuals to host commissions and

conferences and to attract funding to attend the smaller, more focused international academic discussions that are important to sub-disciplinary engagement. While such work is described by interviewees as disciplinary service, it is also seen as significant for raising the international profile of New Zealand geography and thereby signalling and communicating this profile to domestic audiences including government, vice-chancellors and the parents of students.

The IGU, for example, hosts the International Geography Olympiad (the iGeo) annually which involves teams of school students from around the world. New Zealand participates in this event and Oxana Repina was the first New Zealander to be awarded a gold medal at the 2015 iGeo which was held in Tver, Russia. This success was celebrated in the media (*New Zealand Herald* Sept 4th 2015: A12) which generated positive public engagement. In 2017 she was recognised as the top New Zealand secondary school scholar, picking up the Prime Minister's Award for Academic Excellence and has chosen to study environmental science at Sydney University (http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11633573). There was a degree of disciplinary reticence within the New Zealand geography community towards celebrating her success, with the senior geographer who was involved in the iGeo admitting that,

I don't quite know what to do, how to promote it . . . The gold medal for me is worth talking about and yet I've seen one article in the press. That's frustration.
(Interviewee 14)

This demonstrates that skills such as promotion and media engagement are not attributes fundamental to academics and as such, a structured training programme would benefit individuals who seek to promote their own and/or their students' research and successes.

Doctoral supervision is also an important inward-facing practice of academic geographers. Traditionally, the PhD has been seen as an apprenticeship leading to long-term participation in the academy as an academic. While this is no longer the case and the PhD has become a much more widespread learning programme, much of the nature of learning in the degree, the way it is structured into university life, and the practice of supervision is premised upon this model. The PhD process and dissertation are still fundamentally designed to make a contribution to knowledge in disciplinary terms and to sit alongside the research work of academics. It is in this respect inward-

facing, and for mid-career and senior academics, doctoral supervision can constitute a significant part of an academic's work – in some cases taking up to 20% or more of an individual's time. A senior geographer, when considering the potential burden supervision can place on an academic's time, referred to “over-extended academics with a bevy of PhD students” (Interviewee 37). However, he also acknowledged the dual importance to the discipline of training post graduate students who engage both in cutting edge research and reproducing the discipline, noting that “the PhD students are right there in terms of some of those [disciplinary] interfaces . . . and geography certainly has supported, nurtured, and equipped those that are doing that”.

5.4 Inward/Outward-facing knowledge-making practices

A number of the practices of academic geographers have both inward and outward-facing dimensions. That is, they involve work that is designed to reproduce the discipline, but also engages with public audiences and produces and/or presents geographical knowledge for consumption beyond the academy. These practices are labelled “inward/ outward-facing” in Table 5.1. They include activities that while being fundamentally academic are outward-facing, such as undergraduate and graduate teaching or engagement with research networks and organisations beyond the discipline. There are also activities that are fundamentally publication-centred and about academic research, but pivot towards extra academic audiences by engaging with publics in developing applied projects and co-producing knowledge.

5.4.1 Teaching

Undergraduate lecturing is a significant point of contact between academics and the public, an activity that one mid-career academic referred to as the “greatest of privileges” (Interviewee 13). For all my interviewees, undergraduate teaching made up a significant part of their job. While all recognised undergraduate teaching as one cornerstone of the academy, a number suggested that it was not the primary role of academia. One disciplinary kaumātua reflected that in his first lecturing position, his Head of Department had stressed on his first day as a lecturer that “...*your job is to do research, and all your teaching will be informed by your research*” (Interviewee 43). The Education Act 1989 emphasizes that the role of universities is to deliver research based teaching, and the accepted standard work division of full-time academics is that

they will spend 40% of their time teaching and 40% on research. Teaching is the primary purpose for a New Zealand public university and its primary source of revenue, but this teaching must be research-informed. This makes undergraduate teaching both an outward, public-facing practice and an inward academically focused practice through which to reproduce the public university and resource its research functions.

Nearly two-thirds of my interviewees regarded undergraduate students as a 'public' and teaching as a public good activity. Several of the interviewees questioned whether the fact that students who, as an early-career geographer emphasised, now "pay for a product" (Interviewee 29), has restructured the academic-student relationship into a market one. The majority, however, agreed with Burawoy (2004), and saw students as a public and the role of an undergraduate lecturer as someone with a responsibility "to share some knowledge" (mid-career geographer: Interviewee 38). Most interviewees commented on the shifting nature and role of undergraduate teaching as governments sought to make universities more inclusive and various pressures on universities shifted the point at which students were expected to engage with more complex geographical knowledge upwards towards post-graduate teaching. Several commented that undergraduate teaching has become more onerous with increased emphases on assessment and expectations apropos new pedagogical styles, enhanced inclusiveness and a new, twenty-first century knowledge economy vocationalism. Undergraduate teaching has become more explicitly outward-facing with one mid-career geographer describing a shift in role from the "sage on the stage" to that of "grade enabler" (Interviewee 19), which has further shifted teaching from an academic to a public performance.

Graduate teaching and supervision differs from undergraduate engagements as it represents a more focused engagement with an academic's own research. In this sense it's again public in that the objective is to prepare students for professional roles in society; however it can also be viewed as an inward-facing academic practice associated with the specific and specialised work of universities. Also, the relationships between staff and students shift more fully towards richer inter-personal exchanges in which at some level knowledge is co-produced within the academy. A disciplinary kaumātua pointed to the difference between the "intellectual relationship" that can be generated with graduate students and the "en masse" format of

undergraduate teaching. He elaborated that “you [the lecturer] learn more from them I sometimes think than they learn from you” (Interviewee 42). A mid-career interviewee went further still to suggest that he “treat[s] graduate students as colleagues” (Interviewee 31). Trafford (2012) contends that this public-academic relationship, is best thought of as (and performed through a pedagogy that recognises) “a gradual move away from more disciplinary-centric research practices to more outward-oriented, border crossing engagements . . . which elucidate co-learning, co-production” (Trafford, 2012: iv).

At the extreme of engaged, experiential teaching lies what two of the interviewees have labelled “problem-based learning”. This promotes student engagement with research projects and was characterised by a disciplinary kaumātua as an effort to “teach an engagement with the public(s)” (Interviewee 34). Two interviewees—one a disciplinary kaumātua and recipient of an Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Teaching Award, the other a senior geographer—have been at the forefront of what the former terms public geography with “a small p” (Interviewee 34). They each run academic courses that involve students who, whilst working in groups of between three and five, identify community partners and develop research projects which aid the organisations. Such an approach enables communities and groups who feel ostracised from government bureaucracy to develop an effective voice while providing geography students, as a senior geographer observed, with the opportunity to “find a voice and an interest” (Interviewee 33) and to develop “sharp edged skills” (Interviewee 34), that will aid them in future employment. Learning takes place beyond the traditional setting of the lecture theatre and challenges established pedagogies.

While these approaches are criticised by some for lacking rigour and the engagements with theoretical frameworks necessary to underpin learning, the two geographers using them emphasised the virtues of publicly engaged experiential learning. They view the pedagogy as a significant mode of public engagement and as a positive form of student learning. Institutional leaders however, while providing supportive platitudes, have as yet been unprepared to find sufficient levels of resourcing that recognise the approach as a valuable form of public engagement.

5.4.2 Extra-disciplinary research networks

There is a sense that academics beyond geography are also a public and that interdisciplinary institutions and the practice of academic geography in interdisciplinary settings are forms of public geography. Interviewees reported being widely engaged with interdisciplinary New Zealand research networks and organisations which include the RSNZ and Engaged Social Sciences Hui Rangahau Tahī (eSocSci). These organisations aim explicitly to blur boundaries between disciplines, but also between academic and policy worlds, and between the academy and various publics. Each organisation hosts interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary academic webinars focused on methodology, research tools, research fields, and policy applications of current research. Geographers report that they participate widely in these activities with 25 interviewees indicating participation in one or more of a range of outward-facing events such as the RSNZ special issues series on land use or more routine eSocSci webinars addressing a range of national concerns with respect to social transformation.

Geographers are often leaders in these spaces and organisations. In recent years, they have become prominent figures within the RSNZ. The president, immediate past president, and immediate past vice-president of Humanities and Social Sciences, are all geographers. In addition, three interviewees are part of the society's Catalyst programme. This programme acts on behalf of the New Zealand government and

supports New Zealand science sector participation in, and membership of, key international science fora and targeted engagement that cannot be supported through other means." (<https://royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/catalyst-fund/catalyst-influence/>)

The programme enabled interviewees to engage with the IGU, the Association of Asian Social Science Research Council (AASSREC) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC). Another interviewee is a member of the RSNZ early-career research forum. The strong representation of geographers, and human geographers in particular in these spaces, provides opportunities to disseminate geographical imaginaries and to apply them in influential settings to contextualise new knowledge, frame understandings of the world, and shape new worlds.

Geographers are also prominent participants in eSocSci, as they were within the BRCSS network from which it evolved and which included five academic geographers in its management group. ESocSci has been led from its inception by geographer

Robin Peace, whilst four geographers are currently listed as convenors or co-convenors of the 26 eSocSci research groups, and many more participate regularly. As with the ECPG and WGGRN initiatives in geography, eSocSci works through webinars and electronic meetings, which were pioneered in New Zealand by the earlier BRCSS network. The seven webinars held by the ECPG during 2017 covered topics which ranged from “academic writing” to “life after postgraduate study”. Interaction with the public was specifically addressed in a webinar entitled “The Importance of Public Scholarship—Perils and Possibilities” held in June 2017. This examined the potential for academic scholarship facilitated by social media to engage beyond the ivory towers. The contributors pointed to the low barriers to entry and potential egalitarianism offered by social media, while noting the intimate and less controlled environment.

My interviewees report that this widespread participation in external research institutions has involved significant investments of time, but that it has provided opportunities to practise geography beyond the discipline. Further, they report that these various organisations have come to be shaped by how geographers think and what they do. While these organisations remain focused on the academy they have functions and mandates to reach out to various publics from policy spheres to iwi, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and wider publics. While most of my interviewees saw these forms of participation as an extension of their roles as academics and an important dimension of institutional and disciplinary service, few considered them as public geography. Those actively involved in leadership roles in these networks, however, saw them very clearly as a form of public geography. They report that they have provided important platforms for the extension of geographical thinking into public engagement and policy networks, as well as researcher networks across disciplines and beyond the university (notably into the CRIs).

5.4.3 Participatory forms of research

Community-focused research and participatory (action) research are both inward-facing and outward-facing at the same time. They involve geographers using their academic knowledge and skills to benefit community groups, whilst also producing research-based forms of geographical knowledge to build the discipline, advance individual careers and inform students. The recent geographical turn to the co-

production of knowledge was demonstrated by the theme of the 2014 RGS-IBG Conference being “The Geographies of Co-Production” (Larner, 2014). A senior geographer who has worked with a community trust for a quarter of a century insists that this kind of work is crucial for geographers, and represents one of the founding strengths of the discipline. His contributions have ranged from scientific measurements for funded research projects to school field trips. While he has understood this work as community service and part of his role as an academic, he has not interpreted it as ‘public geography’. Similarly, a mid-career geographer who has for many years worked closely with her iwi as a voluntary expert in fields of environmental management, finds it difficult to imagine this work as public geography. She understands it rather as who she is when she comments that “by doing work with . . . , I am . . .” (Interviewee 30), even though she is now formulating publicly-funded research to explore some of the questions and issues with which she has grappled. Arguably, however, these examples of deep and sustained performance of geographical expertise and co-production of knowledge are quintessential forms of public geography.

There are parallels here with participatory (action) research practice. Participatory research involves academic geographers working in partnership ‘with’ communities and groups as opposed to objectifying the groups for research purposes. This is subtly different from the public engagement mentioned in the previous paragraph, as the approach is founded on the premise of how knowledge can be co-produced with the community. This mode of practice was offered as an example of public geography by four interviewees and is not to be confused with slow scholarship, as it focuses on the need for long term commitments to durable relationships which facilitate spaces for different objects of interest and perspectives to emerge.

This commitment to “share knowledge around participatory practices” (Interviewee 12) was detailed by a senior geographer, who stresses that this method of applied research is frequently driven by the publics outside of the university as opposed to her own intellectual curiosity. Here she talked of the inherent methodological and epistemological tensions that arise when indigenous practices are required to fully grapple with questions in particular fields. One mid-career geographer noted that while this style of applied research presented challenges to physical geographers, it also

provides them with “an opportunity to expand and to become more credible” (Interviewee 41) which will be important in future research within New Zealand.

The senior geographer also talked about how research relationships built during one research process can last well beyond that project and even transcend particular research fields to provide enduring conduits from academic geography to public audiences and concerns, and vice-versa. She highlighted a project centred on the social sustainability of farming in which her research relationships endured and her knowledge was able to be deployed in further projects culminating in a Treaty of Waitangi settlement claim. She described this relationship as one where she had a “sense of seeing myself both in service to people but also as a catalyst or a facilitator” (Interviewee 12). The interviewees did not present any sense of being obligated to these groups, and each seamlessly morphed into the role of the understated New Zealander, as they were self-effacing about their involvements and despite the fact that each had and continue to knock their own [research-based] ‘bastard off’ they were humbled that their academic knowledge can serve a purpose.

5.4.4 Mission-led research

In contrast with the inward-facing dimensions of Kitchin’s (2014b) characterisation of academic writing for grants, the New Zealand funding landscape has become firmly outward-facing (Lewis and Shore, 2018). This will be explored in greater depth in the next chapter, but it is clear that the funding environment is now regulated by more formalised investment-oriented contracts than the hands-off social contract that once gave researchers freedom to ask and answer their own questions. Even the Marsden Fund, the ostensible ‘blue skies’ research fund, has come to expect projects to have identifiable and measurable social impact, be this formally or otherwise. Four of my interviewees are involved in current Marsden projects and two others in the ‘Sustainable Seas’ NSC. Each emphasised the public dimensions of the project, and the expectations and opportunities embedded in them. One, for example, pointed to the constraints of funding that expects particular types of questions to be posed and applied answers to be found, but also to the opportunities available from public funding that might be leveraged for research ranging from “social science through to hard-core modelling” (Interviewee 23). In these, and other cases, geographers are carrying out research that is producing geographical knowledge for debates within the

discipline and writing papers for disciplinary journals, but are also creating geographical knowledge for government and different publics.

One professional geographer welcomed these new funding models as being based on more extensive public negotiation of what society wants and needs from the science it funds. She used the term “engaged compact” (Interviewee 72) to capture the reconfigured relationships between research and its publics. She suggested that this is not giving researchers a framework into which they must fit, but a framework ‘around’ which they can develop their work. The example she gave was that of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals which provide a framework around which the researcher can answer his/her own questions. In the New Zealand context, the new NSCs, which have diverted research funding into a set of eleven significant issues for the nation, and the aligned Nation of Curious Minds projects, which identified four primary ‘action areas’ in which to engage the public with science and broaden learning experiences (<https://www.curiousminds.nz/actions/>), have produced a science landscape that seeks to make a virtue of research that is both inward and outward-facing at the same time.

The theoretically and empirically grounded knowledge production traditions of geographers have positioned them well to participate in the NSCs. Geographers from the University of Auckland, for example, are heavily involved in projects within four of the eleven NSC frameworks. While some geographers argue that in practice this landscape reduces knowledge production to answering pre-formed questions posed by established social actors and will result in the production of geographical knowledge for the benefit of stakeholders (users and beneficiaries) rather than wider publics, others are more sanguine. They suggest that these funding arrangements will give geographers opportunities to develop their own research in tandem with providing answers to the questions set for them even if pushing the boundaries of disciplinary knowledge may not be the primary purpose of the research programmes. There is also always the potential to ask other more challenging questions, and to work with social actors to change the questions in the course of answering them, and thereby make different worlds (see Lewis *et al.*, 2016 and Le Heron *et al.*, 2016). In each of these forms of mild subversion, the distinction between inward and outward-facing research is being blurred, such that we might conclude that geographical research is becoming more public. Certainly, three of the most senior geographers interviewed suggest that

it will encourage academics to become more cognisant of the potential for practical and relevant application of the knowledge they are generating. In a sense, the NSCs and similar programmes are leading more geographers to become public geographers, although this does beg the questions: what is ‘the public’; and what is the purpose of ‘public’ geography—questions that will be addressed in the next chapter.

5.4.5 Policy-focused research

Finally, geographers are also performing inward-outward-facing work when they publish their research in journals aimed at policy makers. Geographers have a long history of conducting research with policy implications, particularly in regard to regional development (see Lewis *et al.*, 2013). The *New Zealand Geographer* once carried little else but policy-focused scholarship. While the turns to theory in both physical and human geography have altered that tradition, one mid-career geographer reported how she was personally aiming to reverse this trend in her work. She detailed how she was “targeting the policy makers” (Interviewee 32) by moving away from journals aimed at other academics to those journals which use the data to inform policy makers, as she felt that without doing so her research lacked application. Others, whilst writing for academic journals, have tailored their analysis of existing policy to offer constructive critiques that suggest policy reform or alternative policy. New Zealand geographers have been active in this area, whether in relation to New Zealand (see Wetzstein & Le Heron 2010, Morrison 2011, and Lewis & Murphy 2015), countries elsewhere (see Scheyvens, 2011; Nel & Rogerson, 2016; and Bek *et al.*, 2017) or questions relating to international governance or the global South (see Murray & Overton 2014; Underhill-Sem, 2016; Scheyvens, Banks & Hughes, 2016).

Other geographers have worked with or completed reports for the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), UNESCO-IHC which is a policy sector for UNESCO water education, the United Nations Commission on Social Science, the United Nations Habitat Service Committee, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) which is part of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Council for Scientific Unions, the ISSC and the AASSRC. These are all inward/outward-facing reports, which address both disciplinary audiences and the organisation for whom they are written. In all, six interviewees have completed reports

for and/or served on committees for such organisations, with at least two working their way into the ‘inner group’ of the organisation. The work comes with individual recognition and research funding opportunities, and opportunities to influence powerful actors in the world and thereby perform a form of public geography. Many others have completed more definitively outward-facing work commissioned by policy actors which I explore in the following section.

5.5 Outward-facing practices

Geographers also participate in explicitly outward-facing practices that directly address public audiences of one kind or another. While usually more overtly targeted to performing public geography than the inward/outward practices just discussed, they may be more or less explicitly focused on remaking worlds through the production and application of geographical knowledge. I identify five spheres of practice through which academics engage and inform the public about disciplinary knowledge and research: traditional forms of media engagement; new social media engagement; engagement with schools; community focused work; and contracted research.

5.5.1 Traditional media engagement

Engagement with the established media (visual, print and radio) is not a defined part of an academic’s job description. The decision to engage with the media is often an individual one. Perhaps the most celebrated of such engagements in New Zealand geography was Cumberland’s *Landmarks*, the 1981 TV documentary. *Landmarks* drew huge audiences and recognition for both the presenter and the discipline. In contrast, a mid-career geographer explained, “I avoid the media. People do that much better than I do so I don’t like to engage with the media” (Interviewee 31) while another mid-career geographer noted that she was “scared of being misquoted” and she did not actively “promote myself into that space” (Interviewee 32). A common observation amongst those who had done some media work was correlated with the experience of a mid-career geographer who described her media experiences as “time-heavy with few benefits” (Interviewee 40). While the majority of interviewees were wary of media involvement, several were keen participants and committed to publishing articles, op-ed pieces and letters in the print media as a way of engaging with publics. One senior geographer and long-term participant in the established media

made a clear distinction between creating the conditions for public debate by publishing pieces relating to original research, or extending academic publication into the public sphere, and entering into an established discussion of public interest through an op-ed piece or editorial letter(s).

Eight of my 47 interviewees had published articles relating to their research in either the *New Zealand Herald*, *The Dominion Post*, *New Zealand Listener*, *Stuff.co.nz* and *theconversation.com*. One senior geographer had published articles in the overseas newspaper *The Guardian* and the magazine *The Economist*, both of which were written in his area of research but did not relate specifically to New Zealand. Six others have published in regional papers, with one early-career public geographer having a monthly column. He detailed how his regular column formed a positive two-way interaction. It offered a platform on which he was able to comment, in this case on food politics, and enabled the public to engage with him, which improved his understanding of their views.

This is a surprisingly high level of engagement, given the lack of institutional support for media engagement and the ambivalence towards its value as an academic practice. Interestingly, the individuals who have written op-ed pieces were all senior geographers or disciplinary kaumātua. A disciplinary kaumātua notes that his engagement through op-ed articles, makes him “feel as if I’m engaged a little bit more broadly. I often feel it’s really quite interesting how that [an op-ed] has a long tail of recognition by people weeks after some op-ed” (Interviewee 18). A senior geographer, in using letters to the editor as a medium, explained that his motivation was driven largely by the need to challenge “ignorance and blatant untruths” (Interviewee 11).

5.5.2 Social media engagement

Two-thirds of my interviewees used social media to publicise their personal research. Those adept in the area of social media pointed to its value as a platform for public engagement and no interviewee expressed hostility towards its use as a means of communicating geographical knowledge. A disciplinary kaumātua emphasised the importance of remaining alert and cognisant to technological as well as social and political change. She noted the discipline needs to be “where people’s real lives are, people are on Facebook” (Interviewee 15). Several others reported that academics are

actually encouraged to use platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to increase the visibility of themselves and their work.

Users of social media emphasise the distinctions between platforms. Different academic geographers use different platforms and have developed individualised approaches to reach different audiences. One senior geographer explained that he uses both Facebook and Twitter to promote his research to an academic audience, but targets different publics. He regards the latter as having the potential for greater global reach in promoting his work, although he has no control over how and to whom the information is disseminated after he has tweeted it. In contrast, his Facebook contacts represent a smaller potential audience that he can target for more New Zealand-specific news.

Other academic geographers using social media also reported that they targeted specific platforms. One mid-career geographer detailed how in attempting to use Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn concurrently, he became tied in a “digital knot” (Interviewee 6) as he struggled to keep each updated. As a result he chose to focus on Facebook as it was easier to maintain the consistency and quality of his message. Another interviewee focused only on YouTube, using it as a method of engaging with students. This senior geographer uses his own particular musical skills to extend his teaching performance beyond the classroom and to engage in different ways with his students and also reach wider audiences. Those academic geographers using social media again emphasised that the time commitment is high and the obvious returns are low in terms of clearly demonstrable impact or career advancement. An early-career geographer who uses Twitter as a platform to engage with his students and wider publics about the risks of natural disasters observed that little weight is apportioned to these modes of communication within current appraisal models.

Users and non-users alike also express doubts about the potential of social media as a vehicle for public geography and for building individual research profiles. One early-career geographer who works on public policy described his Twitter feed as “a digital talking circle” (Interviewee 17). He described how Twitter conversations that promised to be democratic and inclusive frequently became dominated by the opinions of those with established reputations who carry the most academic mana. Others suggested that the ability to target an audience and become involved in wider digital communities did not necessarily enhance the wider visibility of their work, and

questioned whether posting work on social media necessarily reaches audiences beyond the academy. One senior geographer and Facebook user, warned against a slavish adherence to digital communication, which might obscure and erase opportunities arising from face-to-face contact. This sentiment was echoed by another senior geographer who commented that,

I think the challenge in the digital world is to get the right balance between face-to-face and digital, and a lot of organisations will use both and if you are too heavily digital you are at risk but you haven't got much time to do face-to-face. So if you are organising a task group you might spend 80% of your time working digitally but unless you've got something like 10 or 15% of your time face-to-face then you're missing a hell of a lot of opportunities. (Interviewee 37)

Some evidence of the need to be fully aware of where your potential audience is, came from an early-career geographer who was encouraged by a colleague to use YouTube. The aim was to attract a wider audience to her research; nevertheless, the strategy was less successful than she had hoped as the core strength of her research was derived from face-to-face interaction.

In spite of these concerns, interviewees frequently commented on the need to upskill in effective use of social media. The requirement to be trained and proficient in how to perform these forms of engagement successfully has been acknowledged by the NZGS. The organisation invited attendees to participate in the 'Science Media SAVVY Express' workshop during the 2016 conference in Dunedin. The success of this initiative meant that it was repeated at the 2018 conference. Individuals were given the opportunity to produce a 30-second clip on their research with the completed video being emailed to them which could then be uploaded to the social media platform of their choice. This initiative proved extremely successful with all time slots taken and has been extended to other academics through the RSNZ, which launched its own Twitter and Facebook feeds in October 2016 as part of its wider science communication and social media drives. The NZGS itself launched a new Facebook page in October 2016, and the IGU launched a Twitter account in April 2017.

Arguably the most successful social media venture in the area of geography has been the eSocSci website. The website aims to create a "non-partisan online presence" (<http://www.esocsci.org.nz/about-us/>) for the disparate New Zealand Social Science community. It has a mission to spread engaged social science research across disciplinary boundaries and silos, and create "communities of practice" which address social issues. To date, 26 interdisciplinary networks are used by 1,821 researchers (as

at February 1st 2018) in both academic and public sector research areas (<http://www.eSocSci.org.nz>). The website is structured around web-based exchange and has a mediated blog through which its members contribute research-informed commentaries to public debates as well as links to wider commentaries and academic articles. As discussed above, geographers were prominent in the formation of this space and continue to be actively engaged. A search of the eSociSci membership on February 1st 2018 revealed 232 geographers from the total membership of 1,821 ranging from Masters and PhD students to early-career geographers and professors. As with the membership of any organisation, I acknowledge that membership does not necessarily relate to engagement; however the fact that over 10% of the membership identify as geographers suggests more than a quorum of the discipline are aware of the website. The challenge is to keep this space visible and relevant. The website has greater engagement with early-career researchers and geographers have been especially prominent in the two networks previously mentioned, namely the ECPG and the WGGRN in addition to contributing to the blog on matters that are relevant to their research. The website allows individuals to register for a weekly email which covers the latest research news, new books and articles for discussion. This facility enables individuals to choose to engage with topics which are relevant to their research areas and interests.

As previously noted, the NZGS ECPG network has also used digital technologies to extend the work of its members by hosting seven webinars on the network during 2017. While the ECPG network struggles to capture the imagination of physical geographers, its use of digital technologies has encouraged more outward-facing practices and affirmed the use of social media platforms in geography. It is bringing together a generation of academic geographers who are determined, as one member observed in interview, to “get their work out there’ (early-career geographer: Interviewee 13) and normalising this form of work in geography. Whilst the ECPG network has yet to actively seek public participation in its webinars, they provide the opportunities and stimulate the motivations to extend conversations beyond geography. They also confirm for many mid-career and more senior geographers that online communication of geographical knowledge and the engagement and promotion of the discipline and geographical research through digital technologies will only increase. The opportunity for individuals to engage in debates has democratised the

disciplinary landscape, producing a collective and cohesive disciplinary vehicle for geography to achieve more.

5.5.3 Engagement with schools

School engagement is another form of outward-facing knowledge production and ten of my interviewees report engaging routinely with schools. Interviewees indicated that they performed school visits, spoke to school students visiting the university, delivered workshops to examination classes, represented the university on committees with teachers, marked NZBoGT competitions, and assisted teachers and students with field work. These interactions were generally informal and voluntary and often undertaken outside of normal academic duties. However, the University of Auckland has specified a service role with a time allocation for school liaison and direct engagement with the Auckland branch of the NZBoGT while Victoria, Canterbury and Otago universities have academic committees focused on improving connections with their local school geography associations. As previously noted, five universities offer workshops to help students prepare for the NCEA geography scholarship exam, and the University of Auckland hosts an annual geography teachers' field trip at the end of the school year in November. This field trip supports teachers in developing field teaching skills and has become an established and anticipated event.

With the exception of examination preparation and support for field pedagogy, school engagement generally takes the form of a range of informal contacts centred on personal commitments, disciplinary collegiality and institutional interests. It tends to involve little systematic translation into schools of geographical knowledge and insights generated within the academy. Nonetheless, school liaison is practised and valued by many academic geographers and its value is recognised in institutional terms by the regional and national bodies of the NZGS and by the regional teachers' organisations within the NZBoGT. It is also recognised at some level by universities where interviewees report that school liaison has become a pivotal disciplinary project for the NZGS and the current levels of academic engagement with schools represent a renewed enthusiasm. However, the removal of the role of universities in setting and developing school curricula has created an ignorance at the tertiary level as to how geography is taught in schools and weakened the potential to develop the renewed engagements of academics in schools into a more effective public geography.

Interviewees were frank in expressing their ignorance of the school geography syllabus and curriculum, with one mid-career geographer who serves on a regional NZGS committee admitting that “I don’t really understand high school geography” (Interviewee 30). Another mid-career academic geographer who engaged in renewed contact with his local branch of the NZBoGT, observed that he had been struck by the difference between the interpretation he applied to the term ‘concepts’ in his first year geography course in comparison to that used in the school curriculum. As a consequence he felt “a bit at sea in terms of trying to understand what we have that may be useful [to the teachers] and how we can package it” (Interviewee 5).

The work performed by academic geographers in developing academy-school relationships has moved far from the top-down syllabus-orientated influence to particular forms of liaison work. This not only undermines the value to the discipline of its visibility in schools and thus in turn the discipline itself, but also the capability of academic geography to shape geographical imaginaries in schools and thus its capacity to practise public geography (see Chapter 6).

5.5.4 Direct work with communities: outreach

Interactions with community organisations occur as part of a geographer’s life, but may be more or less formalised and framed as public geography. Involvements in community activities that drew on their geographical knowledge were detailed by 19 of the interviewees. These ranged from formal roles on community boards, the contribution of knowledge to community meetings of one sort or another, public addresses, participation in community events, and the routine participation in iwi and hapū matters that involve geographical knowledge.

Four interviewees work on community boards, which three described as ‘*pro-bono*’. All four explained that they were happy to share their expertise and assist where they could, whether through being used as a labour unit to clean up a lake or guide tourists, or in an advocacy role helping to draft and present information at council meetings. While one disciplinary leader suggested that such engagements frequently facilitated research opportunities, these engagements were all seen in the first instance as ethical commitments and a discharge of community and wider public responsibilities.

Two academics talked about their relationship with specific iwi. As observed in Section 5.4.3, these geographers carry largely unspoken responsibilities to attend hui and share their geographical knowledge and expertise with their hapū and iwi. They are also recognised as having particular expertise that can be mobilised by hapū and iwi in relation to environmental, social or development concerns. Their capability is in essence a community asset, which the two geographers accept. These researchers recognise and perform this responsibility, but do not add up the hours spent, or understand this work as associated with their academic responsibilities. One senior geographer, for example, explained how an initial three-year project with an iwi on a state sponsored project led to 12 years of engagement. Significantly, community engagement generally leads to long-term connections that provide important opportunities for translating geographical knowledge into public settings.

In 2016, in delivering the inaugural University of Auckland Cumberland Lecture, Victoria University Provost and geographer, Professor Wendy Larner, observed that academics and universities were “tripping over” each other to achieve these kinds of community outreach. Eighteen of the interviewees connected discussion about community engagement to notions of outreach; that is, in institutional and impact terms. These tended to be divided into experiences of giving public talks or exhibitions, and engagements that were more closely connected to institutional responsibilities and academic practice such as contributing to short courses or to public events such as the Incredible Science Day organised by universities, the RSNZ or other institutional agencies. One mid-career geographer suggested that it is important to “share your knowledge” (Interviewee 45) with other people and emphasised the difference between addressing a professional audience and reaching out to non-professional audiences. She made two significant points here—it requires different skill sets and modes of communication, and it involves an affective relationship in which the geographer engages as part of their community for the wider good of that community. One senior geographer emphasised the extent of the work involved in community engagement and the challenge of developing the different skill sets required to engage with non-professional public audiences. Most interviewees made this point less instrumentally, suggesting that talking to public groups such as Rotary, Probus, University of the Third Age, and Fish and Game tended to require

them to develop narrative in a more personal way, and that the challenge was an opportunity for more meaningful work and impact.

While the definition of outreach can be elastic and cover a vast range of inward/outward and outward-facing activities (<https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2012/sep/24/university-school-outreach-support-partners>) it tends to refer to forms of engagement by academics and universities that aim to expose community groups to the value of academic knowledge and to translate that knowledge into more informed citizenship. In practice this tends to come with a strategy to advance a range of institutional interests from attracting students to building a constituency for greater public investment in science.

Three separate interviewees each ran short courses for groups of workers employed in the same space as the researcher. A senior geographer described how this environment provided him with the opportunity to learn from individuals who “cumulatively have hundreds of years of working experience” (Interviewee 20). Another interviewee, an early-career geographer, draws on professional expertise in her role as a mountain guide in her spare time and commented that she felt sure she had increased awareness of climate change “more by guiding than in my job as an academic” (Interviewee 41). The interviewees who described their participation in different forms of outreach saw them as an opportunity to engage with and promote the knowledge generated by their research, but were quick to differentiate their involvement from “promoting disciplinary brand awareness”(Interviewee 28, early-career geographer).

Even largely institutional events such as the Incredible Science Day, Devora Project and Hands on Geography were described by geographers as interactive with a focus on fun. They aim to ignite a spark within individuals which will encourage them to explore the opportunities to study a specific area. Two of my interviewees have used exhibitions as a way of communicating their research visually. One senior geographer described how she was little more than an “advisor” (Interviewee 12) when setting up a collaborative project with Te Papa to raise awareness of the backgrounds of refugees. This allowed her to facilitate engagement with young refugees and perform a crucial public role in building awareness of the experience, and a more inclusive public ethic with respect to those experiences. The display continued for five years, providing a crucial platform for this kind of public work.

5.5.5 Contracted research

The involvement of geographers in producing reports for government agencies was once a staple of a geographer's work diet. Geographers are still actively involved with policy making, but in a more fragmented and contracted manner. Prior to the restructuring of the 1980s, state agencies such as the Ministry of Works, the five statutory agricultural marketing boards and others charged with state development historically provided a natural and sympathetic audience of policy makers and implementers with whom geographers could engage. This could be through report writing for local and central government, training employees, and planning board meetings of one sort or another. The New Zealand Year Books, while not explicitly labelled as a geographer's annual, can be pinpointed as a tangible example of a natural and reliable state-sponsored home for the knowledge which geographers produced (Lewis *et al.*, 2013). These were the policy audiences highlighted by *Landmarks* and which were swept away during the reforms of the 1980s. As one disciplinary kaumātua reflects "the dismantling process of the state actually took out a great many policy-makers" (Interviewee 22). Ironically, the 70+ geographers who contributed to the two editions of *Changing Places*, which tracked this process, unwittingly produced an anthology of obituaries for the state-structured research publics from which the discipline historically derived its disciplinary relevance and its public utility.

This meant geographers needed to establish new areas and modes of engagement with the state. A disciplinary kaumātua commented on his belief in the public policy opportunities available to geographers, and how having "a clear institutional link" with clear "entry points" (Interviewee 7) to a ministry to which he can target his research. Eight interviewees have that direct access to a policy related audience in national ministries and agencies which provide an area for report writing and research. A senior geographer commented that having this fixed audience makes this work "relatively easy to do" (Interviewee 11). The ministries and agencies with which the interviewees been involved include the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NZ Aid), Ministry of Health (MOH), the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI), Statistics New Zealand, The New Zealand Geographical Board/Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa (NZGB) and the Undersea Names Committee, the Families Commission (Superu; Social Policy Research and Evaluation Unit), the Children's Commissioner, and regional and local governments.

This availability of an audience, as opposed to the need to find an audience, does not deride or undervalue the nature of the work; simply there is an audience which is happy and willing to engage with geographers' work. One senior geographer, who described himself as a public geographer noted that while having a ministry to engage with facilitated engagement, making the "leap from the policy world to the public world" (Interviewee 11) is not always so easy. He compared the ease with which he was able to generate publicity around his other research interest of wine as opposed to the challenge of engaging with his work around national aid. This was a trend observed by another senior interviewee in his engagements with the Ministry of Health involving his work with obesity.

Arguably the most high profile media attention attracted by geographic research attributed to these ministries is that of the NZGB. The NZGB is New Zealand's national place-naming authority responsible for official place names in New Zealand, its offshore islands and continental shelf, and the Ross Dependency of Antarctica. The functions of the board are detailed under the New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008, with Land Information New Zealand being the ministry to whom the board is responsible. The NZGB meets three times a year and assigns to places new names, makes alterations to or discontinues current ones, approves and adopts recorded names, and concurs with and validates Crown-protected area names. The board encourages consultation with local communities, local iwi, local councils or any interested person who can propose a new name or alter an existing name for a place or feature. The aim of this process is to help the board make informed decisions on naming proposals that will endure. Interestingly, a disciplinary kaumātua who sits on the board noted that of the 10 people on the board he was the only geographer. He described the majority of the board's work as "confidential 'public geography'" (Interviewee 3) which he considered in terms of behind-the-scenes work done for the public good, and which deals with "geography in terms of places" (Interviewee 3).

Much of the board's work deals with the important but not provocative task of naming places in mountains, forests, rivers, lakes and coasts to enable search and rescue teams to be directed to the correct location. A recent increase in work load has come from the Treaty Settlement Process where a restoration of Māori names is seen as 'cultural redress' and the Minister for Treaty Settlements will refer proposals for

name changes to the board. There is then some research, submissions are taken and advice given to the minister who will make a final decision. The interviewee expressed amusement at media reports of large salaries for board members and opined that the media organisation which had undertaken an official information request “were probably quite distressed to see that I was charging about \$34 each way for the bus trip”. He detailed how board members are allocated the standard government meeting allowance for the day and some preparation time which is taxed and a travel allowance for two to three meetings a year.

A pattern has emerged of high profile media coverage when politically contentious name changes or unorthodox information is delivered by the NZGB. The decision in 2009 to accept the spelling of both Wanganui and Whanganui attracted substantial comment and media interest, as did the decision to formally adopt both English and Māori names for New Zealand’s three main islands, (see Figure 5.1) which research showed had never officially been recognised.



Figure 5.1: Map of Aotearoa/New Zealand at Auckland International Airport arrivals area with both the official English and Māori place names for the three main islands.

Source (author's own, 23rd July 2017)

The official non-existence of towns is a staple of media interest in place, with Featherston in the Wairarapa (see *New Zealand Herald* Dec 1st 2017) the latest in a succession of places to discover that it has never officially existed. In contrast, the dearth of coverage given to the board's Undersea Names Committee which has been charged with naming areas of the sea bed confounded my interviewee. This work has proven politically challenging due to a sub-committee of an international organisation, the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO), called the Sub Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN). SCUFN have named some features within New

Zealand's 200-mile territorial limit which the NZGB has not accepted. The political elements to naming places and areas in Antarctica offer an international dimension and are lost in the media focus on climate change science.

Similarly, the submission process, in which the general public can choose to become involved, has the potential to attract substantial media coverage. This occurred in 2016 when significant media coverage followed the board's proposed altering of the existing names of three places in North Canterbury which included the word 'nigger' (<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/decisions-made-north-canterbury-place-names>). New names replaced the existing names and were added to *The New Zealand Gazette*, which is the official record of New Zealand place names, on December 15th 2016.

The interviewee also noted the erratic nature of public submissions with the proposal to change the spelling of 'Whanganui' receiving 1,030 public submissions whereas giving the South Island the 'official' title of Te Wai Pounamu led to only 71. This public inconsistency in awareness and reaction to processes in which they are invited to be a part is further demonstrated by the commemorations marking 100 years since the end of World War I. The public and media interest in the commemorations has been high, although the focus has been on the main battles, lives lost and the human connection to present day New Zealanders. The board has worked on confirming names such as Anzac Bay or Passchendaele Ridge that have been assigned to local places in New Zealand. My interviewee noted that in spite of the interest, some of the proposals to confirm place names had received as few as three submissions, which he found surprising as in his view, such names marked a tangible, lasting and visible symbol of New Zealand's involvement in World War I.

The difficulty in promoting work that does not strike a chord with the public at large is demonstrated by the problem encountered by geographers who are seeking to promote the public geography they perform in policy areas which have little public appeal, as opposed to policy areas where daily individual actions help individuals to feel connected to the research. Ten interviewees have written reports for the local government institutions detailed below on topics as diverse as forestry, refugee resettlement and earthquake management:

- City councils
- Regional councils
- RMA commissioners
- Expert witness in resource management debates
- CERA in Christchurch

A mid-career geographer detailed this dilemma when he indicated that his research engagement with his local council around drainage and infrastructure garnered little public interest. This can be attributed to the problem of “mundane practices” (Interviewee 4) which relate to issues that, while important for his region, attract little or no public interest. In contrast, a senior geographer who conducts “applied research” (Interviewee 33) around transport and cycling suggests that his public geography easily generates momentum as it must engage with the public or “end user” (Interviewee 33). In addition, he observed a trend for policy to be funded and guided from a national level, but with implementation becoming the responsibility of local authorities. He argues that this positions local and regional councils as conduits between state policy and practical implementation of these policies and offers opportunities for researchers to become more involved at this applied level.

This opportunity must not detract from a deeper concern around those researchers whose work involves subjects that, while integral for the infrastructure of the region such as drainage, fail to engender public interest. This signals a divergence between the ability to engage with the public on matters which focus on personal choice as opposed to those taken by an elected body which canvasses competing views and then makes a decision based upon what they conclude is in their public’s best interest. Individualised actions such as cycling, while arguably involving a greater degree of negotiation and direct input from the public, provided easier opportunities for geography and geographers to engage with the public.

Quangos, NGOs and charities are not lobby groups but organisations who attempt to bring concerns of like-minded citizens to the attention of government and decision-makers. Nine interviewees have provided reports or advice for a diverse range of organisations at both a local and national level including Age Concern, Asia New-Zealand Foundation, the Red Cross and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). A senior geographer remarked that writing reports for such organisations had the tendency to

produce a “cross between academic and popular results” (Interviewee 2) while a mid-career geographer emphasised the minimal financial incentive of doing such work and that feelings of having “made a contribution” (Interviewee 16) were her primary drivers. A senior geographer alluded to the demands of working for the government where you were responsible to people who had political agendas. In contrast, working in these advisory spaces, while challenging and not insulated from internal political machinations, allows individuals to coalesce around a single positive aim. Engaging with these types of organisations meant that the work entailed a degree of raising the public’s consciousness of an issue, supporting those affected, and activism and was frequently framed in terms of ‘principles’ and ‘rights.’

5.5.6 A reshaping of a geographer’s work

The importance attributed, and time devoted, to each form of practice by individual academics will differ but it is shaped by several key pressures. First, as one senior geographer noted during his interview, it is increasingly shaped by both inward-looking and individual career-building pressures as hiring has become more competitive, job tenure less secure, and careerism more accepted, prevalent and expected:

the nature of the university academic’s job at the moment which is all about self and where you get what you need to climb the slippery pole rather than thinking more broadly about the group and the discipline’ (Interviewee 23).

Second, publication has become increasingly central to this equation of academic performance and the measures by which it is solved. An early-career geographer noted that writing articles in journals “is the currency you are looking at” (Interviewee 28). The necessity for individuals to write, and to write for internal disciplinary audiences, is captured in the aphorism ‘publish or perish’. A disciplinary kaumātua and prominent interdisciplinary academic leader noted “the almost insane pressures to publish” (Interviewee 43) while another disciplinary kaumātua observed that “like all academics I’m under pressure to publish” (Interviewee 42).

Third, the PBRF has in itself become an increasingly central framing technology shaping this inward-facing geographical knowledge production and reinforcing its centrality in the work of academic geographers. The PBRF was a recurring refrain across nearly all my interviews, and was clearly regarded as being at the pointy end of the ‘publish or perish’ culture of the contemporary university. As I write this thesis in

the lead-up to a PBRF census (due at the end of 2017), it is easy to see how a preoccupation with the PBRF is driving academic practice and the rhythms of the university more generally. The University of Auckland Faculty of Science organised drop-in sessions, held during 2016 and 2017, to provide academics with the information and tools on how to complete their evidence portfolios. The presentation commences with slide one, point one, which reads, “Publish, publish, publish.” An academic’s cardinal responsibility to both themselves and their institution has been laid bare. As a mid-career geographer noted, she is “trapped in a system where we have to produce a lot quite quickly and it has to be in a peer-read journal and it feeds into what the university wants and what we want for our career as well” (Interviewee 38).

The PBRF has formalised ‘publish or perish’ by defining successful performance as four internationally recognised research outputs, 12 other research outputs and a range of other research contributions in a six-year block. The unintended consequences of the assessment measure has been to produce priorities for what ought to be published and where. When combined with the use of technologies such as citation and ‘H’ indexes (the holy grail of publication) which influence both academic hiring and internal promotion decisions, publication becomes increasingly focused towards global journals. In addition, research is also narrowed towards themes and cases that might interest global audiences at the expense of domestic and local interest or outwardly-focused activities. An early-career geographer argues that the publication of an article in an international journal, “even if it [the article] is crap” (Interviewee 39) would help a career progress.

As well as redefining academic responsibility, the interplay between the PBRF and the dictum ‘publish or perish’ has led academics to redefine their relationships with research subjects and in turn viewed the publics to whom they respond and are answerable. As the disciplinary kaumātua cited above observes, one consequence is that those with whom geographers interact have become in effect “research subjects” as opposed to people with whom you “enact or do things together with” (Interviewee 43). Another is that while the tightening focus on inward-looking practice provides a platform for strengthening the discipline around a reputation for internationally relevant expertise, an emphasis on individual research agendas risks eroding collegial practice at the same time.

All this places enormous pressure on academics to divert their efforts to inward-facing research, or at least inward/outward-facing activities. Whilst some of this pressure might conceivably be offset by new exhortations to demonstrate ‘social impact’, it is likely that this will also come at the expense of more explicitly facing community activities that do not involve research funding arrangements.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter describes the practice of academic geographers in New Zealand. It examines how academic geographers actually perform geography in a multiplicity of ways in a multiplicity of places. The chapter reveals a diverse, multi-faceted and vibrant discipline with Table 5.1 detailing 52 practices that New Zealand academic geographers perform in making geography public.

There is much more to geography in this account than the often trite definitions of the discipline sometimes given to school and undergraduate students and public audiences, and even articulated by academic geographers themselves. There is also much more to being an academic geographer and to practising the discipline than implied in the largely British literature about the disciplinary present and futures, and the place of ‘public geography’ within them. Any reduction, for example, to forms of writing misses much of the world of practice.

Some of these practices are directed explicitly at public audiences and the questions they ask, and others are directed at narrow academic audiences and purposes. However, much of the work of academic geographers and the ways in which they are now practising this work carries a mix of academic and public purpose, relevance, and immediate concern. This suggests that established and/or narrow definitions of public geography fail to capture the full extent of this public work, its value, and its potential for shaping impactful and transformative knowledge and in turn disciplinary futures. In short, New Zealand academic geographers perform multiple forms of public geography. To capture this public geography and to harness and enhance its potential to shape local, national and global futures not to mention disciplinary futures, will require a broader definition and a closer look at geography’s various values. It is to these points I turn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: PERFORMING PUBLIC GEOGRAPHY IN NEW ZEALAND

*I don't particularly regard myself as a human geographer or physical geographer; I like to call myself a geographer.
(Interviewee 26)*

Chapter 5 identified the nature and range of work performed by New Zealand geographers. In this chapter I focus attention directly on the public work of geographers. Interrogating the data outlining the diverse forms of work they perform, I identify a set of subjects and spaces of public geography in the New Zealand context. I use the interview data gathered during my research to ask whether, given the extensive range of values that both academic and professional geographers attribute to their discipline, academic geographers might do more to identify, promote and enhance the publicly valuable dimensions of their work. I then reflect on the potential for extending and enriching the different spaces of public geography I identify in the New Zealand context and to highlight some of the as yet unrealised opportunities to build a public geography in New Zealand. I ask whether there is a distinctive public geographer archetype, and whether or not (and how) it is performed by New Zealand's geographers. The chapter argues that New Zealand geographers practise public geography; nonetheless both its value and status are underplayed and unexplored and there is only a very small number of public geographers. Opportunities exist to practise a more focused, even orchestrated, public geography but are not taken up. The current turn to impact is reflected in more public practice, but has yet to become a catalyst for more systematic thought about how public geography might be elaborated and practised individually and collectively.

6.1 Spaces of public geography in New Zealand

Chapter 5 identified a diversity of outward-facing practices routinely conducted by academic geographers. Many of these use activities in spheres beyond the university to develop, secure, enrich and extend academic geography as a social practice, but many bring that social practice to bear on the public realm in an effort to make change. It can

be difficult to categorise those practices as public *per se*, even if many clearly embody transformative potential. Specific practices are always situated and involve the nature and intent of each individual act of knowledge production and dissemination. Here I seek to overcome this categorisation problem, by identifying certain spaces in which outward-facing practices might materialise as public geography and identifying the academic geographer subjectivities that might be at work in making these practices public.

6.1.2 The university

The university itself is probably the most significant space in which public geography is performed. It is in undergraduate lecture theatres that the knowledge produced by academic geographers is converted into public geography through teaching. In all, an average of 1,500 students a year are taught geography in New Zealand’s universities, learning geographical knowledge and approaches to making new knowledge, and developing geographical imaginaries. They are taught geography as part of the public responsibilities of universities under the Education Act 1989 to mould citizens, prepare workers and leaders, secure democracy, and critique power. A more pertinent and specified appraisal of the potential offered by geography lies in the number of students who graduate with geography as their major degree. Table 6.1 demonstrates that between 2013 and 2016 approximately 400 geography graduates annually leave university, ready to act as agents of geographic knowledge and expertise throughout New Zealand.

Table 6.1: New Zealand geography graduates 2013-2016

<i>Year</i>	2013			2014			2015			2016			
<i>Degree</i>	BA	BSc	Other										
<i>University</i>													Total
Auckland	53	95	0	49	78	0	41	92	0	46	81	0	535
Waikato	15	0	3	3	11	5	2	15	1	4	12	2	73
Massey	10	17	0	14	12	0	6	16	0	10	11	0	96
Victoria	14	56	2	17	60	0	14	56	1	13	56	1	290
Canterbury	14	25	0	18	82	0	12	59	0	6	40	0	256
Otago	34	42	0	44	39	1	29	48	0	30	34	0	301
	140	235	5	145	282	6	104	286	2	109	234	3	1551

This was a crucial point for Burawoy (2004), who argued in his work on public sociology that his students were one of the most important publics with whom he interacted. The point was not simply that they were a public and the public most closely at hand and conditioned to be affected by his work, but that they would take sociology out into the world and actively engage with a wide audience. In practice they were the most significant agents and translators of sociological imaginaries. In relation to geography this same argument was reinforced by Ward (2006).

The majority of my interviewees immediately interpreted ‘public’ as a term that implied multiple and diverse publics. I asked them if they viewed their students as a public, and two thirds replied ‘yes’. As one of my interviewees commented, “students go home” (Interviewee 2) and interact with individuals outside our sphere of interest or influence. They are potential agents of change, not just in their own actions, but also by influencing others. Moreover, students had made the choice to engage in this space. As another interviewee commented, our classrooms and lecture theatres are some of “the most political spaces” (Interviewee 12) that we occupy. Here academic geographers perform significant public roles, frequently over and above the minimal considerations of skill provision set down in graduate profiles. This can be seen in the design of the curricula and syllabi that govern the formal terms of their employment, in the choice of examples and extension of engagements and concerns beyond those formalised in syllabi. These extensions are perhaps most obvious in the continued offering of field trips, despite the added investment of time and dislocations from home and family that this involves. This public role, however, is also expressed in the way the discipline is taught through grounded examples, which also involve the co-production with students of rich, and often novel, geographical imaginaries.

Others, however, pointed to the classification of students as clients, arguing that this changes their interpretation of the messages they received. When an early career geographer was asked if he considered his students a public he replied “no” and provided the following explanation:

Well because I would say if I was teaching to a member of the public then they could just come in off the street and sit in my lecture. They [students] can’t. They’ve got to pay fees to come here even though they’ve got to enrol in university and agree to follow a course of study. So I don’t think that makes them the public. (Interviewee 29)

This alters the ways in which they may or may not become agents of change, and even alters the message they are given by academic geographers who under institutional and other pressures reinterpret their own role and see their relations with student clients as one of provider/seller.

6.1.3 Schools

Schools are the places where geographical knowledge reaches its largest public audience and where it has its most profound effects. Schooling is in many ways a public space. Curricula are prescribed, enrolment is compulsory up until the age of 16 (and encouraged beyond that), and attendance is free. As detailed in Section 4.2.2, geography is situated in the social science curriculum, and initially taught within social science, which is a compulsory subject in schools until Year 10. Geographical knowledge produced in the academy provides the basis of geography in schools. In 2016, there were 29,480 senior school geography students (see Figure 4.1 and <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/schooling/student-numbers/subject-enrolment>) in New Zealand High Schools. This is a sizable public.

Academic geographers generally reach this public through their production of geographical knowledge, which gets filtered through the training of teachers and shifts in emphasis in the curriculum over time. This is a disappointingly watered-down expression of what was once a rich set of connections. The immediate post-war period saw academics, such as the late Professor Cumberland, articulate that one of his principal functions was the development of geography teachers and the geographical literacy of high school teachers and students (see Cumberland, 1946). This led to a series of formal relationships that coalesced around the work of regional offices of the Department of Education and around local geography teacher associations and the NZGS through the NZBoGT. University academics had significant influence in setting bursary exams and they marked both the university entrance (UE) and bursary exams. School curriculum development was deemed to be part of an academic's wider role, and geographers such as Cumberland and Fox produced school text books and other resources. In this way, academics translated their work directly into schools and provided what one disciplinary kaumātua describes as “the received wisdom for generations of school kids”. (Interviewee 3)

In the last 20-30 years these different roles have been transformed along with the institutional structure of the educational landscape. Tertiary involvement in schooling has been devolved to teachers and schools. There is, for example, no tertiary level presence on the NCEA scholarship exam board. The NCEA was introduced at roughly the same time as the PBRF, which attached lesser weightings to institution-building. Both have meant that the form and frequency of contact have changed, as have their significance for schools and university departments alike. Changing job expectations, shifting institutional priorities, and the erosion through policy change of links in curricula between schools and universities have produced a gradual weathering of contact between school and university geographers. School and university-based geography have grown apart and developed separate characters. A senior geographer commented that what once “happened organically” (Interviewee 14) within established structures must now happen through voluntarism. Commitments to engage from both sides remain strong and materialise in a range of different forms of routine but less formalised engagement. Associations are less formally structured and are normally developed through interactions between teachers and academics, both of whom are driven by deep personal commitments to the discipline.

Formal roles, nonetheless, remain significant. Of the 47 academic geographers interviewed, ten had direct connections with geography in school. They include five academic geographers working in education faculties, the president of the NZGS, three academics who are representatives on local geography association committees and one with a contracted service role to liaise with school geography through the NZBoGT. While the sample is weighted towards geographers who have formal responsibilities for disciplinary development (including direct responsibilities for interaction with school geography) and includes an over-representation of those working in education faculties (Section 4.2.2), the result nonetheless indicates that these school-based responsibilities remain and are taken seriously. Academic geographers working in education faculties work closely with teachers on a routine basis, mediating the connections in respect of curriculum and professional development and thus much of the translation of geographical imaginaries into schools. Of the 37 who have no formalised connection with school geography, however, over 90% have at some time interacted with teachers or pupils of their own volition, in spite of the ‘very limited incentives’ for individuals to devote their time

and expertise in this way. The forms of interaction include presentations to visiting school students, visiting local schools, acting as a compère at quiz nights, marking NZBoGT events, writing papers for the Geo-Ed section of the *New Zealand Geographer* or involvement with university-organised teacher-only days or field trips. These are direct performances of public geography in school spaces.

The relationships between academic geographers and schooling was described by one mid-career geographer as “tentative” (Interviewee 45) while a further six indicated that the relationship between school and university geography had been eroded to such an extent that they knew little about the school curriculum. This resulted in one department re-engaging with their local teachers’ association, where the first meeting provided the teachers with an opportunity to explain what geography was taught in schools. Others have instituted scholarship workshops, or academic visits to schools. These initiatives and the personal commitments that underpin them suggest that the relationships that secure the performance of public geography in schools are perhaps richer and healthier than some imagine. It is a challenge, however, to sustain, let alone extend these linkages in the context of the loss of disciplinary autonomy at universities, new research-based priorities for academics, the intervention of student recruitment and careers development experts, and the loss of key functions for curriculum and professional development at regional offices of the Ministry of Education. The unstinting work of committed teachers and particular academics, however, maintains the contact between geographers in different institutional settings.

6.1.4 State spaces: policy and implementation

Geographers have also long performed public work under the auspices of the state, through informal and formal policy advice networks, positions on advisory and governance boards, commissioned research or advisory services, and publication of policy-relevant research. A significant proportion of the public-facing work described in Chapter 5.5.5 falls into the realms of policy and delivery work for state agencies. The contraction of this space, and the apparent retreat of geographers from it, is a crucial dimension of the relevance debate and the call for new forms of public geography. For human geographers in particular, the hollowing out of the state and the turning over of knowledge production functions to private consultancies or market processes has meant a diminution of potential influence. The particular skill sets of

physical geographers remain in demand, and a number of my physical geography interviewees continue to deliver research under contract that supports a diversity of decision-making in environmental management.

The concern of both physical and human geographers with the situated nature of social and bio- and geo-physical processes has led to strong relations with local and regional governments. Academic geography produces research-trained students for roles in these organisations and academic geographers perform much of their public geography in support of these organisations or in relation to them as critical voices alongside others in local governance processes. Geographers are involved in producing knowledge for, and with, various publics in relation to environmental management and its governance at local and regional levels. They also engage with local governments formally or informally in relation to urban change and questions of regional economic development, either as critics or as producers and disseminators of expert knowledge.

6.1.5 Community organisations and iwi worlds

Academic geographers also reported directly engaging with grassroots community organisations. Geographers have long worked routinely with such groups and organisations, drawing on their expertise in concerns about place to inform, support and effect change through formal reports and recommendations, service on boards, and/or participatory and enactive forms of engagement.

In the New Zealand context, engagement with iwi worlds occurs as scholars bring geographical expertise to bear formally or informally in commissioned or un-commissioned ways for one's own whānau, hapū and iwi. Working with Māori, indigenous geographers have forged a similarly diverse set of relationships which have allowed them to engage with various community-facing concerns. In recent years these engagements have increasingly evolved into arrangements of co-production and co-learning. They have engaged widely at various levels, where the work of state agencies overlap with that of community organisations and other constellations of independent expertise. They have circulated geographical imaginaries and produced geographical knowledge with and for them.

6.1.6 Popular media

Performances of public geography through engagements with the popular mediums of radio, television and print are widely recognised. These media are important sites at which geographic knowledge is produced and translated from the academy, and at which geographical imaginaries are communicated, generated, and popularised. A number of academic geographers engage in processes of making and translating these popular imaginaries by writing or otherwise communicating with publics through these media. They have found the practice an important opportunity to connect with the public, discuss their work, and produce influence. As *Landmarks* demonstrates, geographers writing geographies of the place, region or nation in the popular media have contributed significantly to how New Zealand was, and is, imagined by New Zealanders.

Examples of these appearances over the last five years abound across the various sub-disciplines of geography and have been detailed in Table 6.2. The 2013 book written by Ford, Green & Jenkins, was titled *Spreadable Media*, and this phrase neatly encapsulates how in the contemporary popular media, stories move from one medium to another and then circulate through wider social media. These appearances have greater resonance than what might appear to be the case on their face value. As one of my interviewees, a magazine editor, notes:

The boundaries have gone now, so it's disingenuous to think about a magazine as just a magazine or a radio station as just a radio station. You've got radio stations turning into television stations and we've launched a streaming television service. (Interviewee 90)

The matters of concern with which they engage are central to current questions of nation-building: migration, climate change, environmental restoration, population diversity and food politics amongst others. These examples illustrate a highly engaged discipline and are at odds with many of the self-assessments of the influence and relevance of their discipline made by geographers in isolation.

Table 6.2: Self-identified geographers and media engagements 2012-2017

Geographer	Media Outlet	Area of Expertise
Paul Kench	Paul Henry Show	Sea level rise and the inundation of Pacific Islands
James Renwick	Radio New Zealand	Climate change
Heather Purdie	Prime	Glaciology
Larry Murphy	Radio New Zealand	Housing crisis

Ward Friesen	Multiple TVNZ, RNZ	New Zealand Asian population dynamics
Francis Collins	TVNZ	Migration
Sean Connery	Otago Daily Times	Local food producers
John Overton	Radio New Zealand	New Zealand Aid
Warwick Murray	TVNZ	Teaching engagement
Eric Pawson	Radio New Zealand	Christchurch rebuild and community groups
Payman Zewar	Radio New Zealand	Kaikoura earthquake
Richard Bedford	Radio New Zealand	Population and Royal Society of New Zealand
Robyn Longhurst	TVNZ and Mediaworks	Geographies of the body

The geographers who work in these popular media spaces suggest that the media has a strong interest in geography, even though journalists will invariably reframe this knowledge and rarely attribute it to geography. Different media will exercise different levels of control and the shifting nature of media forms and practices make the challenge of framing content more important than ever. While this leads many to avoid working with the media, those adept in and committed to presenting material in the popular media, claim to be able to find ways of overcoming these barriers, thus avoiding the commonly perceived dual threats of a loss of control over the message and its reduction to a soundbite that strips it of its meaning. Indeed a small number of those whom I interviewed (17) reported having received media training, after taking up offers from their universities or third party science promotion agencies. This training has resourced academic geographers to perform public geography in media spaces, but at the same time points to the ways in which their performance in these spaces is being increasingly orchestrated by various forms of media expert and the universities themselves.

The active media promotion of research successes has become part of the working of neoliberal universities. Universities are actively encouraging academics to be aware of their “outward-focused responsibility” (Interviewee 4) which can involve performances in the public spotlight and then using their media appearance for marketing purposes. One early career geographer detailed how her appearance in a TV series was used without her knowledge to promote the engagement of her university. The editor of a credible New Zealand magazine talks of how

. . . the brigades of public relations staff within universities are swelling by the day and are constantly banging on our door and not wanting to advertise but wanting to get free PR for somebody that’s graduated with some degree about something and get us to cover it in the magazine and it’s not really material that serves the readers so we would far rather that relationship stayed ad hoc and on

our terms, so we can approach the universities as the content demands basically.
(Interviewee 80)

The University of Auckland, for example, has purchased weekly advertorial space in the New Zealand Herald where it works with the paper to present research that promotes the university. As the editor reflects, while opportunities for academics to appear in public space are increasing, they are right to be suspicious about the motives of both the media and university intermediaries alike. As a disciplinary kaumātua commented, media engagement has always been difficult, and he recounted his initial media engagement in 1971 when he was incorrectly attributed as using the phrase “niggers in the woodpile” (Interviewee 43) in a report. In what are now increasingly intermediated spaces, it might not always be the case that geographers can fully shape the geographical imaginaries they develop.

Indeed, geographers may not be able to have their contributions recognised as geography. Those who have engaged with the media report that they are not always clearly identified as ‘geographers’. This may be by their own volition and the disciplinary diffidence by geographers to describe themselves as such. Two interviewees, both senior geographers, admitted that on Community Access Radio they had not identified themselves as geographers, even though they had been identified as working in geography departments. One of the geographers noted “I usually introduce myself as a planner” (Interviewee 27). In light of Professor Dick Bedford’s address to the NZGS 2016 conference which encouraged geographers to self-identify as such, she confided that “I feel quite bad about it now” (Interviewee 27). However, it may be done unto them by media who frequently demonstrate a lack of factual rigour and a willingness to independently re-label individuals. Two interviewees, who were happy to be described as geographers, have previously been referred to in the media as a demographer and a coastal geomorphologist respectively. Also, in 2015 Radio New Zealand incorrectly referred to one interviewee as doctor and not professor and then when introducing a geography professor, managed to get his name wrong. In an appearance on TVNZ in 2017, one academic geographer noted how the programmers did not want to use the label of geographer and suggested sociologist. When he said that was not a label with which his sociology colleagues would feel comfortable, the programme editor simply labelled him as a ‘senior lecturer.’ It appears that ‘geographer’ does not satisfy the media’s desire for a familiar label. One senior geographer remarked further that since his move from the business

faculty to the geography department “his phone has stopped ringing” (Interviewee 47), despite the fact that he continues to work in the same research area.

Two of my interviewees have engaged with the public through Local Access radio which is part of The Association of Community Access Broadcasters (ACAB) and is constituted by 12 independent Community Access radio stations spread throughout New Zealand. The association positions itself as “a forum for debate on issues which affect us all” (<http://www.acab.org.nz/about/what-is-acab/>). The interviewees both noted that they had been contacted through enquiries to the geography department at their respective universities, indicating the importance attached to having a named geography department. While one of the senior geographers involved described her performance as the “talking head public academic” (Interviewee 12), both she and her fellow senior geographer described an unpressurised environment that allowed them to explain their narrative in a detailed manner. The small audience in relation to larger media brands, while relevant, obscures the fact that there exists community radio stations that too few geographers consider when looking to engage with a public.

The point here is that opportunities to access media spaces to practise public geography exist, but are undermined by the discipline’s weak media presence. The collective failures of the discipline to build a profile were detailed in Chapter 5, Section 5.3 in relation to geography student Oxana Repina, who won New Zealand’s first gold medal in the Geography Olympiad in 2015 (*New Zealand Herald*, Sept 4th 2015; A12) and was also awarded and the Prime Minister's Award for Academic Excellence in 2017 as the top New Zealand secondary school scholar (http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11633573). The publicity surrounding her success was initiated by her family with the geographic discipline apparently unsure how to capitalise on the opportunity. There is room here for more concerted collective efforts to secure these opportunities and promote the discipline.

6.1.7 Social media

The number of digital platforms available to promote research is numerous. As an example, the NZGS launched a new Facebook page on October 13th 2016 in an attempt to increase its outreach. The University of Auckland is the only institution which provides a space on institutional profiles for the social media platforms used by

academics. Those used are Twitter (6), LinkedIn (2), Facebook (2), Skype (2) and Google+ (1); two have web links to projects with which they are associated. I am unable to conclude that only 13 academics have social media links pertaining to their careers; however, the low number advertising their use of these communication methods is interesting, especially as the use of these platforms to promote research is now a common way of assessing job applications and research grants.

This trend is continued when I consider that only four academics have detailed a personal home page or blog. I accept that not all academics choose to promote their work in this way and one of my interviewees commented on the discipline required to keep blogs updated. He also cautioned that engaging in too many forms of digital communication can spread research too thin and tie the academic in a “digital knot” (Interviewee 6). There was, however, no dedicated space for promotion of an individual’s web page or blog, thus inclusion in a profile is very much an *ad hoc* decision made by each individual. One individual who does have his own web page commented on the fact that he had more traffic on his personal web page than on his profile page. A disciplinary kaumātua, who was initially dismissive of blogs, commented on a conversation he had with a prominent New Zealand scientist. The scientist regaled the virtues of the unmediated method of communication that blogs offer, as a direct engagement with the public. The kaumātua was influenced by this argument and while not having the personal discipline to blog, encourages direct public engagement through any number of the digital forms available.

Interaction with or through the media is a personal decision and my interviews suggest that while some academics are happy to engage with this form of public interaction, others display a greater degree of reticence. In actively promoting themselves and their work via social media, web pages and blogs or through traditional media sites, academics are engaging with “micro publics” (Barbour & Marshall, 2012) and a public persona is being created. This invariably opens the academic to engagements which have the potential to provide both positive and negative responses.

Individual profile management allows media engagements to be included on a profile. Massey University is the sole institution that has a media section on the profile template which details video, print and web links; however, only seven of the 16 academics at Massey have this on their profile, which suggests it is optional. Auckland

University has a media contact icon on 23 profiles but it does not link to anything. Two professors, one at Otago and the other at Auckland, provide links to their inaugural professorial lecture and a professor at Victoria included his four-part radio series. Interestingly, however, he did not include his YouTube videos relating to geographical content specific to the courses he teaches.

The low number of academics that chose to include media in their profile indicates what could be construed as a disciplinary reticence towards this form of engagement. In recognising the increasing importance attached to social media communication, the 2016 NZGS conference through the Science Media Centre, created an opportunity for each delegate to create video profiles of their research, for free. There was a 100% take up with all the available time slots used. This highlights both an acknowledgement and an intention by the NZGS and other organisations, which includes the RSNZ, to help academics improve this area of engagement.

6.1.8 The cyber selfs

Academics are required to have online profiles linked to their institution's website. Electronic profiles are increasingly important as a public space in academic life. They produce a public, if institutionally sanitised, account of each individual's academic work. While much of the critical interest in academic profiles has centred on who controls the production of these profiles and to what ends (see Hess, 2002; Thoms & Thelwall, 2005), it is clear that they represent an increasingly important site at which academics engage with publics and where academic geographers might choose to practise a form of public geography or indicate their performance of academic geography in other domains. While shaped by an institutional template, they allow academics to present themselves and their work. They provide a platform for promoting, and even performing, public geography.

Barbour & Marshall (2012) categorise the work practices of academics, such as those of New Zealand geographers revealed in Chapter 5, into the performance of five academic personae: the formal 'static' self, the teaching self, the networked self, the comprehensive self (the academic as a wider social subject) and the uncontainable self (the academic performing beyond his/her institutional confines). Their analysis highlights the fractured nature of academic work and points to the different academic subjectivities at work in contemporary universities. The academic self is a complicated

construction, which individual academics often seek to manage through representations of themselves (Barbour & Marshall, 2012). Any individual academic can at any one time be performing any of these subjectivities, and each of them takes a different grip on the performance of any academic. The rich array of inward, inward/outward and outward performances documented in Chapter 5 is performed by complex, multi-layered academic selves in which individual academics often seek to manage through representations of themselves. Each of these academic selves is picked up in the academic's institutional profile. These profiles tend to contain information about the formal position of the academic within the institution, roles performed, awards won et cetera. They also contain details relating to teaching responsibilities including courses taught, graduate students supervised, and external relationships or the networked basis and status of the academic. They are, however, dominated by reflections on research interests and activities which are predominantly represented by information related to fields of expertise, papers written and grants awarded.

The representation of the academic through these profiles focuses greatly on publications and omits much of what Wadel (1979) describes as the "hidden work of everyday life." All research active academic geographers have a list of publications on their profile page, and three institutions now offer links to research databases where their academics' work might be found and their research matrices highlighted. Nearly half of Auckland's academic geographers now offer links to their personalised ORCID databases (a global research management database increasingly used by national research funding agencies). Only Victoria University's profiles, for example, lead with teaching ahead of research in its template for organising these profiles. Voluntary outreach, collegiality and emotional support are important to institutional strength, celebrated in visions and missions of universities, and emphasised in some dimensions of HR management of staff. Cupples & Pawson (2012) detail undertakings which include attending PhD proposals, meeting students outside lecture hours, talks given to interest groups, attendance at guest lectures and other activities which form the fabric of the academic milieu, but whose importance is not easily measured. These activities are not registered in the institutional templates of academic practice produced for the public gaze.

Disciplinary service is also played down. No institution provides a space for work such as editorial and refereeing work, while Massey, Otago and Victoria have no

space for professional body memberships or appointments on committees. Nonetheless, when editorship or disciplinary engagement is noteworthy in respect of individual and institutional status, individuals make space to highlight it. Fourteen academics, for example, included details of the journals on which they provided editorial input, while 40 geographers indicated their memberships of professional bodies, committees, and other services. Only 13 academics included their membership of the NZGS, missing the opportunity to indicate a thriving discipline and reinforce the potential of the organisation and the image of a collective.

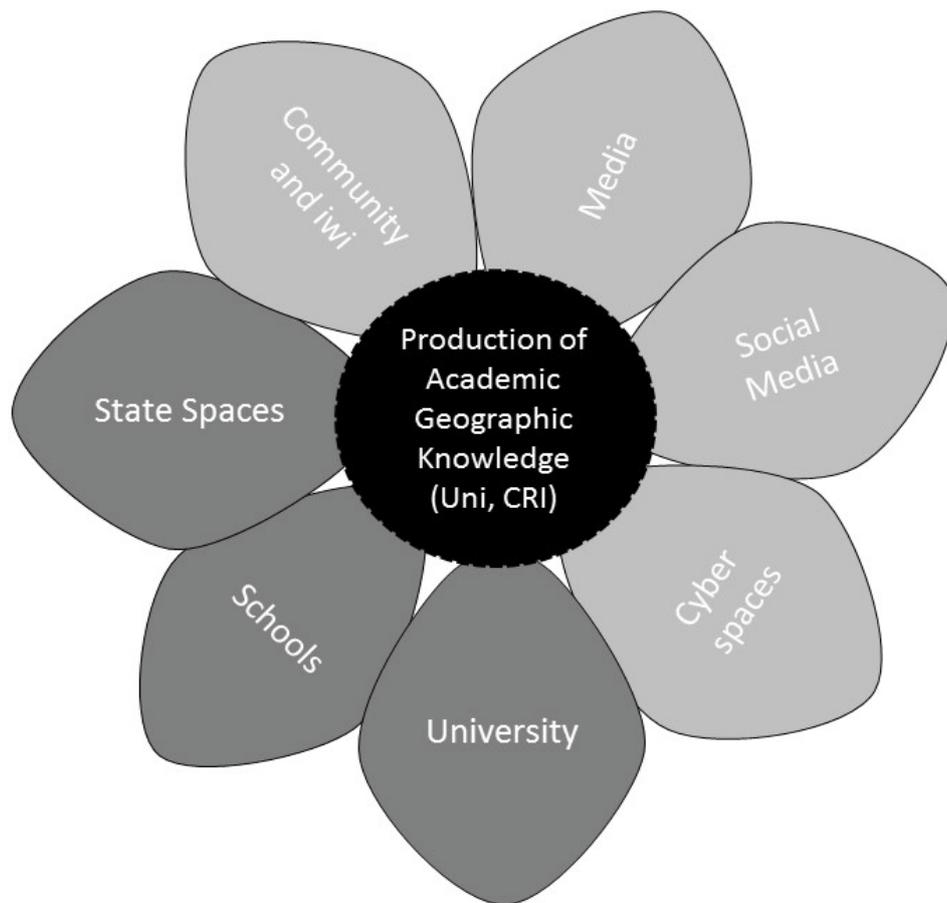
None of the academic profiles examined record any engagement with high schools and students in a professional or voluntary basis. The 2016 academic school year saw 29,480 high school students study geography as a subject. This is a significant public, the individual constituents of which will go on to occupy a diverse range of public spaces. My interviewees indicate that a number of academics have been involved in the work of regional and national teachers' organisations, by providing resources, professional development and political support. One institution has a lecturer with a time allocation for this liaison work. Others, as detailed in Chapter 5.5.3, have been involved directly with students and teachers in pedagogical encounters such as examination workshops. However, as pressures mount on teachers to assess under the NCEA and on academics to demonstrate performance in other ways, and outreach work is handed over to specialised marketing, careers and enrolment units, the discipline-based voluntary engagements between academics and schools have fallen away (Bonnett, 2008). There is certainly no template space for this kind of work in the institutional profiles of New Zealand universities.

6.1.9 New spaces of public geography in New Zealand

In Chapter 2, I produced Figure 2.1 which is an elliptical-shaped visual representation of the publics (knowledge spaces) to which academic geography and geographers may direct their work. Public geography occupies the centre of the diagram with the three prominent institutional spaces of school, university and government, which along with a smaller but significant media space, creates an ellipse. The diagram contains a further eight spaces on the circumference of the ellipse, which I did not apportion for importance, which give the shape clearer definition.

In acknowledging the initial diagram as a working document I have updated Figure 2.1 and created Figure 6.1 which models the spaces of public geography detailed above, in the New Zealand context. This positions the academy and the production of academic geography in the form of research and the teaching of research students at the core of the disciplinary enterprise. Academic geographers are the discipline's full-time knowledge producers, the curators of its knowledge bases, and its custodians. It is their engagement with other sites of knowledge use and productions that sustains flows around different sites, primarily in flows from and to the centre, represented by the spaces in the circumference of the centre circle. The work of public geography in all domains begins with this research, which may or may not be public-facing either in its design or in the practice of the geographers who produce and use it.

The petals of geography's flower represent potential public spaces of engagement, sites to which academic geographies either flow or do not flow in the form of: direct academic engagement, knowledge artefacts such as research publications, commissioned reports, interviews, statements, manifestos and the bodies of trained students. They are sites where any particular academic geographer may or may not actively engage. The petals of the flower deliberately overlap in places to indicate that these spaces are not exclusive and a degree of interaction occurs. They are also sites where new geographies are produced, and far from simply spaces where geographical knowledge is put to work. The key observation surrounds identifying what flows into these spaces and how is it received.



Key:
 Institutional
 Non-institutional

Figure 6.1: New Zealand's spaces of public geography

6.2 The public value(s) of geography

Ultimately the potential of public geography lies in the value(s) of geographical knowledge. The particular nature and strengths of the discipline, mean that geography has much to offer as a platform for generative public engagement and to contribute to public debates in relation to a wide range of issues. In this section I draw on three sources to explore the nature and strengths of geography. The first is the views of the 47 interviewees drawn from a cross-section of academic geographers at different career stages and working in different sub-disciplinary fields to catalogue these strengths. (Note: I will only draw on material from the 47 interviewees who attained

the criteria of being a geographer, detailed in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1). The second is the views of undergraduate students who are arguably the most immediate ‘public’ audience for academic geography. And the third is a small sample of interviews with professional geographers, whom I asked to reflect on the potential for academic geography to be successfully translated into their professional fields.

6.2.1 Academics outline the value of their discipline

Alistair Bonnett’s 2008 book *What is Geography* hints at the discipline’s interminable quest for a definition. Positioned across the human and bio- and geophysical epistemological divide and framed in ‘residual popular memory’ as an account of where things are (‘capes and bays’ and ‘flags of the world’), geography focused on factual regurgitation. As a disciplinary kaumātua asserted, “geography will never win a discussion of definition”. (Interviewee 22)

Interviewees talked at some length about the discipline and its potential, positioning the value(s) of their work and its contributions relative to the academy, community and nation. At best, geography is seen as meaning different things to different people at different times or reduced to the ‘study of place’ or ‘human-environment interactions’. At worst, it is understood as ‘what geographers do’. To reinforce this point, none of the 47 academics interviewed during my research defined geography in the same terms when asked how they would explain the discipline concisely to students. Nonetheless, they did refer to a number of recurring keywords when asked to define the discipline (Table 6.3). Most referred to ‘place’, half of the group referred to ‘people’, and one in four used the conjunction ‘people and place’. Others used the more abstract concept of space to capture the territoriality of geographers’ interests, and another group referred to the notion of ‘interaction’ to capture a defining concern with relationality.

Table 6.3: Keywords and phrases used by academic geographers when defining geography

Descriptive words and phrases used by interviewees	Number of times used
Place	40
People	27
Space	11
Interact	10
People and place	13
People and environment	7
People in places	3
No definition provided	1

Given the emphasis on the interaction of human and bio- and geophysical processes implied in these definitions, they point very much to an understanding of geography as an integrated and integrating discipline. Indeed, 45 of the 47 stated explicitly that it is important to bind physical and human geography institutionally in New Zealand universities—in terms of co-location and organisational structure. One interviewee, a senior geographer, stated, “Oh it’s absolutely essential” (Interviewee 37), while an early-career geographer noted that,

It’s becoming more important because . . . our physical sciences are becoming more and more techy . . . and you end up with this situation where people say I will just go down the physical processes path or the social processes path. And then they are trying to address things at policy or something and they have no idea how the other is working. (Interviewee 41)

Two of the six universities that run geography teaching programmes are currently operating without co-location, while successive rounds of restructuring at different universities have seen geography located in very institutional settings (see Section 4.2)².

The roots of the fragmentation of the discipline are well documented (see Section 4.3.5). My interviewees stressed the disarticulating pressures in the current New Zealand context of different (and contradictory) epistemologies, pressures for young academics to publish in specialised journals with high rankings and citation possibilities, and very different funding streams between physical and human geography. In the New Zealand context these internal pressures have been intensified by organisational design, notably the introduction of faculty-level line management systems which has led to geography being housed in either a faculty of science or arts/social science. While different institutions have gone one way or the other, it has complicated efforts to secure a geography that crosses these fundamental disciplinary borders. One human geographer and disciplinary kaumātua who works in a science faculty was resolute in stating that “My email signature is not Professor of Human Geography and I will never put that. . . . I just have Professor of Geography” (Interviewee 18). Another senior geographer commented that “some recognition that the landscape or the physical environment in which we find ourselves is more than just a stage upon which the human drama is set is really important” (Interviewee 46). She

² Ironically, Geography at Massey is not housed in the Geography Building.

added that a physical environment without interpretation is an “inert tangible object” and not a place.

In whichever faculty the academic geographers interviewed were placed, they agreed that opportunities to build a distinctive geography are undermined by the omnipresent science versus humanities debates. Pragmatists, on the other hand, pointed to contemporary pressures to escape disciplinary confinements and to cross interdisciplinary connections, which geographers are forced to do by the challenges presented by contemporary institutional locations. This group was ambivalent about how geography was positioned institutionally.

Promisingly, this message was also captured by the prevailing sense among interviewees that geography’s experience with producing knowledge at the borders of key disciplinary divides, and in the multi-, cross-, inter-, or transdisciplinarity contexts, is a rich resource. Embracing the uncertainties of teaching and researching in these spaces provides geography with particular opportunities in contemporary problem spaces and the science funding regimes designed to tackle them. Indeed 46 of the 47 academics interviewed viewed interdisciplinarity in this context as an opportunity rather than a threat to the discipline. As a senior geographer noted, being interdisciplinary is “something that’s instinctive—geographers do it” (Interviewee 20), while a disciplinary kaumātua noted that “geographers are in an incredibly good position to work with multidisciplinary teams because we think we are not siloed, we’re not locked into one component of what will be a holistic perspective.” (Interviewee 46)

Most claimed that because geography is by nature interdisciplinary, geographers feel uninhibited in these spaces and well-practised in borrowing ideas from other disciplines. A senior geographer noted that a characteristic of many geographers is that “their minds are not locked” (Interviewee 25), which allows them to be instinctively more at ease in these disciplinary interstices than colleagues in other disciplines. So if you want knowledge to be useful in terms of managing the world you have to be interdisciplinary because we don’t exist independently of it.

Interviewees also reiterated the common refrain that complex problems require interdisciplinary thinking, or at least the broader perspectives offered by geography. The rewards from participating in interdisciplinary research, willingly or by necessity,

were argued by one interviewee to be “immense, personally and intellectually” (Interviewee 34). Yet interviewees also saw risk in this respect as well, especially if the research became too broad or was negotiated through fundamentally uneven power relations that saw one body of knowledge treated as inferior or its inclusion as little more than a cursory gesture to satisfy funding agencies. A senior geographer contends that “interdisciplinarity is accepted but possibly less openly embraced” (Interviewee 25) and suggests that a degree of lip service is prevalent amongst both academics and funding bodies. Others wondered whether the wider turn to interdisciplinarity had begun to erode what was special about geography, while others pointed to the challenges of practising interdisciplinarity under the constraints imposed by the biases towards single discipline research in journal structures and the PBRF.

In these various debates, it became clear that the discipline has meaning to most, and academics have a strong sense of its distinctiveness and a deep belief in its potential. This potential was highlighted by one disciplinary kaumātua who recalled a conversation with a leading Australian history professor who had commented that “geography is the subject that we [historians] turn to for stimulation”. The interviewees recognise that the problems geography seeks to understand are invariably publicly-focused and that geographical sensibilities have much to offer in resolving them. On the basis of their responses, I identified statements that define five imagined features of the discipline that respondents claimed to represent the strengths of geography (Table 6.4). Each of these features has independent qualities, but overlaps with others in terms of how it manifests in a valuable public geography. Geography then is argued to be distinguished by holistic perspectives, grounded methodologies and thought, concerns with people in place and the politics of the place-making embodied in those relations, and the largely undefined notion of geographical thought.

Table 6.4: Conceptualising strengths and benefits of geography

Holistic view	Grounded	People in place	Politics of place	Geographic thought
“They like the blended nature of it.” (I 42)	“...believe that geography has got quite a lot to say about current big issues.” (I 34)	“..thinking about people and place and environments.” (I 25)	“I say we’re here because geography is situational and at this time and at this space.” (I 1)	“..how people create space and how people shape and are shaped by nature.” (I 2)
“..the real world doesn’t exist in silos. Everything’s interlinked and that’s a strength of geography.” (I 29)	“.. [the objects geographers study].. interact and overlap and get messy.”(I 37)	“..where and how we are in place and what the places are that we inhabit.” (I 13)	“..we need to come up with a better definition than spatio-temporal processes and dynamics because it has no traction with anyone.” (I 23)	“..someone who thinks geographically acknowledges the importance of place in structuring people’s lives and place in being an outcome of human endeavor.” (I 18)
“... taking a relatively holistic view and blurring the boundaries between the physical and the human as well which other social sciences don’t do to the same extent.” (I 21)	“In my ideal world we would all be practising geographers in our everyday lives.” (I 28)	“..it’s about people in towns, people in the wilderness areas and everything in-between.” (I 42) “I focus on the people and places and social relations.” (I 31)	“As you go through life, you are going to be dealing all the time with negotiating complex interactions between the environment and social world you’re living in. There is no discipline that brings those together other than geography.”(I 43)	“So to try and create this inner replicable physical non-real thing like a machine, you’re creating a machine, interpretation of the world doesn’t work, it doesn’t help us manage the world, it doesn’t help us understand the world.” (I 3)
“..a unity of geography where people in the environment are closely related. I don’t particularly regard myself as a human geographer or physical geographer I like to call myself a geographer”. (I 26)	“People use geography just to describe the landscape or the environment and if that’s missing a trick maybe if you put public in there, it implies some kind of human element.” (I 32)	“Our task is to understand why one place is different from another and this is true of physical geography and human geography.... Some differences are trivial and unimportant but others are fundamentally important like differences in standard of living”. (I 10)	“..because our environment’s undergoing such significant change and because our society is undergoing so much significant change, if you have a discipline that brings these together and enables you to navigate a lot of that change, you have a very powerful discipline in my view.” (I 43)	“What we discover is that geographers have a whole set of engaging ideas that we find our students, once they get out of the first year, really want to wrestle with. And they go on to read widely and think very carefully about how their geographic understandings can help in debate and actually in decision-making, which is not just policy decision-making but in investment and all the rest of it. (I 22)

Geographers see themselves as having been trained to see the whole in ways, as one senior geographer observed, that “other social sciences don’t do to the same extent” (Interviewee 23). Physical geographers made similar comments in relation to colleagues in earth and environmental sciences.

As an illustration of this commitment to holism, most geographers identify themselves as ‘geographers’ rather than as either a social or physical scientist. Historically this has positioned geography uniquely to develop an interdisciplinary

gaze that attends to physical and social environments. In more sophisticated expressions, the gaze saw the two spheres as co-constitutive. In today's research worlds where interdisciplinarity is a crucial leitmotif and networked, post-disciplinary research teams and institutions are the norm, the discipline has lost its monopoly over this space, but many geographers remain particularly well positioned to operate within it (Castree, 2014a; Castree 2014b). Moreover, this strength of holistic thinking might be reinterpreted as a relational gaze in which geographers, with their theoretically sensitised but relentlessly empirical training, identify relations across all manner of knowledge, processes and worlds and not just the human-physical divide.

This first defining feature, is therefore, bound to the second, a more grounded set of understandings and methodologies than are practised in the experimental sciences or the more theoretically-bound social sciences. My interviewees described their geography as lived rather than as an externalised set of ideas or practices. Only a few built their conception of groundedness from the romanticised nature of early 1900s geography that Lambert & Morgan (2010) described as the “mud on your boots” form of geography. Rather, as demonstrated by the quotes, it is understood and lived as a sensibility to the real and sometimes messy issues faced by individuals in everyday life. On the one hand, geographers recognise the worlds that they study as multifaceted and messy, and on the other hand they recognise that social actors employ this kind of geography in finding accommodations to the messiness and making the world. They have a grounded perspective that directs them to study multi-faceted and highly contingent social and socio-environmental worlds and to make sense of them. They are potentially able to talk to others about them as well as theorise them—and to identify a grounded politics in which change might be made.

In many ways it is attention to place and the study of people in it that gives geography both its groundedness and holistic perspective. A mid-career geographer who places significant emphasis on public geography describes the geographer's gaze as an openness and curiosity as to how people operate in the places they inhabit. He describes this through the aphorism, “What is where? Why there and why care?” (Interviewee 45). A disciplinary kaumātua observed that, notwithstanding his children being unambiguous in their desire of never wanting to follow in his footsteps as a geographer,

they have said the one thing that they've picked up from me, from my geography, is that they look really carefully at the places that they're in and all the time, without really thinking about it, they're conscious of that environment they're in – not just the physical dimensions of it but all the dimensions of it, how the land is used; they're reading landscapes as they're going through them without any of that formal training. (Interviewee 43)

This aggregation of knowledge around place is a recurrent motif within the reflections of my interviewees on their discipline. Place gives it a label and a rationale. It is held to capture the essence of how geographers view and solve problems, and to provide significant resources for building public knowledge. It is also thoroughly political and imbued by a politics of knowledge production as much as a more traditional politics of control over resources. Places are always changing and being actively renegotiated, an insight that not only shapes much geography, but one that is, in the view of my interviewees, a distinguishing feature of the discipline, and one that equips geographers to engage in and think about decision-making to do with places. As one disciplinary kaumātua observed, his practice is all about “the importance of place in structuring people’s lives” (Interviewee 3), which provides a powerful platform for taking geographical insights to multiple publics.

These views of the discipline are of course located in time and place. They are views developed in relation to the institutional restructuring and range of anxieties that pervade thought about discipline and its future. The view of a disciplinary kaumātua that “..we need to come up with a better definition than spatio-temporal processes and dynamics because it has no traction with anyone” (Interviewee 22), is telling. It represents a call for an explicit reinvention of discipline and the formulation of a new set of geographical imaginaries with which to think it and perform it. It also, in effect, challenges the views of others that public geography does have extensive potentiality and it can help others to ‘navigate’ the changes of the times.

6.2.2 Student views of the value(s) of geography

Students have similar views on the merits and values of geography. Tables 6.5-6.9 present the key results from a survey of two separate groups of third year university students at the University of Auckland (see Section 3.4.1 and Appendix 6). Surveys were distributed to 175 human geography students and 109 physical geography students, with 59 and 65 students responding respectively. Whilst the sample captures students from only one institution and thus those conditioned to a particular framing of

the discipline through the prejudices of a particular group of academics and a particular teaching programme, it does capture both human and physical geographers. It also surveys students who are approaching the end of a geography degree programme and are at the stage when they are preparing for life beyond the university, therefore in a position to reflect upon the value(s) of the discipline.

When asked what they understood to be the subject of geographical inquiry, students produced a wide range of answers, which are categorised into key themes in Table 6.5. The individual answers contained more than a singular theme, meaning the total column numbers in each theme will be greater than the number of individuals surveyed. This is to be expected from a diverse discipline, but also indicates both the absence of a disciplinary canon, one of the hidden strengths (and weaknesses) of the discipline (Le Heron & Lewis, 2011). The actual responses given in the survey ranged from three to 41 words, reflecting different levels of engagement with the survey instrument and confidence in addressing the question.

The students ranked 'people' as the top area of inquiry, which differs from the understanding of their discipline by academics (Table 6.3), who ranked 'place' first. In addition a disconnect between human and physical geography students appears with regard to the word 'place', with 42% of the former and only 9% of the latter suggesting 'place' was a subject of inquiry. These figures suggest that academics are more in tune with human geography students, although this was a very small sample which would require further research. There was also a noticeable deviation between students and academics with regard to 'relationships between' subjects which the students rated significantly higher.

The results capture the teaching (at Auckland) of a doctrinaire set of disciplinary values and definitions which students are encouraged to interpret in their own way. This can be viewed as a potential strength of the discipline as it emphasises the engaged, experiential, empirical and interpretive dimensions of field inquiry.

Table 6.5: Student interpretation of the subject of geographical inquiry

KEY THEME	Human geography		Physical geography		Human and Physical geography	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
People	38	64	42	65	80	65
Place	25	42	6	9	31	25
Interact/relate/relationship	25	42	29	45	54	44
Environment	23	39	20	31	43	35
Space/spatial	21	35	6	9	27	22
Processes	13	22	20	31	33	27
Physical	11	19	32	49	32	26
Landforms/features	4	6	11	17	15	12

Students were also asked what word or phrase they use to best describe the ability to think geographically. Again, given an open-ended question, students offered up a range of answers which I grouped into key words in Table 6.6. The question elicited diverse responses, although these did tend to cluster around the notion of interconnected or holistic thinking. For students their discipline appears to emphasise the ability to think across silos of various kinds and this defines the distinctive skill set of a geographer. Defining the key capability as spatial thinking might be interpreted as a more precise definition that embraces the capacity to think holistically across disciplines and scales, whilst the emphasis on curiosity is a more generic academic learning focus, which is far from at odds with this understanding. The fact that spatial awareness was recorded is a positive affirmation of many of the formal definitions of the nature of the discipline. Responses emphasising that thinking geographically is ‘awesome’ and ‘invaluable’ reflects perhaps a less intellectual engagement with the survey instrument, but one that, if nothing else, affirms the value of a geographical education.

Table 6.6: Student views of the key phrase that captures ability to think geographically

KEY WORDS	Human geography		Physical geography		Human and Physical geography	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Interconnectedness	19	32	8	12	27	22
Holistically/big picture	10	17	21	32	31	25
Critically	5	8	10	15	15	12
Spatially	13	22	6	9	19	15
Curiosity	6	10	6	9	12	10
Context	0	0	2	3	2	2
Geographer	2	3	2	3	4	3
Other	2	3	5	8	7	6
Don't know	3	5	6	9	9	7

Students were also asked (Table 6.7) to identify two key strengths of the discipline. They pointed to the breadth of the discipline, and its interdisciplinarity as the strongest

features of geography. In common with staff members, they then point to elements of holistic study, groundedness and breadth of interest as strengths. Human geography students in particular emphasised the significance of critical thinking as key to the discipline, effectively emphasising that its focus is not simply descriptive. Without prompting, they see geography as open to different bodies of thought and ways of thinking and engaging.

Table 6.7: Student views of strengths in geography

STRENGTH	Human geography		Physical geography		Human and Physical geography	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Broad	22	37	26	40	48	39
Interdisciplinary/ interconnected	19	32	9	14	28	23
Contextual/beyond basic binary	14	24	17	26	31	25
Holistic and open minded	13	22	14	22	27	22
Relevant/ interesting/ practical	12	20	18	28	30	24
Critical analysis	9	15	11	17	20	16
People and place	3	5	0	0	3	2
Disciplinary past and history	3	5	0	0	3	2
Spatial	3	5	3	5	6	5
Other	1	2	8	12	9	7

Students were also asked what they thought were the greatest weaknesses of the discipline (Table 6.8). Again none of the responses from the 124 students were the same, with some individuals giving only one example. I was required to analyse the answers and attempt to group related concepts. The most commonly cited weakness is the broad nature of the discipline, with one student writing, “sometimes I crave detail or specificity”. This answer is closely related to the sense of ambiguity in the nature of geographical knowledge. The criticism of both the breadth and ambiguity may reflect the double-headed nature of the discipline at Auckland University, and the clear distinction between physical and human geography pathways through the discipline. This may leave students uncertain as to the strengths and weaknesses of the discipline as a whole. Ironically from a student perspective, geography’s strengths are also seen as its weaknesses. This reflection also echoes through the concern that students have about careers, in the context of the rise of employability as a new form of vocationalism in universities.

Table 6.8: Student views of weaknesses in geography

WEAKNESS	Human geography		Physical geography		Human and Physical geography	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Too broad/lacks specificity	34	58	40	62	74	60
Ambiguity of what discipline studies	19	32	21	32	40	32
Lack of clear career	12	20	1	2	13	10
None	1	2	1	2	2	2
Human/physical divide	3	5	13	20	16	13
Others	14	24	16	25	30	24

The broad messages relating to groundedness, interdisciplinarity, breadth of focus, holistic thinking, and openness to diversity are also reflected in why students initially considered geography as a potential course of study (Table 6.9). The gift of hindsight will allow them to read their decisions through their subsequent experiences of and views about the values of the discipline but it is interesting, nonetheless, to see a recurrence of some themes. Significantly, the discipline is seen as offering practical, real world relevance, factors which speak to both the breadth and correspondence with experienced realities. Human geography students pointed to the coverage of social factors that they felt would enhance their understanding of the world. One commented, almost certainly in retrospect, that geography was “the ultimate social science”, another that the discipline encouraged “wide-angled” thinking, and another that it was distinctively “progressive”. A significant proportion of students who chose to study geography as a result of their positive school experience of the subject, had their views of the discipline confirmed.

Table 6.9: What was the most significant aspect of geography that encouraged you to study it at tertiary level?

REASON	Human geography		Physical geography		Human and Physical geography	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Practical/relevant/interesting	19	32	23	35	42	34
Use of social/human factors	17	29	10	15	27	22
Broad/ world view	13	22	12	18	25	20
Good at geography at school	9	15	6	9	15	12
Understanding landscapes	0	0	6	9	6	5
Other	1	2	4	6	5	4

6.2.3 Teachers

Teachers are perhaps the most passionate advocates of the discipline and the relevance and value of its knowledge. One long serving teacher put this very succinctly by saying “I’m passionate about my subject” (Interviewee 50), a sentiment matched by the other 22 geography teachers I interviewed. A past president of the

NZBoGT provided a concise summary of the subject's relevance in terms of the way it acts as a platform for teaching school-aged students about today's grand global challenges.

The issues around pressure on the environment, whether it's global warming, resource depletion, issues around population growth, access to resources, migration, refugees, all of those things are geographical and it's in your face, in the media all the time and I think it's really trying to get people to actually recognise the power and importance that location plays in those issues so migration is not just a cultural thing, it's very much a spatial thing as well, and trying to get people to think more deeply about the spatial I think is the challenge of geographers. (Interviewee 49)

In a school environment pervaded by inter-subject competition similar to that faced by academics in universities, geography teachers have little option but to promote their subject and justify their position and claims to resources in terms of numbers. Most reluctantly default to the word 'sell' to describe this imperative and emphasised that, in the words of one, teachers "need to ensure that the programmes they are offering are engaging, contemporary and interesting" (Interviewee 51). The broad nature of the curriculum and the ability of teachers to basically design their own programme (see Fastier, 2016) gives teachers the opportunity to compete actively, and many draw on the way that students identify with "their place" and to question "their place in the world" (Interviewee 63) to try and engage them. An experienced teacher detailed the success she had in developing a Year 10 course called 'investigative geographies' which was very hands-on and provided impetus for student numbers at Year 11. In these various accounts of promoting their subject, teachers came to define geography in terms of place in much the same way as academics.

The definition in terms of place is further emphasised in school-based geography by the centrality of the field trip in the curriculum and pedagogy. It sets geography apart from more class-bound subjects and many teachers report that field trips give the subject its appeal for students. Field trips to places as diverse as Mount Cook, Rotorua, West Coast rainforest or a goat farm position 'place' at the centre of the subject. They also provide a distinctive form of experiential learning and allow teachers to emphasise this and the practical skills they can teach in the field as crucial dimensions of the subject, again bound up with place. The centrality of place and field trips in school geography can be demonstrated by the AGTA having a formal relationship with the Rotorua Education Network (REN). The network was initially founded in 1997 to provide outdoor experiences for students and the AGTA has since 2002 had a

formal contract with REN to promote geography field trips to Rotorua. This contract also requires two members of the AGTA committee to keep the staff at the REN updated with changes in curriculum and assessment, therefore keeping the learning current for students.

A teacher noted “The kids love the field trips” (Interviewee 68), while another teacher from an all-girls school described her week-long field trip to Mount Cook as “a drawcard” as it entails a week away from school and she takes “the most enthusiastic teachers” (Interviewee 75). While concerns with financial cost, health and safety risks, and the loss of class-time in other subjects are putting increasing pressure on the opportunity to run field trips, my interviewees continue to emphasise their importance to teaching the subject. The fieldtrip has the added virtue of allowing teachers to demonstrate the values of the subject away from the classroom, demonstrate a passion for the subject, and teach core geographical knowledge in context. At a time when teachers and teacher educators worry about the deteriorating level of basic geographic knowledge among new teacher graduates (Morgan, 2017b), the field trip remains a focal point at which teachers and students can continue to, as Harvey (1972: 32) noted “engage with the subject in all its complexity”.

‘Skills’ are an important component in the NCEA curriculum and are also seen as distinguishing geography. Geography teachers lament the loss of the knowledge of basic or core skills among new teachers. They tend to assign responsibility to the way in which teacher education is organised, which they suggest gives trainees far too little time to prepare to teach the subject itself. This chronic lack of subject specific training was revealed by a teacher educator, himself a former geography teacher, who detailed that he taught

. . . student teachers for three three-hour blocks before they go out on their first teaching experience, and then I get to see them for two three-hour blocks. And that’s the sum total of their geography teacher education . . . there are 15 contact hours with me. So by far and away, the major learning is their enculturation in schools. (Interviewee 45)

Another geography academic who teaches students was more blunt in his assessment of the situation, stating that “the [New Zealand] curriculum is only as good as the teachers you have and the teachers just do not have enough geographical knowledge” (Interviewee 47).

This training background results in situations experienced by another teacher educator, who was rendered speechless when a newly trained geography teacher, who had passed some 300 level development studies papers and therefore attained the entry standard to train as a geography teacher, stated that she “did not do grid references” (Interviewee 45). This is a basic skill that is examined at each of the three levels of NCEA assessment in New Zealand. The dearth of universal geographic knowledge and skills which geography graduates learn through their degree speaks to the increased specialisation of academics and the courses they offer in university. This results in a partitioning of geographic knowledge and skills which, ultimately and perversely, (un)enlightens geography graduates and reduces their ability to coalesce around communal areas of expertise. Therefore, the few remaining skills which connect geographers, especially those tied to the study of place in the field become seen as areas where academic geographers might become more active in working with teachers in schools.

This narrow and reductionist definition of geography marks out a different subject landscape from the late 1960s when geography was the top option subject in New Zealand schools (see Macaulay, 1988). In an era when assessment has overtaken content in the organisation of schooling and assessment regimes and curriculum development are more tightly focused on employability than community and nation building, teachers cling to skills and engagement with place as the core values and distinctive dimensions of geography. An experienced teacher, who has taught at four different high schools, commented on the perception of geography ‘the subject’, by highlighting “children who have done geography degrees and they cannot find a job with their degree, that is a huge issue” (Interviewee 71). Whether or not this is actually the case, and whether or not a geographical education is either directly responsible or failing in some way to overcome whatever else beyond the geography classroom is to blame, the concern is widely held. It is also seen as a threat to the future of the subject by interviewees, who refer to the need to ‘educate parents’ as well as students to see geography as a pathway to a career.

Teacher educators and disciplinary leaders within the academy tend to argue, however, that a narrowing of focus to skills as a platform for employability and a strategy to convince students, parent and other publics underplays the wider strengths

of the discipline. Castree (2011) contends that some of the most important conversations concerning geography take place between students and parents over the dinner table at home. He makes the point that rather than interpret the concern with place (and the field trip) as a platform for skills development, perhaps the deeper strength of the subject is to cultivate a sense of wonder about the world, a moral reading of it, and a grounded sense that it might be changed and how this might be achieved. In 2016, there were 29,480 geography students (www.Moe.govt.nz) in New Zealand high schools. As in the UK (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/13/the-guardian-view-on-geography-its-the-must-have-a-level>) this is a sizeable captive audience with which to secure these core geographical imaginaries and associated knowledge, as well as a distinctive set of skills. It is clear from the interviews that teachers as well as academics are being driven to interpret the values of geography in a context in which they are having to ‘sell’ their subject. It is also clear that as a discipline more widely, geographers are struggling with how best to do that and to redefine the purpose of a geographical education. Arguably this is about how to perform publicly and, in the case of schooling, how to work with teachers to reach school students, their parents and their communities.

6.2.4 Professional geographers’ views of the public value(s) of geography

Despite the attempts of Le Heron (in 1995) and Albrecht (in 1999) which I detailed in Section 4.2.4, geography is not a professional discipline. Nonetheless, there are professionals who have built their careers on the back of degrees in geography, who self-identify as geographers. They are part of a wider community of geographers whose work is in some way framed by the different types of work laid out in Table 5.1. In this section I use a set of interviews with six ‘professional geographers’ and ten ‘non-geographer professionals’ working in policy positions to ask how they, as either users and/or co-producers of geographical knowledge, understand the different values of geographical knowledge and its potential to generate influence in public spaces. Each interviewee works in a professional setting where they utilise geographical knowledge and translate that knowledge into public domains. The organisations in which they worked include a national and a local government research management unit, the Department of Conservation, a government department in which many geographers work and one that has responsibility for an important policy area

where society and environment interact. The projects were: NZ Story; A Nation of Curious Minds; Te Ara the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand; Department of Conservation (Enviroschools) and the New Zealand Environmental Education Association (NZEEA).

Crown Research Institutes

Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) are the government's science labs. They carry out government funded, mission-led research. They house a number of professional geographers, who contribute significantly to the production of geographic knowledge in New Zealand and its translation into different public spaces. I identified four geographers who worked in two different CRIs, and interviewed them on the same basis as I interviewed the academic geographers. Each held a PhD in geography and identified as a geographer, and two had formal roles labelled 'geographer'. Each performed the role of social scientist in multiple cross-disciplinary research projects, and claimed that their backgrounds in geography prepared them well for that role; indeed, it prepared them to work across disciplinary boundaries, engage with communities, and work well in interdisciplinary teams. It made them attractive recruits for their organisations. Each used the terms 'people' and 'place' to describe the particular nature of their capabilities and the qualities of geography. They also referred to nature, environment and landscapes, as quintessentially geographic frameworks for their work.

All four were positive about the future of geography, citing the value of the strong interdisciplinary and collaborative skills that it emphasises and works to instil in its graduates. They added that the turn towards participatory research approaches in the management and governance of environmental resources positioned geographers well to lead new research-based professional activity and to complement geography's traditional emphasis on grounded research methodologies. One interviewee highlighted the comfort geographers had in dealing with different data sets, which allowed them to make important contributions in addressing complex problems. While three had not encountered the idea of public geography, all four saw these attributes as equipping geographers to perform in the public sphere of environmental management, especially as this opened up to working directly with diverse public groups through participatory approaches and the co-design and co-production of knowledge. One did, however, emphasise the public nature of her work and clearly grasped the potential of

geographers to do more and to frame this work in terms of public geography—to enhance their careers, build the discipline, and enhance the value of their impact. They each, however, regretted the failure of the community of geographers in New Zealand to embrace the label ‘geographer’ as a platform for securing the capabilities of the discipline and performing impactful research.

Public policy realms

The first public policy official is a geographer involved in producing science and research policy and fostering science excellence and relevance in the New Zealand context. Her work involves promoting and monitoring impact within the national research communities. She emphasised the potential for geographers to produce relevant and valuable knowledge for multiple public spheres. She refers to the notion of a “social compact” (Interviewee 72) approach to public good research to identify new potential for geographers to practise influential public geography. Promoted by the Office of the Prime Minister’s Chief Science Adviser, this is in contrast with a post-war ‘social contract’ model of research in which scientists were funded to pursue their own research agendas and trusted to align them with the public interest. The ‘social compact’ approach is more mission-led. Researchers are encouraged to engage more directly with diverse publics and develop a relational approach to defining and developing their research agendas, in which the government may ‘choose to invest’. She employed the 17 United Nations ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ as an example of a potential framework for researchers noting that it would be hard to argue that this is too narrow. It is, however, “giving them [researchers] a framework within which to work so that they can ask their own questions, but knowing that the knowledge they are providing could actually be relevant and useful” (Interviewee 72). In this way, funding is coming to shape what knowledge is produced (and how), without, she claims, overt central direction.

While my interviewee had not heard of the concept of public geography, she suggested that the new social compact approach to public good research would offer geographers new opportunities to work with diverse publics to develop influential research. Indeed, she argues that geography is particularly well-suited to this mission-led research framing and to playing a “brokering role” (Interviewee 72) in the new interdisciplinary and co-production expectations for how research projects become organised. Physical geographers, she argued are already practising the ‘post normal

science' expected of the new approach (see Tadaki *et al.*, 2012), where facts are seen as evolving in relation to the solutions required of them. She directed attention to where these approaches are being applied to the eradication of exogenous pests, offshore oil prospecting, legalisation of recreational psychotropic drugs, water quality, family violence, obesity, teenage morbidity and suicide, the ageing population, the prioritisation of early childhood education, reduction of agricultural greenhouse gases, and balancing economic growth and environmental sustainability. Geographers, she suggested, already recognise these problems as more than simply economic or reducible to certain siloed bodies of scientific thought. For her, geography is a mix of humanities, social science and physical science, all combined into "one tidy package" (Interviewee 72). As a discipline, she suggested, it is almost uniquely prepared for this new world of funding and pursuit of impact in the public realm.

A second professional, a geographer working in research management in local government, emphasises the legislative requirements of local governments to gather and make decisions on the basis of robust evidence. This creates roles for research, evaluation, monitoring and reporting to inform council's core functions, including planning for growth and administering the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Local Government Acts in relation to social, economic, land use and environmental issues. Local governments around the country routinely employ geographers in their land use, infrastructure, and social and economic development teams, as well as in various planning roles. This geographer points to the multi-disciplinary skill sets in which geographers are trained which prepare them for applied research settings that attempt to link research, policy and implementation. In her terms, geography has the potential to provide the "intellectual horsepower" (Interviewee 93) to drive policy changes, a capability that mixes practical orientation with instrumental skills and critical capacities. In common with the first policy official, she therefore named the capabilities and disciplinary potential that academic geographers and students alike refer to as the strength and core values of the discipline.

The interviewee also used the terms 'people' and 'place' to highlight the specific knowledge specialisms offered by geographers. In her view, however, the discipline was "insecure" (Interviewee 93) about the intellectual status and values of its knowledge base and felt a collective need to defend its "values proposition and its borders" (Interviewee 93) relative to other disciplines. The lack of clear identifiable

disciplinary champions who showcased the potential of the discipline through high profile public work and contributions was, she suggested, an Achilles heel for the discipline in today's saturated media environment. However, she remained upbeat about the potential for geographers to contribute significantly in public realms. She too was unfamiliar with the idea of public geography *per se*, and indicated that there was an unmet demand for academic geographers to become involved with local public debates and local government policy making. At a time when local governments are crying out for intellectual leadership and new ideas to meet pressing and rapidly shifting environmental management, urban development, and local governance concerns, her personal observation is that academic geographers are "floating too high on theory" (Interviewee 93). This theoretical myopia has resulted in academic geographers being 'conspicuous by their absence' in policy spaces where they have significant disciplinary knowledge to offer. She speaks to the need and opportunities for new connections between academic and professional geographers as a platform for performing a new generation of public geography.

A third interviewee works for an industry lobby group. Identifying as a geographer and farmer, she has retained strong ties to academic geography and continues to conduct her own research exploring interactions between farmers, social organisation and environmentally sustainable development in land-based industries. She highlights the capabilities of geographers and geography as a body of knowledge for examining these interrelationships in a distinctive way. She attributes this to a focus on place, one that is otherwise rare in policy arenas, scientific inquiry, and the perspectives adopted by industry lobby groups. The geographer's integrated, interdisciplinary perspective and knowledge of place is for her distinctive and valuable. She added that while today's geography is moving away from land-based concerns, the more traditional geographer tends to have a far greater sense of what actually happens on a farm than many of those now representing industry interests or making policy with respect to them.

She highlights the importance that geographers once played and might again play in working within, and often stitching together, the rich, place-based and informal knowledge networks that allowed those in land utilisation and management to come together to design management solutions. She noted the potential for generational farmers and Māori to work together as their view on land management demonstrates a

great number of similarities, especially its long-term focus. In her view, geographers might once again play a knowledge-making and translation role in building such networks, which she sees as a crucial antidote to the technocratic and adversarial solutions advocated by scientists and policy makers. When asked about public geography she commented that it sounded like one of those “weird academic terms”; however, she challenged me to find a geographer who “did not work with the public” (Interviewee 81).

Knowledge production projects in public spaces

Government, and the formation and delivery of policy, does not of course lie simply within the offices and technocratic and bureaucratic processes that take place there. In the neoliberal era, government is now increasingly practised through the production of knowledge beyond these offices, commonly through the development of knowledge production projects at various scales that cut across private-community-NGO-state lines. It is in these spaces where geography’s potential to develop and disseminate geographical imaginaries and shape public worlds is perhaps at its keenest. In this section I explore a series of interviews with geographers and others working in those spaces to reflect on this potential, which is in some cases taken up and in others left unfulfilled.

One of my interviewees worked as an environmental education project manager at the Department of Conservation (DoC). While not a geographer herself or involved in policy making, she talked of the opportunities for geographers in this field. She interpreted geography less as an integrated discipline and more as a stand-alone subject. As such, she saw it as one of a number of contributions required for a more holistic approach to address issues of environmental education and the challenge of changing mindsets and instigating behaviour change. She pointed to the Enviroschools programme in which over 1,000 New Zealand schools participated in 2017 as an initiative designed ‘to foster a generation of people who instinctively think and act sustainably’ (<http://www.enviroschools.org.nz/about-enviroschools>). Here, she said, the intervention of geographers might have been more significant, as they clearly had much to offer. The Ministry of Education Curriculum notes ecological sustainability as a key value, which it interprets in landscape terms in relation to waste, energy, water, plants, orchards, predators and sustainable communities. Each of these topics fits within the geography curriculum and might be interpreted, as one disciplinary

kaumātua remarked, as ‘geography in drag’. Academic geographers, however, have not played a significant role in developing Enviroschools.

My interviewee also pointed to the work of the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE). Established in the mid 1980s, it aims to promote environmental education in the public, private and voluntary sectors and to influence decision-makers (nzaee.org.nz/). It has developed flagship events such as Seaweek (<http://seaweek.org.nz/>), promoted social movements such as transition towns and community gardens, and partnered with other non-governmental organisations such as Forest and Bird and The Sustainable Living Educational Trust to produce a manifesto outlining policy priorities for an incoming government (<http://nzaee.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2014/07/Election-manifesto-July-2014.pdf>). Again, academic geographers have not been directly involved in these projects, and have in a sense been bypassed by other actors who have taken ground that might conceivably have been developed by geographers.

The *NZ Story* is a government initiative which presented the opportunity for academic geographers to become involved in shaping national imaginaries. Launched in November 2013 by then Prime Minister John Key as part of a business growth agenda (www.nzstory.govt.nz), it is part of the previous government’s aim to increase New Zealand’s exports from 30% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2013 to 40% of (GDP) by 2025. During an interview, a director explained that in the context of potential overseas trade partners, the program aimed to “shift the narrative” (Interviewee 82) of nation towards new and prospective trading partners. Governments and exporters have long sought to take advantage of New Zealand’s reputation as an aesthetically beautiful “agrarian nation at the bottom of the Earth who largely provides food to the world” (Interviewee 82), but this imaginary has been cast for generations in the image of New Zealand as Britain’s farm. The *NZ Story* seeks to refresh this narrative by positioning New Zealand as part of the Asia Pacific, the preferred zone of economic influence that, as then Minister of Economic Development Steven Joyce joked, is only “two movies and a sleep away” (Interviewee 82).

The *NZ Story* is a ‘whole of government initiative’ funded by six different agencies: New Zealand Trade and Industry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of Primary Industry, Te Puni Kokiri, Education NZ, and Tourism NZ. Rather than simply develop a logo and a brand message, the aim is to develop a toolkit of resources to

help New Zealand businesses tell the story of New Zealand. The challenge is to overcome the “agrarian (and) kind of hokey” (Interviewee 82) messaging associated with established nation branding such as the 100% Pure tourism slogan. It aims to stimulate a more values-based portrayal of nation focused on integrity, resourcefulness and kaitiakitanga. My interviewee insists that building the story offered an obvious space in which geographers and their skills might be matched with policy objectives, yet academic geographers were not involved in the project.

Te Ara, The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand (see www.teara.govt.nz) is another such public space of potential influence for academic geographers. It aims to be a comprehensive guide to New Zealand’s people, natural environment, history, culture, economy, institutions and society and is intended for an audience outside academia. The site is the digital successor to the 1966 Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Development began in the early 2000s by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage (Manatū Taonga), under the editorship of historian Jock Phillips. The initial advisory committee comprised a number of specialists from different disciplines, including geographer Professor Eric Pawson from Canterbury. Currently, it is managed and updated by the Research & Publishing Group at the MCH, in Wellington and was developed over a number of years and released in themes.

In an interview, a senior historian involved in Te Ara confirmed that the project required specialist disciplinary knowledge. The works of Kenneth Cumberland (<https://teara.govt.nz/en/search/resources?keys=Kenneth+Cumberland>) and Harvey Franklin (<https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/45771/harvey-franklin-controversial-geographer-1980s>) are captured in foundational accounts of national history recorded in Te Ara. Other geographers, including Professor Phil Morrison and Associate Professor Alan Gamlen have provided contemporary updates in their specialist areas of research. A note of caution needs to be added, as the constantly changing staffing and focus of those involved in the project requires a geographer or geographers to maintain a current relationship with the project’s decision makers. This is a clear example of a public space in which geography is integral to the project and in which geographers are actively involved.

One place where academic geographers have become involved, and have arguably punched above their academic weight, is in the NSC. These were launched in 2013 with the goal of addressing ‘defined issues’ of national importance. The aim was to

harness national science capabilities into collaborative research programmes that assembled ‘best teams’ of researchers across disciplinary and institutional boundaries. The challenges were to look for ‘additionality’ and new scientific approaches. After a process of public consultation, the government named an initial ten challenges, to which another two have been subsequently added, including a ‘Science in Society Leadership Challenge’ and a housing-related challenge. There are two important points with respect to the ‘publicness’ of the efforts of academic geographers. First these science initiatives are mission-led government funded initiatives and as such in a sense on a par with the other knowledge production projects considered in this section. More than this, however, they were all designed around appeals to public input to identify the pivotal questions for national futures and are intended to engage the public directly in their knowledge-making agendas, as well as to have explicit science communication and behavioural change dimensions. Thus whilst research-oriented and locked primarily into the worlds of the CRIs and the academy, the challenges are both policy spaces and public spaces more broadly writ. Geographers are highly active in these spaces predominantly in the ‘Sustainable Seas (*ko ngā moana whakauka*)’ challenge with five geographers involved (see <http://sustainableseaschallenge.co.nz/events/conference-2017>) and the ‘Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities (*Ko ngā wā kāinga hei whakamāhorahora*)’ Challenge and Resilience to Nature’s Challenges (*Kia manawaroa—Ngā Ākina o Te Ao Tūroa*) (see <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/science-innovation/national-science-challenges/documents-image-library/national-science-challenge-mid-way-review.pdf>). This list is not fully inclusive and geographers are deploying their expertise in other NSCs.

Significantly, however, they appear to have become locked more into the science-policy dimensions of these spaces, into the work of research, publication and informing better policy. Only one of the geographers interviewed pointed explicitly to work with communities outside of the public policy space, in this case a geographer who was working closely with communities around a project to do with dance and the promotion of altered attitudes for ecological sustainability. This arguably stood outside of the how to manage socio-ecological relations thrust of the challenge with which she was engaged. While others pointed to participatory processes and to work engaging publics in these processes as a significant public geography, they had not

communicated this work into other spaces. Nor have geographers become involved in the most overtly public of the challenges, *A Nation of Curious Minds* (ANCM).

Launched in July 2014, ANCM is focused on stimulating public engagement with science and encouraging participatory science (<https://www.curiousminds.nz/actions/>). Projects funded under the challenge have included regionally based efforts to engage young people and enhance their scientific literacy. These and other projects have sought to blend the promotion of Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) literacy with social realities, cultural practice and community development initiatives, such as investigating the effect of rodent control on the kumara yield in South Auckland marae-based urban gardens³. Here geographers might not only bring their particular expertise to engaging the nation, their understandings of scale, the problem fields of housing, changing population dynamics, economic development, community formation and subjectivity, and socio-environmental relationships, but also engage their familiarity with spatialised imaginaries in supporting the work of the challenge. They might also do important work in ensuring that literacy in STEM is connected to broader socio-technical and socio-environmental literacy. However, when I contacted my interviewees in late 2017 as I was writing up my research, not one of my interviewees had been involved in the current 41 community-focused projects under the *A Nation of Curious Minds* banner. A significant number of the projects involved working with local schools and were arguably geographic in nature. The opportunity to shape national geographical imaginaries in this way has at least in the short term been lost.

Popular media

I interviewed six individuals who worked in different areas of the New Zealand media ranging from radio and TV presenters, a magazine editor, two television producers, and a freelance writer and radio contributor, in order to establish the relevance, if any, of geography in their work and how geographic knowledge could be utilised. To focus on geography and its potential, each of the interviewees were asked to define what they understood ‘geography’ the subject and discipline to be. Two of

³ In Māori culture, a marae is a communal meeting ground and spiritual home to a social group. Built around a wharenui (or meeting house) the marae is where extended families and wider kin groups come together to celebrate funerals, birthdays weddings and other social occasions as well as discuss important collective concerns. In recent years marae have been seen as places to carry out collective gardening and other social projects in urban areas.

my interviewees had studied some geography at university, although only one graduated with a geography degree while the others had no experience of university geography. The interviewees had a surprisingly similar understanding of geography. Each used the words ‘people’ and ‘place’ to talk about what geographers might be able to contribute in media spaces, and two referred to the more abstract notion of ‘space’. Significantly, the finding suggests that there is in fact a popular understanding of geography at large in New Zealand, and that it is more sophisticated than academic geographers might sometimes imagine it to be.

Less encouragingly, however, the interviewees suggested that the discipline and its practitioners lacked a sense of vitality and currency. Two suggested that geography conjured up images of school lessons, while another saw its relevance as restricted to educational institutions. Another suggested that as a word, it lacked “contemporary resonance”, especially when compared to the “warmer” connotations that emanate from the words “nature, environmental or sustainable” (Interviewee 89). The magazine editor, while acknowledging that geography is a worldwide brand which “means something” (Interviewee 80), suggested that its value depends heavily on what it is attached to in the popular media space. He pointed for example, to the long history of the association of the term ‘geography’ with the *National Geographic* magazine as an example of its resonance with older generations and an earlier time.

One figure involved in producing the documentary series *100% Pure* observed he could not imagine how a geographer would help with his projects. Another interviewee, a TV producer, commented that series such as *New Zealand from Above* (2012) or *Making New Zealand* (2014) could conceivably approach individuals who might “loosely be categorised as geographers” (Interviewee 88) to work on the series. Although it is noteworthy that the second series of *Making New Zealand* (2017), is being promoted as “The popular history series” (see <https://www.primetv.co.nz/making-new-zealand>) and covers amongst other topics forestry and mining, both of which resonate with geography. Nonetheless, no geographers were consulted or involved with the research that informed these programmes. The radio host detailed how he and his producer, both of whom are geography graduates, did not have a geographer in a regular slot on his show. He explained that there was little room for geographers given his suite of regular

interviewees encompassing historians, sociologists, economists, geologists and others who covered travel. He commented:

maybe at the back of our minds, because we were both geographers, we kind of know, well that's geography's where they all meet, so the fact we've already got all these other things is, in some ways, it's one great, big geography thing.'
(Interviewee 85)

This comment is telling—geography is seen as an integrating discipline and the geographer as having little that is distinctive to add. Everything is geography, which in a sense means that geography adds little that is distinctive. After all, the integrating work is performed by the journalist, the producer and the cinematographer. Both these television based interviewees reflected that they had yet to encounter a charismatic geographer who possesses the skills (and looks) needed to present in a visual medium for today's audiences. One remarked that, "if they'd found New Zealand geography's answer to Brian Cox and they had a good concept" (Interviewee 88) then she could envisage geography on screen again. The other commented that there was no reason why a New Zealand geographer could not gain the profile that Cumberland enjoyed; it has just not happened yet. Both agreed that while a willingness to engage with the media was important, the ability to translate what can be difficult subject matter into "lay terms" (Interviewee 90) was essential.

I engaged the interviewees with their understanding of the phrase public geography and none of them had encountered the phrase. This led to a series of interventions regarding the form public geography may take and how it could be practised. One suggested that a contemporary Cumberland would need to be able to present material in a more nuanced manner. They would need, for example, to balance difficult conversations about the nature of national identity with the recognition that "recreational readers" (Interviewee 80) are likely to react negatively to challenges to their preconceptions of their own country. Another interviewee suggested that New Zealanders have a "genuine love" for their country and a "pining for the rural and for the small town and I don't think it's claustrophobic or nostalgic; I think it's genuine" (Interviewee 89). The challenge for geographers is to embrace this interest and connect and engage with geographic issues from the Cape to the Bluff. He suggested that the critical obligation with which academics are charged, means that some of their more controversial research was not suited for his brand of media coverage. There is a

point here about tone and substance, but also one about the commercial requirements of the media in the post-public broadcasting era.

The interviewees preferred to think less of opportunities for a discipline to speak and selecting commentators by discipline, and more about specific stances with respect to public debates and the qualities of any particular commentator as a public voice. The point reinforces that raised by all these interviewees about the integrating nature of geographical thought and expertise. The geographer was the ‘honest broker’ across perspectives and bodies of disciplinary knowledge, and potentially highly valuable as such. In order for the geographer to fill that role in public, this would require an individual to perform the role, not of expert, but of integrator, which requires different expertise to research. One interviewee challenged academic geography to become more of a “training portal for specialists” and to find “the little niches” (Interviewee 76) that would enable them to speak with authority as experts. He suggested that disrupting the default presentation of development questions as “economy versus environment” (Interviewee 76), was one such space, as was being able to narrate the “interconnections” (Interviewee 76) between the human and the non-human. Another suggested that geography’s particular expertise might lie in questions of place, especially as they pertain to “smaller communities” (Interviewee 89). He pointed to the upturn in church attendances in Southland as a result of Philippine dairy workers as an example of an area where the media might turn to geographers for commentary.

6.3 A public geography?

It is one thing putting geographical knowledge into public spaces. It is another to think about making a contribution that (a) reaches the public in a way that might shift values and alter practice; and (b) realises the values of the discipline and works to secure its future. That is, there are discrete and overlapping challenges to ensure the work of public geography is not only performed, but translated for diverse publics, addresses public values and issues, transcends the immediate locale of its production, and adds up to a contribution that exceeds the value of a series of diverse, one-off interventions. In this section, I ask whether and how these contributions are somehow pulled together.

6.3.1 Public geography subjectivities

The broader point to take from the discussion of academic subjectivities in Section 6.1.8 above is that the full potential of public geography in New Zealand universities, is contingent upon the interplay of these subjectivities within the persona of any individual academic geographer and within the collective body of geographers. It matters how the public geographer takes form and is shaped in this mix and what potential exists for him/her to escape the confines of both institutional academic constraints and the external pressures to perform 'other' selves. It matters how much the public geographer self is valued by academic geographers as well as the institutions that govern them.

The discussion of the academic self above highlights the external pressures brought on this self and foreshadows the challenge of remaking this self from within as the ultimate objective of my work; that is, elevating the value and status of public geography. Academic geographers do not currently represent their public work clearly, confidently and proudly through their profiles. Whatever the current extent or potential for public geography, academic geographers present both less well than they might in their CVs, their statements to me about their work, and in their institutional profiles. This is the case at the individual level and the collective level, where even though the NZGS website is very much public-facing, it tends to serve the 'profession' in its content.

Of the 234 geographers whose institutional profiles I examined, only 16 have profiles that have been significantly modified to emphasise public geography as represented in Figure 6.1. These profiles emphasise inward-facing work, but do highlight research projects completed for external clients (including government). Some of the commentary on this work by academics does elaborate the nature and impact of that work in policy and community spaces. However, the institutional profiles of academics, which contain work undertaken by academic geographers in relation to among others the World Bank, NZ Fish and Game, RMA Commissioners and the Health Research Council of New Zealand, offer up only an abbreviated reading of the full value of the discipline and its public contributions

Detailing the diverse work of academic geographers and the different priorities assigned to different forms of work in Chapter 5, confirms that the academic

geographer is constituted of multiple subjectivities. These subjectivities are framed and moulded institutionally, but are commonly contradictory. The interviews highlighted a number of key tensions between them and the expectation sets of both institutions and geographers themselves in relation to priorities and embodying those different subject positions. The academic as teacher and researcher is one field of contest in which these tensions play out, as is the academic as mission-led researcher and the academic as disciplinary subject and PBRF-led actor. So too is the academic as public practitioner (critic and conscience beyond the page of the journal) and the academic as inward-facing reputation-builder, for self and for institution. The academic as emotional, caring subject and professional career builder or deliverer of institutional interest is yet another contradiction. But is there an inherent contradiction between the public and the institutional/disciplinary geographer? There, I think, there is more room to move with respect to suspending that contradiction and being both, as many academic geographers do, even if they do not always recognise this overtly or advertise it to the world.

One consequence of this complexity is that what constitutes a public geographer is complicated. Another is that not all subjectivities are available to all geographers at all points in time or stages of their career. Who gets to practise what form of public geography and at what stage of their careers, are pertinent questions. The opportunity to perform as early career researcher or disciplinary kaumātua (an academic who has long experience practising geography and is an accepted leader in the national disciplinary community) are of course restricted by career stage. The former is expected to perform fundamentally inward-facing work focused on building their own research agenda and developing teaching capabilities, while the latter defines her or his role by carrying out practices that shape and secure the discipline.

For the kaumātua, the activities that secure and shape the discipline rest on established research reputations and a depth of institutional and disciplinary knowledge, many of which involve building internal capability. However, many are outward-facing and involve network building in public spheres. There is a public geography to this network building, which not only secures pathways along which geographical knowledge might flow and around which it might be co-produced with publics, but will always involve the translation of geographical imaginaries of one sort or another into policy and other public spaces. A small number of these senior leaders

have come to resemble the ‘Project Barons’ of the science world, managing large and or multiple externally funded projects, and leading significant teams of students, colleagues and external actors. These figures have begun to shape or even set both institutional and national knowledge production agendas in geographical fields such as river restoration, community health, Pacific development, and population dynamics.

In all of these senses, disciplinary kaumātua are in a stronger position to influence more formal, institutional publics, and to have forged the links with communities necessary to perform public geography in community spaces. Indeed, with expectations that they lead the work necessary to attract external funding, which is predominantly sourced from government funds and agencies and increasingly comes with expectations of impact, they must perform public geography in institutional fields. Here the contradiction between public and disciplinary/institutional subjectivities is suspended or even, to some extent, erased—even if senior disciplinary figures do not always practise their public geography openly and with the intent of capturing the public eye or building a disciplinary reputation.

Several of the early career researchers whom I interviewed, however, also practised public geography, although not in this authorial fashion or via extensive policy and community networks. Rather they practised public geography via research-based commitments to particular communities, such as community economies, and mostly through the performance of co-production and participatory forms of research. Several performed their public geography as activists in relation to particular social movements, or more general social concerns such as welfare, Treaty issues, or environmentalism.

Mid-career researchers also had these forms of commitment and a number claimed to be in the process of producing knowledge for and engaging with institutionalised publics. This is most obvious in the work of academic geographers working in policy fields either as policy critics or producers of research for either national or local/regional governments. A number of critics in these fields had engaged directly with policy and other government agencies to discuss their work in housing, migration, economic development and welfare. Along with disciplinary leaders, 14 academic geographers had produced reports for and participated in workshops with state agencies. Of those 28 interviewees not within the early career research group, eight had also produced at least one piece of writing for the popular media, while 20

claimed to have engaged with community audiences of one form or another independently of their teaching or data gathering work. Several academic geographers had well-established connections with international community groups or policy networks, where they either informed groups through their research or took more active roles in participatory processes co-producing knowledge with communities.

For all, however, writing for the discipline at some edge or other of it, represents the dominant form of work. The ‘PBRFable’ academic is the dominant subject position for most, and the research and writing necessary to produce publications in top-ranked international journals dominates work. For some, this, combined with teaching, is the purpose of the university—discovery and/or high level critique. For others it’s important in and of itself, as well as for providing knowledge, mandate and authority for engaging in public geography of many different forms. For others still, it is something that must be done in order to continue to perform the ‘real’ field, community or policy oriented work of geography. Making knowledge with and for public groups of one sort or another (working with communities in New Zealand or elsewhere to develop their tourism aspirations, education and health systems, river qualities and coastal protection) is generally deeply political but often invisible. Different academic geographers have different dispositions and capabilities in relation to different forms of work and the expectations of their universities. There is no simple axis of publicness to their work or the way they perform it. There are different shades of public geographer.

6.3.2 Public intellectualism

Cumberland was able to combine both the exercise of performing public institutional geography as the head of the Department of Geography at Auckland University with the public intellectual work of *Landmarks*. There is no geographer in today’s academy who works in both these zones or is a public intellectual of any local or national prominence. There are opportunities to practise geography in non-institutional public spaces (Figure 6.1), but academic geographers agree that no other public intellectuals have emerged from geography into the public realm. When probed, my interviewees named a small number of geographers as at least potential public geographers. Of these, only four were academics (the others include notable media figures with some geography training), with Professor Richard Bedford, the one

geographer considered by any more than a handful of my interviewees to embody the figure of the public intellectual. Most, however, recognised that in relation to figures more widely understood as a public intellectual, Bedford's high profile work is conducted in the more institutional spaces of Figure 6.1.

For some interviewees, there is a clear potential for public intellectuals to emerge from geography and perform important work in securing progressive or even radical geographical imaginaries. Of these interviewees, most see that potential as positive although 12 saw the inherent risk that a single individual's perspective and subject position may become representative of the discipline. This has the potential to further narrow public and institutional understandings of the discipline with potentially harmful effects. Indeed this narrowing might close down spaces in which other geographers might practise more routine and lower profile forms of public geography within community or state. Several identified a difference between public intellectuals who operate in media spaces and those who are more participatory or community-focused in their engagements. One questioned the intent of anyone who habitually sought to appear in the media and whether this was a more effective way of bringing about change than providing robust research-based evidence to guide decision making and public understandings. Others suggested that a community of engaged scholars rather than a singular champion, may be able to more effectively facilitate, communicate and critique any possible directions for change. These more doubtful interviewees, and others more open to the idea of the geographer as public intellectual, cautioned that being a public intellectual might take multiple forms and that the potential for geography in this regard to be diverse, is one of its strengths.

While this reflection does register competing definitions of public intellectualism, the point about the value of diversity is more important, especially in a national context where public intellectualism is far from an accepted part of public life and public intellectuals are rare and far from universally recognised. As a mid-career geographer noted "We don't have those [public intellectuals]. We have Ritchie McCaw" (Interviewee 13). Among my interviewees, Professor Jane Kelsey was clearly recognised as the most prominent of those figures, and then by less than a third of my interviewees. Nonetheless, the work understood to be performed by public intellectuals—leading public debates over matters of national concern; 'translating' ideas effectively from the academy into wider public spaces; performing the legislated

role of the academic as ‘critic and conscience’ in public; agitating to shape decisions in government, business and society; and even promoting discipline, was seen as valuable by nearly all my interviewees.

While the idea of geographers coming together to champion a public intellectual was seen as problematic, 39 of the 47 interviewees responded positively to the proposition that geography would benefit from having a disciplinary champion. One interviewee pointed to an earlier disciplinary moment when the NZGS was led by prominent professional geographers who provided access to decision-making bodies. He highlighted the tendency over the final decades of the twentieth century to the continual and protracted attempts by the discipline to address ‘the’ public in the guise of policy makers, as a major disciplinary failing with lasting consequences. He pointed to the wider New Zealand public as the discipline’s “natural audience” (Interviewee 20) and the alternative of addressing them as a lost opportunity. For one geographer the absence of a disciplinary champion left “a gaping hole” (Interviewee 7) as the positive publicity generated by Nigel Thrift’s visit to the ‘Running Hot’ lectures in 2010 (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6G2yCbeefNA>) demonstrated.

Others again pointed towards the benefits of diversity and multiple champions. Those who answered ‘no’ largely focused on the difficulty in identifying a single person with the discipline and the associated risks of that person being seen as the only type of geographer. Frequent mention was made by both sides of this debate, of the need for a good communicator who could enthuse a younger audience and help the discipline escape its ‘Victorian model’ and board game/pub quiz image. For most, figures with the appropriate mix of public persona, sensitivity to the diversity of the discipline, and commitments to championing it ought to be encouraged to do so, and the wider disciplinary collective needs to explore the avenues that have the potential of making that happen.

6.4 What then is public geography?

Despite this diverse range of interventions in spaces beyond the academy, the prevalence of debates about public geography in the international literature for more than a decade, the universal recognition of the impact agenda, and an editorial in the *New Zealand Geographer* (Lewis, 2015) that called on geographers to confront the issues raised by ‘impact’ in the New Zealand context, geographers were relatively

unfamiliar with the term. Twenty eight of the 47 academic geographer interviewees had not encountered the term, and others struggled to define it. For those who had heard of public geography or were able to quickly internalise its meanings, it was understood broadly to refer to engagement outside the academy. Not a single person commented on either the origins of the phrase in the sociology literature or the early interventions in the geography literature in the mid 2000s. Only three people identified Kitchin's later work or the ACME special issue in 2014 that addressed the concept directly.

Those who engaged critically, commented about its “exclusionary nature” (Interviewee 46) and potential to assign different status to different forms of geographical research. Interpreting the term narrowly, they worried that if understood as a distinctive form of scholarship, it might paradoxically create a new highly theorised form of research that could even undermine some of the diverse forms of knowledge production and engagement actually practised with publics beyond the academy. This sits at odds with those who are aware of and open to demonstrations of the relevance of geography in real world debates and problems.

This concept of an arcane discipline was dispelled by two senior geography professors. One noted that unless you are in solitary confinement you are always speaking to someone, the other highlighting the fact that every piece of research undertaken “involves negotiating with the public” (Interviewee 43). The majority of those interviewed recognised the need for a bilateral ‘mutual relationship’ between the university and the outside world, while maintaining the difference between research impact and public impact. Indeed, broadening the ‘public’ availability to and dissemination of relevant geographic knowledge needs to be enacted by ‘mutual agenda setting’, while not being co-opted by narrowly constructed ideas of economic or social impact from institutions and funding bodies.

6.5 Geography's future: Glass half full or half empty?

The interviews with academics ended by exploring how each individual viewed the future of the discipline. As with previous questions this was not a yes or no answer and there was considerable difference in the detail and length of the conversation that took place. The almost 50:50 split, detailed in Table 6.10 below, represents what I consider to be the most interesting of my findings. In examining the conversations, I

am conscious of the spectrum ranging from sanguine to melancholy, within which each individual’s differing disposition will lie; and also the differing stages of their career, both of which will influence their answers.

Table 6.10: The future for the discipline of geography

How do individuals perceive the future of the discipline?	
Positive/healthy	24
Negative/apprehensive	23

Those who were positive about the future expressed a multitude of reasons for this which I will detail; however, three senior geographers expressed some pertinent aspects in relation to the history and character of geographers. One described how his tutor at a prestigious British institution in the late 1960s questioned why his students wanted to study a “dying discipline” (Interviewee 34) and another commented on the “ingrained characteristic” (Interviewee 10) of geographers to self-critique, which he felt was a healthy sign. The third commented on how geography had been complacent in challenging labels which have arisen in the last 20 years. These observations were all followed by a positive expression of geography’s future.

The most frequent comment made was how future challenges, or as a mid-career informant termed them “big ticket items” (Interviewee 23), are more complex and a geographical sensibility provides an excellent framework for solutions. This was strengthened by the view that our interdisciplinary nature and the government settings which encourage research groups and can span research areas, provides an ideal space for geographers to engage in research. As a senior geographer noted, “This should be geography’s moment in the sun.” A disciplinary kaumātua, whilst noting her obvious bias in being a geographer, commented that the Anthropocene was the ideal vessel where geography has the opportunity to offer some “intellectual leadership” (Interviewee 47), which can unravel these complex problems.

Those who were more pessimistic about the discipline’s future cited three principal reasons, the changing nature of the academic over specialisation and poor understanding of the skills that trained geographers possess. Firstly, the requirement for academics to concentrate on self, coupled with constant institutional restructuring, precludes individuals from thinking about the discipline and having time to promote the discipline and encourage future students. The empirical evidence I gathered which revealed only 10 of 47 geographers had direct contact with schools, shows the anaemic

links between school and university geographers and provides some strength to this argument.

Secondly, the increase in specialisation and the “rise of the studies” (Interviewee 42) has led to an erosion in the visual presence of geography in institutions and the creation of a geographic tower of Babel. This loss of a central area of communication has created a space too great to work across, and my interviewees feel specialisation is widening this space. Finally, fighting the legacy of geography as being descriptive and producing rote learnt knowledge of the Mercator map, combined with the pressure on students and institutions to produce fully manufactured economical and vocational graduates, produces an unstable disciplinary environment. The challenge to demonstrate the analytical and synthetic skills geographers possess, in an employment market where the job description of geographer is conspicuously absent, is hampering the health of institutional geography

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have investigated how the routine practices of geographers might be understood as public geography in relation to claims made by geographers about the values of their work. I have also asked how academic geographers present and promote the publicly valuable dimensions of their work. It is clear that individually, geographers do not use the technology of academic profiles to capture the full range of their work and its values to build a distinctive account of geography and a compelling public representation of the academic geographer. It is also unclear in this respect, whether disciplinary institutions such as the NZGS do this either.

The six public policy areas with which I have engaged represent a small number of potential relational spaces where community engagement and negotiation between publics can occur. The ‘broker’ role is valuable and points to geography’s integrative character, but keeps running up against the deep tension generated by expectations that the discipline should be able to name and practise specialised, discipline-specific expertise, knowledge and skills. From the school staffroom to the TV producer’s office, what is seen as geography’s defining strength is also its weakness (Le Heron & Lewis, 2011). Public geography points to the importance of presenting geography and the work of geographers to the outside world. Despite the obvious passion for their chosen discipline, the interviews challenge current geographers to become part of the

public policy lexicon beyond the areas in which they currently operate. The comment from a disciplinary kaumātua that “Every associate professor and professor in New Zealand geography should be putting themselves out as a public face” (Interviewee 22) aligns with the evidence that there is a pressing need for geographers to heed his message in relation to engagement with public policy.

Academic geographers and teachers reinforced this sense of genericism and its strengths, in terms of the need for a link between the two sides of the discipline, the opportunities offered by interdisciplinary research, while acknowledging the fractured nature of the discipline. This is a conundrum not only for promoting geography, but also for practising and promoting its use in public spaces. In practice it is bound up with images of the discipline as basic knowledge, non-specialist and thereby of lower status. Interviewees beyond the school and university each commented in one way or another that the word ‘geography’ took their mind back to high school classrooms and subject silos, highlighting a lack of contemporary relevance.

In an attempt to tackle this issue I posed the question of how a high profile individual or individuals may help raise the discipline’s profile. Each interviewee agreed that having a ‘figurehead’ or ‘disciplinary champion’ had potential, although concern was expressed that any individual was a bona fide ‘expert’ on the topic and not just a spokesperson. In addition, the risk of the whole spectrum of geographic thought being represented by a single person was expressed.

This chapter has highlighted the unrealised opportunities by geographers in New Zealand to produce a collective response to the pressures on the discipline. The final chapter will bring together the findings from the three data chapters and the literature review. It will also propose some ideas that will allow the discipline to become more unified in how it is presented, and how its integrative skills can contribute to develop solutions for today’s complex local and global challenges.

CHAPTER 7: PUBLIC GEOGRAPHY UNEARTHED

*...every citizen is a better citizen for a better knowledge
of geography
(Professor George Jobberns, 15 February 1945)*

In his address to the inaugural meeting of the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Geographical Society in February 1945, Professor George Jobberns, former teacher and the country's foundation Professor of Geography, was preaching to the converted. Jobberns had a passion for geography in all the spaces in which it is produced, co-produced and enacted from school to university and wider public life (Roche, 2011). The discipline was introduced to a post-war public ready to receive it in each of these spaces—its purpose was clear, its relevance obvious in the nation-building work of the development state, and its core knowledge tightly held and debated in relation to the nature-society issues at hand in New Zealand (see Johnston, R., 1971; Johnston, W., 1982; Davidson, 1983; Macaulay, 1988). A group of committed geographers in schools and universities were more than happy to tend to this need and demonstrate the relevance of geography.

The development state, whose mission was building national identities and resource-based economies, provided geographers with a clear and receptive audience with ample opportunity to build their discipline in multiple spaces. Cumberland's *Landmarks* in 1981 may have been the high water mark of this potential, its status and its public reach, but already the temper of the times was shifting. The fracturing of white male national identities as libertarian, feminist, indigenous rights, and various communitarian political projects took aim at a colonial New Zealand made this nation-building focus a geography of past. The cultural turn within the wider discipline of the late 1980s reflected many of the same challenges to modernity at work on the ground in New Zealand. Combined with the tumultuous move to a neoliberal ideology (documented in the *Changing Places* volumes of the early 1990s), these shifts challenged geography's potential and its privileged position as knowledge keeper for a state-led, resource-based economy concerned with efficiency and spatial equity (Lewis & Moran, 1998).

As the knowledge requirements for new development projects or counter knowledges became more specialised, the jack of all disciplinary trades struggled to reposition itself in relation to political and knowledge projects led out of the academy, NGOs and private organisations as well as the changing organs of the state. While the rise more recently of commitments by the state to the co-production of environmental and social knowledge with communities, post-normal science, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity has arguably created new opportunities for geography to forge an identity, it has yet to take advantage of them. In fact institutional changes and rifts within the discipline have eroded its collective capacity to do this. In what follows I ask, finally, whether public geography is a way forward to secure the discipline's future.

7.1 Public geography in New Zealand

The thesis has examined the practice of public geography by academic geographers in New Zealand and its potential to define and secure the discipline into the future. I have uncovered a range of public practices, some directed inwards specifically at the academy, some conducted explicitly outwards to reach non-academic audiences, and many characterised by a dual orientation to both public and academic audiences. New Zealand geographers do not appear to be suffering the crisis of relevance often asserted by British geographers, yet at the same time they are far from proclaiming the public presence or values of their work. Our geographers practise public geography routinely even though they might not always recognise their work as public. Nor do they appear to reflect on the value of this kind of practice, and in turn publicise that work to build public recognition. Yet, they are arguably in a better position than they imagine to address the changing expectations of universities to demonstrate their social impact, and they are well positioned to make a significant difference to national and global futures.

The research presented above also outlines how geographers reassert the values of their discipline across the board. These are centred on grounded and situated knowledge of social and bio- and geo-physical relations, and in particular how these are interconnected in place. Academic geographers are prominent internationally in their sub-fields, respected locally for their scholarship and research, and successful in attracting external funding. They play disproportionately significant roles in national

science and social science institutions. These values are also recognised by non-geographers, and geography remains taught in schools to nearly 30,000 students annually.

In all these and other ways geography appears to be a healthy discipline, but it is clearly under stress as a collective. Cumulative institutional changes have contributed to the fracturing and diminishment of the discipline, and it is under-recognised and misunderstood publicly. It has been internally undermined by two apparently intractable problems. Firstly, by persistent failures to address the weakness of its definition—geography as the study of the interplay of social-physical environments in place—and secondly, the major onto-epistemological fault-line between the ‘human and bio- and geo-physical sciences’ which creates a zone of tension within the discipline as a whole. The ability to create knowledge and serve publics of various kinds in what has previously been acknowledged as the difficult zone of interdisciplinarity, has long been geography’s strength. But now, more than ever, it has become the discipline’s weakness in a context in which knowledge demands have become more specialised and the call for interdisciplinarity has created a new realm of relational expertise that is largely a-disciplinary. Geography’s uniqueness as an interdisciplinary discipline has been eroded at the same time as place has lost much of its significance as a policy and media object and public actors appear to be calling for clearer specialisms.

All this has been reflected one way or another in the cultural turn and refracted through it in the internal questioning of some of the stability of place as an object, that was reflected in key geographical understandings and approaches from earlier times. *Landmarks* would today be dismissed for its single voice and face, notably the successful, didactic, middle-aged white, colonial, male figure. Of course the sensibilities that Cumberland observed and the questions he raised were more complex than his presentation of them and many remain as pressing today. But the New Zealand he presented can no longer be imagined as the singular place he portrayed and the national, nation-state vision he presented has been consigned to history. Although many of the anxieties raised by the economy of producer and land-based resource extraction remain dominant, there are other socio-cultural, urban and global forces at play and they are often not discernible in the land. Geography has splintered to address those questions, especially as the nation-state went through the challenges of

neoliberal reform which yielded further rounds of splintering. In short, my research suggests that geography has failed to successfully redefine and ascribe itself as a unique and somehow unified collective in the wake of this splintering.

The enduring definition of geography noted above remains potentially powerful in both schools and the academy. However, at school level it is undermined by the fracturing of the subject into assessment units and the accent on skills that have less vocational and academic purchase than they once did. It is also undermined by the drive within schools to fit students into clearly defined professional pathways. As a consequence, school-level geography has lost some of its status. In the academy, this definition of geography still captures the attention of students and provides a pathway for many into employment associated with place and its management. Geography graduates go on to work in local government, state agencies dealing explicitly with place, teaching, and environmental management. As environmental management practices are becoming increasingly transformed by post-normal science and the need to engage with communities and escape top-down planning regimes, there are new opportunities in this field for geographers trained across the different sub-fields of the discipline.

However, in academic terms that extend expertise, the definition of geography (as above) lacks the level of sophistication necessary to capture the turn to space as a more abstract central concept that is less amenable to the positivism of physical geographers. Shifts in the academy have seen human geographers explore complex theoretical terrain to do with the fashioning of social, cultural and economic spaces that are not necessarily rooted in the geophysical formation of place. The expert in particular places across fields of knowledge at any scale may be extremely valuable within research teams and science and organisational management, but will struggle to publish in journals that push knowledge boundaries in specific fields of knowledge production. The traditional expressions of the human geographer's particular skills beyond the field are not seen as unique or inherently desirable, in a context where management approaches are increasingly templated and the fad for interdisciplinarity yields its own field of practice-based knowledge.

At the same time, questions of place attachment, social organisation, behavioural change, regulation, cultural and political formation, and (in New Zealand) all matters Māori have meant that human geography is foundational for all physical geographers

in their engagements with worlds beyond the academy. The issue, my interviewees seem to be saying, is that geography needs to be re-understood and reframed institutionally in terms of these and other new asymmetries at its interdisciplinary core.

The question that animated this research was whether any of this mattered for geography's future, and whether an enhanced accent on public geography was the answer. My working proposition was that enhancing meanings of geography mattered and that public geography was the way to help bring the discipline together, secure its future, and realise the public values at its core. In short, I found commitments to geography across the discipline and a strong sense of its values in various public spaces. I also found an academic geography that made extensive public contributions, but failed to describe or publicise them as 'geography'. In what follows I tease out the implications of these findings and the details behind them.

7.2 What crisis?

At first glance the discipline of geography appears healthy. The number of university student graduating with a geography degree annually is approximately 400, as shown in Table 6.1; the relative stability of the number of school student choosing to study geography over the last twenty years around the 30,000 mark (Section 4.2.2, Figure 4.1); and my criteria for identifying geographers as detailed in Section 4.2.1 has established that there are a healthy 100+ academics who identify and practise as geographers. The New Zealand Geographical Society and its regional branches continue to exist with more diverse memberships that reflect the diversifying nature of the academy. In 2018, the vice-president of the NZGS, the immediate past president of the NZGS, the secretary of the NZGS and the chair of the largest branch are women. The 2018 joint NZGS/ IAG conference attracted interest from over 60 special sessions across the discipline including three focused on school-academy relations in geography and at least seven focused on the application of geography in public spaces. In addition, the current president and immediate past president of the RSNZ are both geographers. Geography in New Zealand purports to be, if not in rude health, definitely healthy.

The evidence in this thesis suggests that behind the healthy façade there are problems. As discussed there are challenges around the zone of tension between the

social and bio- and geo-physical sciences and the accompanying destabilising narratives. A 'Geography Department' exists in only two of the six New Zealand universities (Table 4.1) which feeds the suggestion that geography is disappearing from view behind more monolithic institutional names designed by faculties. The issues pertaining to an institutional home need to be viewed in the context of the wider uncertainty which surrounds the future of disciplines themselves in university futures, demonstrated by the fact that 49% (23/47) of the academic interviewees have a negative view of the discipline's future (Table 6.10). This is being unwittingly driven by assessment matrices, which I highlighted in Section 4.2.5, that are focusing academic attention on the search for greater degrees of specialisms, and publications in global as opposed to local journals, earning disciplinary respect for the academic and institutional repute for the university. The effect is to create a group of individual geo-something specialists, whose only commonality lies when they are placed under an administrative home for organisational purposes, as opposed to creating a geographers' collective that gives strength to the discipline. The inherent danger with this is that individuals simply become "global academics who just happen to live in Aoteroa" (Sidaway & McGregor, 2008: 3), as opposed to geographers engaged with the public of New Zealand.

The "big ticket items" (Interviewee 23) that are challenging researchers present a natural home for geographers. As a senior geographer with significant overseas experience notes, "What are the big issues of the world? Globalisation, trade, climate change, migration, social justice. Geographers have got an awful lot to say about these things" (Interviewee 46). The challenge for the new generation of geographers is to utilise the raw material of students with a geographic sensitivity to promote their skills as critical thinkers who are characterised by the ability to be opportunistic and nimble with interdisciplinary interactions. Given that all but one of the 47 academic geographers interviewed regarded interdisciplinary research as a positive development within the academy, this suggests in some way an opportunity for the discipline. The challenge for these academics amongst others, is to take the well-rehearsed expertise and values of geographical knowledge (place, space, interdisciplinarity, holism, the local, and the emancipatory ethic) and to combine it with the potentially transformative nature of core geographical imaginaries such as predator-free, the

Pacific and the metropolitan New Zealander, to create a collectively visible and genuinely engaged discipline.

Most interviewees also point to the strength in this regard of the ‘geographic coupling’ between the bio- and geo-physical and social sciences. This is illustrated in the public domain by the presence of geographers in the National Science Challenges, especially the Sustainable Seas Challenge. It is also witnessed in schools, where teachers remain wedded to definition of the discipline that emphasises the coupling. However, again, these things must be worked at to keep this potential alive in the context of on-going and perpetual institutional change, as Morgan (2017b) observes in schools. He insists that this must mean improving relationships with the academy so as to replenish the geographical concepts with which teachers work (countries, rivers, flags, and perhaps even sustainability). The strength of this relationship needs to be shown in the upcoming review of the whole school system which the government has announced on March 13th 2018 (see <https://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/consultations-and-reviews/tsr/>). The challenge for geographers is to be in the room where the discussions are taking place and decisions being made and have a team of geographers, both academics and teachers, who possess a collective and united geography identity.

The risk otherwise is that geography is reduced to a horrible geography of picture books and capes and bays, or left open to become a floating discipline that can mean anything to anyone or nothing to many. The institutionalised strength of geography still lies in the link between schools and universities, such that the challenge to encourage a geographic sensibility in our schools is crucial, and ought not to be reduced to the need to convert school leavers into undergraduates.

7.3 What public geography—a wider range of contributions?

Investigation of a practice-based national body of work by geography academics (presented in Table 5.1) demonstrates that New Zealand geographers create knowledge for, and with, those working in multiple public spaces, highlighting that there is much more to the work of academic geographers in New Zealand than simply types of writing as detailed by Kitchin (Table 2.5). This singular form of categorisation of work taken from the British context, underestimates much of what New Zealand geographers do. By categorising the work of geographers as either

inward-facing (with respect to reproducing and advancing the academy and the discipline), outward-facing (geared to other audiences), or inward/outward-facing (practices creating knowledge in both external and internal spaces simultaneously) it shows the broad nature and extent of their public practice.

Much of a geographer's inward-facing work is always targeted at university lecture theatres, towards the graduate and postgraduate students who, as both Burawoy (2004) and Ward (2006) remind us, must always be an academics primary public audience. As shown in Figure 6.1, their outward and inward/outward-facing practice involves engagements in the diverse public spaces such as schools, popular and social media and community and iwi groups. The institutional spaces of schools, university and state actors, being more available to public scrutiny, present opportunities in which geographers can influence (or seek more or less overtly to influence) policy and other forms of social action.

The debate about public geography has taken place against a backdrop of an increased awareness of the impact of research, which raises a question as to where the boundary between public geography and what might be termed 'commissioned geography' lies. That is, can the work of geographers in public institutions and for the state be framed as public geography?

With regard to this question, my answer has been 'yes', but a 'yes' qualified by the recognition that there needs to be a more catholic understanding of the term public geography. Policy work is still important and 'public'; nonetheless, state-oriented work alone is not enough. Geography needs also to think more seriously about those other spaces of engagement, as identified above, which include communities of all kinds, iwi worlds, and the media. In practice, geographers do significant work in these spaces, as we would expect from academics who advocate for a discipline that grounds itself in conceptions of people in place. However, at least in New Zealand, they practise less overtly in such spaces, but are not yet prepared to narrate it with much confidence and they often do so without using the label of geographer. This comes at a loss to the collective. Paying attention to public geography will offer the geography community the ability to secure the discipline.

In the era of impact it is important that public geography be seen as a transparent way in which the potential of the discipline can be displayed. The conspicuous nature

of this potential was verified when a professional geographer issued me a wero (a traditional Māori challenge) to find a geographer who “did not work with the public” (Interviewee 81). I addressed the point of lost potential in Section 6.4 by referring to the disciplinary kaumātua who insists that every piece of research in his long career is public geography as it involved contact and negotiation with members of the public and should be narrated confidently and proudly as such. Taking a lead from this observation, it is crucial that geographers recognise the breadth of their engagements as a pivotal resource and a clear demonstration of public value and public impact. Another disciplinary kaumātua insisted that every professor and associate professor “should be putting themselves forward as a public face” (Interviewee 22). It is also crucial that they narrate these things wherever possible. One innovative way of defining the extent and scope of public geography might then be to ask about the extent of communication across the multiple spaces in which geographers produce and disseminate knowledge. Another may be a disciplinary project, such as the environmental geography project proposed by Lewis (2015) which aims to highlight the skills geography offers. The advantage of a disciplinary project is that an individual is not forced to drive his/her project but there is an organisation driving the ideas.

A key challenge is to ensure that the nature, value and extent of the public engagement of geographers is recognised. There are myriad opportunities for geographers to say more about their work in this regard, particularly in cyber-settings. The internet is a key technology for enabling the message about the value of geography to happen by chance (through random searches) as well as by design (through strategically pre-empting targeted searches from various publics such as policy officials, journalists, and students). Institutional academic profiles are one such space but, as noted in Section 6.1.8, one that is not used as effectively as it might. There is much to work with here, from the extensive practices of geographers to their committed and passionate advocacy for their discipline. There is arguably a role here for the NZGS in proliferating the messages about geography as well as mediating and directing them. Again, while the NZGS website is lively and informative, it does not focus as much attention on public geography. The question may well lie in cultivating a public geography subjectivity.

7.4 What public geographer – an emerging academic subjectivity?

One professor noted that geographers are happy “doing geography” (Interviewee 1) and it’s not part of their DNA to grab a megaphone and shout about it. The shifts in funding and performance measurement, however, will mean that geographers must step confidently into public spheres to translate or co-produce geographical knowledge. My research suggests that while they are not yet always doing this with the confidence of representing their work as public or themselves as geographers, they are confident about their practice and its value and they are working in public spaces. A significant number do appear in the popular media (Table 6.2) as trusted commentators on matters as diverse as climate change in the Pacific or population dynamics. Surely, if geographers are to declare their work as geography, this will help secure a clear disciplinary identity. A mid-career geographer, when asked about the future of the discipline, responded that he was “a fan of a phrase of one of Napoleon’s marshals that ‘God is on the side of big battalions’!” (Interviewee 4). Geographers are, in Lewis’ (2015) terms, “being” geographers, but are not always thinking or saying so. This needs to change if the discipline is to build a big battalion of geographers.

Ironically, the neoliberal educational environment has created an institutional and public expectation that academics perform ‘impactful’ work and make their work visible. The institutional profile is a key site where there is potential for this to occur. While designed to build institutional reputation it is a site where disciplinary reputation might also be developed. However, New Zealand’s academic geographers have yet to develop this latter potential, individually or collectively and, as noted previously (Section 6.3.1), only 16 of the 234 institutional profiles I researched had details pertaining to the academic’s public work. The reserved geographer tends not to push the boundaries of the institutionally formatted templates; hence much of their public work, such as that in schools or in submissions to, or appearances in front of, public commissions, is not captured. Perhaps the task of completing the mediated institutional profile is perceived as a chore or obligation rather than as an opportunity. The geographers assessed here are also minimal users of blogs and social media such as Twitter, which have been argued by others such as Hendy (2016) to be important lines of communication to New Zealand publics.

A commentator such as Shaun Hendy could be perceived as a public intellectual. The figure of the public intellectual is an unfamiliar one to New Zealand geographers and is generally distrusted. When pushed, however, interviewees were able to identify elements of a public geographer subjectivity in New Zealand, and even point with great respect to a geographer, Professor Richard Bedford, who has performed significant roles in institutional spaces. As noted in Section 6.3.2, the idea of a geographer as a public intellectual seems to carry with it a geographical cringe or a lack of confidence. There is perhaps a sense of unworthiness that is reflected in the failure of geographers to participate more prominently in public debates or announce their work to publics. And yet there are spaces in which a public intellectual might practise a public geography, such as the media and community spaces ordinarily imagined in discussions of public geography (see Kitchin, 2013a and Rogers *et al.*, 2014), and identified in Figure 6.1. This distrust of the idea of a geographer as public intellectual appears at odds with the interview data where 39 of 47 interviewees suggested that a disciplinary champion for geography would be an asset. The idea seems also to carry with it the baggage of the didactic performances of public intellectuals in other spheres, which seems to offend the geographic sensibility even in spite of the current prominence of a geographer, Danny Dorling, as a public intellectual in the UK.

Evoking Lewis (2015), perhaps the better way of grasping geography's potential to influence in public spaces is to see this contribution as being made by a diverse multiplicity of committed geographers who attend more carefully to highlighting their work and who are prepared to name themselves as such. This need not require public displays of disciplinary advocacy but the presentation, always labelled as such, of excellent research and commentary in all of the spaces in Figure 6.1 of geography. Castree (2014a, 2014b), for example, has advocated for the practice of a much higher profile geography in national and global institutional spaces, not because of what that might mean for the discipline, but because the skills and insights of geographers might help overcome key impasses in thought and action. This is the position inherent in the responses of many of my interviewees. However, a number of predominantly disciplinary kaumātua also call for something more, something akin to an on-going project of profile building for geography. Here there is clearly a role for the NZGS, but one that must be framed in such a way as to embrace and celebrate the diversity

and multiplicity of spaces in which geography is performed. It must not begin from definitional premises, but from an assemblage of practices, from which the particular strengths and potential contributions of geography might be distilled.

7.5 Final word

My research journey began with *Landmarks* and with Kenneth Cumberland; a distinctively embodied presentation of geography towards the centre of a nation-building project with its roots firmly grounded in colonial New Zealand, albeit asking some difficult questions of it regarding economy-environment relations. I asked whether public geography might fill the space in the mid-2010s that *Landmarks* occupied for geography in New Zealand in the early 1980s, and what this public geography might look like. My review of the work of geographers reveals that New Zealand geography is far more diverse than that imagined and represented by Cumberland. Episode 4 of *Landmarks* is titled “The Pastoralists” and examined the idea that there might be “a country to break in” (Cumberland, 1981); however the processes and problems addressed by contemporary geographers are far more complex, multi-layered and diverse and do not fit into the ‘man versus nature’, nation-building narrative of *Landmarks*.

Cumberland addressed a different set of economy-environment relationships, relations that he took to be more stable than perhaps they were, especially in a colonised nation that was beginning to learn about what it meant to consider its past. Today, New Zealand is a more openly diverse nation and is operating in a more globally integrated environment, and geography itself is a far more diverse discipline. Significantly, where once it named its strength as the certainties of its place as the integrated discipline that considered the interplay of human-environment relations, many geographers now celebrate its diversity. As one professional geographer commented positively during his interview, “there’s something viral about geography” (Interviewee 76). There is a deep strength in this observation of a discipline that encourages the examination of a multitude of areas and interacts with a multitude of publics.

One of the disciplinary kaumātua interviewed in effect challenged geographers to recognise this strength as a platform for stepping confidently away from a Cumberland-era, development-state singular definition of discipline and its value(s).

He called on them to embrace the recent history of discipline that had allowed them to escape their disciplinary box, whilst some other disciplines have been unable to do so. He challenged them to take up leadership in addressing what one professional geographer termed “the classic conundrum of our time” (Interviewee 76)—the persistence of political discourse that places economic and environmental interests on opposite sides of debates. For Cumberland-era geographers this was a no-brainer, but was something they dealt with within a presumed set of political, environmental, economic and socio-cultural stabilities.

Pivotal global geographers such as Noel Castree, Rob Kitchin, and Sarah Whatmore have in their own work explored the cultural and economic edges of the discipline and its engagement with diverse, fractured and emergent materialities. Individually, they have in recent years called for new institutional engagements from a geography that has something collective to offer that is not a singular knowledge or politics. My research questions focused on how ‘public geography’ is understood and how it is being performed in New Zealand. They allowed me to capture a strong sense of what those contributions are (Table 5.1; Table 6.2), as well as their considerable extent. They also highlighted the extent to which geographers themselves underestimate their public role and performance of it. While teachers generally still search for an essential definition of Geography and several academics remain caught up in difficult institutional struggles over the future of the discipline in their universities, geographers are teaching, researching and practising a diverse and engaged geography. Most academic geographers practise a multiplicity of inward, inward/outward and outwardly-directed work. The challenge is to find opportunities to step back and ‘publicly’ call this work geography, have the self-confidence to operate in these public spaces of knowledge production as geographers, and be willing to describe their own work and that of their colleagues as geography. At the end of my thesis journey, this seems to be a remarkably reassuring observation and a relatively simple step to take.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Consent form

Appendix 2: Participant interview sheet (PIS)

Appendix 3: Academic interview questions

Appendix 4: Teacher interview questions

Appendix 5: NCEA geography matrix

Appendix 6: Student questionnaire

APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT

Geography, Geology, Environmental Science & Environmental Management



THE UNIVERSITY
OF AUCKLAND

NEW ZEALAND

Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

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www.env.auckland.ac.nz

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142, New Zealand

Consent Form – Interview –

THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6 YEARS

Can 'public geography' reignite and reclaim the generative potential of a geography education?

Bill Howie

I have read the Participant Information Sheet (PIS). I have understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I agree / do not agree to the interview being audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. (Please circle appropriate term)
- I can ask for the recording device to be turned off at any time.
- I do not have to answer any questions that I don't wish to.
- I can request that any data traceable to me, be withdrawn and not used in the research up to June 30th 2016.
- I agree where information or quotations from your interview are used, unless agreed to by you, a pseudonym to protect your identity will be provided.

Consent form, continued

- I understand that data will be kept for a period of 6 years and after which it will be destroyed.
- I understand that this research will be used as part of an assessed piece of university work and in addition will be presented in a summary of findings sent to participants, and in papers reporting the research in academic journals.
- I am happy to provide an email address to which I would like to receive a summary of findings for this research once it is complete.

(please tick)

Name _____ Email _____

Signature _____ Date _____

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 ext. 83711

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE
ON MAY 17 2014 for (3) years, Reference Number: 011529

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW SHEET (PIS)

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT
Geography, Geology, Environmental Science & Environmental Management



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The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142, New Zealand

Participant Information Sheet – Interview –

To:

PhD Thesis

Can 'public geography' reignite Geography and reclaim the generative potential of a geography education?

Researcher: Bill Howie; PhD student at School of Environment.

Introduction

You are invited to take part in the above research project. Before you decide whether to participate it is important for you to know why this research is being conducted and what being a participant in this research will involve. Please take the time to carefully read the following information sheet and feel free to discuss it with others if you wish. Please contact us if there is anything unclear or if you would like more information.

Project description

This research is being conducted as part of the researcher's (Bill Howie's) doctoral studies at the University of Auckland. This research is born out of a reengagement with the 1981 TVNZ series 'Landmarks' which was written by the late Kenneth Cumberland. Presenting clips of the series from the 'NZOn Screen' web site unexpectedly pricked the geographic nerve of students in my geography classes. This has led me to reflect on how 'public geography' is enacted in 2015, the geographical imaginaries it promotes and reflection upon the potential for public intellectuals to contribute to the discipline. The results will be included in the researcher's doctoral thesis, published papers and in a summary of findings, which you can request to be sent via the consent form.

Project procedures

Your involvement in this research will be through participating in an interview lasting approximately one hour. This interview will be focused upon your role as an educator within the discipline in New Zealand. I will explore how and what geographical imaginaries are transmitted through your teaching and what forms of nation building are latent in those imaginaries. I will seek your opinion with regards to how this role may reignite the potential of geography education within New Zealand. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed. You can, however, ask for the recording device to be turned off at any time.

The recorded data will be stored on the researcher's computer in an encrypted file, and will be kept for a period of six years. The interview will be conducted in a place mutually agreed upon by you and the researcher.

Right to withdraw from participation

Your consent to participate in this research is completely voluntary. You are under no obligation to provide any information. You may withdraw from the activity at any time and request your data to not be used.

I am proposing that you can request your transcript up to 4 weeks following the interview. A further 4 week period will be allocated for returning the transcripts with any edits.

Anonymity and confidentiality

The data you provide will be kept in a securely encrypted file. When writing the thesis where information or quotations from your interview are used, unless agreed to by you, a pseudonym to protect your identity will be provided.

Contact details and approval wording

Researcher:

Bill Howie

bhow295@aucklanduni.ac.nz

021 522 313

Supervisor:

Dr. N Lewis

n.lewis@auckland.ac.nz

09 373 7599 ext. 88214

Head of Department:

Prof. Paul Kench

p.kench@auckland.ac.nz

09 373 7599 ext. 88440

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 ext. 83711

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON for (3) years, Reference Number: 010840

APPENDIX 3: ACADEMICS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Academics

1. Do you engage with the public in your teaching and research? If so, how? Would you like to engage more, and if so, how?
2. What do you understand by the term 'public geography'?
3. Do you think that there is a role for 'public intellectualism' in Geography, would it help to enhance the discipline's contribution, would it help to promote the discipline of Geography?
4. Do moves to encourage interdisciplinary research present a threat or an opportunity for your disciplinary work?
5. Do we need to be worried about the future of Geography? If so, why and for whom should we worry – ourselves, the nation, the environment? What would you do to safeguard its future?
6. Do you have a connection with school geography through your academic position?
7. What relevance does the school geography curricula play in modern academic discourse?
8. How would you explain what Geography is to students (High School and/or University)? Do you use the idea of 'geographical imaginaries' – if so how do you understand it and in what ways do you use it, is it useful in explaining Geography [prompt: in thinking about the purpose of Geography, in teaching]
9. Where do you think Geography is headed – what are the threats and opportunities? [prompt with different breaking up of HG and PG, different Faculty bases etc.]

APPENDIX 4: TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Teachers

1. Can you give me a brief potted history of your Geography journey to date.
2. What do you understand by the term 'Geographic Imaginaries'?
3. How do you think 'Geographical Imaginaries' are transmitted through your teaching?
4. What forms of nation building are implicit in the 'geographical imaginaries'?
5. Do you have concerns relating to how students grasp this concept?
6. What do you understand the term 'public geography' to mean?
7. Can you give examples of 'public geographies' practiced in New Zealand?
8. How would you describe the difference between 'civic geography' and 'public geography'?
9. How would you like to see the 'geographical imaginaries' included in school curricula?
10. How would you describe the term 'thinking geographically'?
11. What work could a public intellectual bring to the discipline?
12. Are you and your school members of the Auckland Geography Teachers Association and the New Zealand Board of Geography Teachers? If not what is the reasoning?

APPENDIX 5: NCEA GEOGRAPHY MATRIX

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	
Place, processes, patterns and perspectives	AS91007 Demonstrate geographic understanding of environments that have been shaped by extreme natural event(s). 4 credits External	AS91240 Demonstrate geographic understanding of a large natural environment. 4 credits External	AS91426 Demonstrate understanding of how interacting natural processes shape a New Zealand geographic environment. 4 credits External	1.1 3.1
	AS91008 Demonstrate geographic understanding of population concepts. 4 credits External	AS91241 Demonstrate geographic understanding of an urban pattern. 3 credits Internal	AS91427 Demonstrate understanding of how a cultural process shapes geographic environment(s). 4 credits External	1.2 3.2
	AS91009 Demonstrate geographic understanding of the sustainable use of an environment. 3 credits Internal	AS91242 Demonstrate geographic understanding of differences in development. 4 credits External	AS91428 Analyse a significant contemporary event from a geographic perspective. 3 credits Internal	1.3 3.3
Applying Geographic Skills and Methodology	AS91010 Apply concepts and basic geographic skills to demonstrate understanding of a given environment. 4 credits External	AS91243 Apply geography concepts and skills to demonstrate understanding of a given environment. 4 credits External	AS91429 Demonstrate understanding of a given environment(s) through selection and application of geographic concepts and skills. 4 credits External	1.4 2.4 3.4
	AS91011 Conduct geographic research, with direction. 4 credits Internal	AS91244 Conduct geographic research with guidance. 5 credits Internal	AS91430 Conduct geographic research with consultation. 5 credits Internal	1.5 2.5 3.5

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	
Contemporary Issues	AS91012 Describe aspects of a contemporary New Zealand geographic issue. 3 credits Internal	AS91245 Explain aspects of a contemporary New Zealand geographic issue. 3 credits Internal	AS91431 Analyse aspects of a contemporary geographic issue. 3 credits Internal	1.6 2.6 3.6
Global Studies	AS91013 Describe aspects of a geographic topic at a global scale. 3 credits Internal	AS91246 Explain aspects of a geographic topic at a global scale. 3 credits Internal	AS91432 Analyse aspects of a geographic topic at a global scale. 3 credits Internal	1.7 2.7 3.7
Spatial Analysis	AS91014 Apply spatial analysis, with direction, to solve a geographic problem. 3 credits Internal	AS91247 Apply spatial analysis, with guidance, to solve a geographic problem. 3 credits Internal	AS91433 Apply spatial analysis, with consultation, to solve a geographic problem. 3 credits Internal	1.8 2.8 3.8
Weighting & Total	External 12 credits Internal 16 credits Total 28 credits	External 12 credits Internal 17 credits Total 29 credits	External 12 credits Internal 17 credits Total 29 credits	

APPENDIX 6: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT
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Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

Questionnaire

Title of Project: Can public intellectualism reignite Geography and reclaim the generative potential of a geography education?

Researcher: Bill Howie, School of Environment. The University of Auckland.
Phone: 09 373-7599 ext. 89917.
Email: whow295@aucklanduni.ac.nz

Context: A 300 level Geography paper studied in 2017
GEOG 330 Univ. of Auckland: Research Methods in Physical Geography.

Please note: Completing and submitting the survey is implied as consent. Withdrawal is not possible after submitting the survey due to the anonymous nature of the questionnaire.

- 1) What do you understand the study of geography to be?
- 2) What do you understand by the term 'geographical imaginaries'?
- 3) In the course of your university studies, how has the term 'geographical imaginaries' been used?
- 4) What message about New Zealand has emerged during your studies?
- 5) What do you understand by the term 'public geography'?

Student questionnaire, continued

6) Give an example of public geography in a New Zealand context.

7) Is Geography is relevant in the 21st century? Why?

8) Who or what is a public intellectual ?

9) Which word or phrase would you use to best describe the ability to think geographically?

10) What are the two most important strengths of the discipline of Geography?

11) What are the two most obvious weaknesses of the discipline of Geography?

12) What was the most significant aspect of the discipline that encouraged you to study it at a tertiary level?

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