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The State, youth and schooling: the social construction of studenthood in New South Wales 1788-1948

Dianne S. Snow
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THE STATE, YOUTH AND SCHOOLING:
THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF STUDENTHOOD
IN NEW SOUTH WALES
1788 - 1948

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

DIANNE. S. SNOW, BA(Hons), Dip Ed.

School of Learning Studies
Faculty of Education
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ABBREVIATIONS

AONSW	Archives Office of New South Wales
ANZHES	Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BT	Bonwick Transcripts
CSLR	Colonial Secretary, Letters Received
CSLS	Colonial Secretary, Letters Sent
HRA	Historical Records of Australia
HRNSW	Historical Records of New South Wales
JRHAS	Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society
MEd	Master of Education
ML	Mitchell Library
Nd	No Date
NSWSLA V&P	Votes and Proceedings of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly
NSWLC V&P	Votes and Proceedings of the New South Wales Legislative Council
NSWLCJ	Journal of the New South Wales Legislative Council
NSWPD	New South Wales Parliamentary Debates
NSWPP	New South Wales Parliamentary Papers
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
SB	Special Bundle
UWA	Archives of the University of Wollongong Library

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the social construction of studenthood in New South Wales between 1788 and 1948. It focuses on the role of the state in this process while recognising that it was not the only agent involved. More specifically the thesis analyses the role of the state in defining studenthood and how this changed the relationship of youth to the state. Informed by Foucauldian theory and critical theory on the state, it seeks to render both 'the state' and 'the student' problematics in the history of education.

The thesis argues that as studenthood is an institutionalised concept it has been influenced by the social purpose of schooling. For state authorities this purpose has been one of controlled social change; change which has been contextualised by the form and mode of operation of the state itself. It also argues that studenthood is a concept which is continually undergoing transformation, and that class, gender, race and age relations have been central to its construction. Indeed, much of the evidence illustrates the studenthood became an institutionalised means of delineating the social behaviour of youth. The thesis concludes that although this was not a unified and linear development, studenthood had become the major social relation which defined youth in New South Wales by the 1920s.