

1957

Max Neutze 1934-2000

Otago/Lincoln & University

Urban researcher, university professor

Max Neutze objected to waste. The hard experiences of his family during the Depression in South Canterbury instilled in him a life-long commitment to social justice along with a strong sense of stoicism and frugality. When he won a Rhodes scholarship and became engaged at the same time, the telegram he sent his parents typified his sense of understatement: 'Awarded Rhodes Scholarship. Engaged'.

At Oxford he found 'a new and exciting world'. His mentors challenged him to focus on the economics of location and urban development, and also to explore the effects of institutions on economic processes.

In 1965 he became Head of the Urban Research Unit at Australian National University, contributing to public policy in regard to the urban development of Australian cities, while maintaining a strong interest in New Zealand.

His subsequent work on public policy for the development of Australian cities brought out his commitment to social justice. He argued for the decentralisation of cities, in order to reduce congestion and pollution. He believed that the aim of all economic and urban design was the well-being of people, and he became well-known for saying so 'in a fearless, but gentlemanly way'.



Neutze devoted over 40 years to urban research and policy at Canberra University College, which later became amalgamated with Australian National University. (Photographer: Ronald Dunphy, Australian National University, Marjorie Neutze collection)

Max Neutze was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1994 in recognition of his contribution to research into Australian cities.

FURTHER READING

Max Neutze, *Urban development in Australia*, Sydney: G. Allen & Unwin, 1977.

Max Neutze, *Economic policy and the size of cities*, Canberra: Australian National University, 1965.



Studio portrait of Max Neutze taken in his hometown of Geraldine, ca 1950s. Neutze grew up in a farming family and went on to study agricultural science at Lincoln University. (Photographer: Alex Sewell, Marjorie Neutze collection)

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