People, Rivers and Recreation:

\textbf{Fluid Relationships of Place and Experience on the Clutha River, Otago, New Zealand}

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Abstract

People, Rivers and Recreation: Fluid Relationships of Place and Experience on the Clutha River, Otago, New Zealand

The relationships between people and their outdoor environments are understood as diverse, complex and often contested with the result that examining the meanings people have for places such as rivers and placing value on them is challenging. Rivers are sites of multiple meanings and values – economic, political and socio-cultural – that have been shaped, claimed and contested into the present. In particular, the freshwater values that rivers represent have strongly dictated how people-river relationships are understood and valued, primarily through western, utilitarian economic frameworks which abstract and simplify rivers into unitary values and in doing so, overlook the complexities and richness that these relationships have to offer. This thesis argues that such rich and fluid relationships can be better conceived if a place and meanings-based perspective is engaged with, facilitating a re-examination of our utilitarian-framed values. Through the lens of place, conceptualised as fundamental to human experience through co-creating contextualised, dynamic spaces of relational, material, temporal and socio-political events, so the more nuanced, grounded and contested aspects of people-river relationships can be explored and re-framed.

This study undertook an exploration of one constituent of the diverse people-river relationships - recreation - through a place perspective which examined the experiences and meanings of recreation and rivers for a group of participants. Using an interpretive hermeneutic methodology, the study interviewed a group of thirteen participants regarding their life-long recreational experiences and meanings for the Clutha River, Otago, New Zealand. By framing the interviews within the lens of place and place-experience meanings, so the study ascertained fresh insights into how participants’ meanings for both their Clutha recreational and broader life place-experiences were expressed, constructed and frequently contradicted. Continuing the interpretive methodology via an adapted thematic analysis, the diverse, situated and numerous contextual insights captured through the participant interviews were explored more deeply.

The findings of the study show that the meanings for, and relationships between, the participants and the Clutha River have changed over time for a variety of reasons: physical changes to the river
itself and places along it; changes to participants’ recreational interests; and broader life changes which reflect the interwoven nature of participants’ recreation-life experiences. The range of meanings held for the Clutha reflect not just participants’ recreational activity experiences, but also their family, work, cultural and place-based experiences which combine to frequently produce vivid memories and stories that simultaneously reproduce/recreate the events, people and river-places of their experiences. Placing these findings within the research contexts of place and recreation, the thesis makes a contribution through providing one of few empirical studies of the multiple and complex constructions of place meanings for rivers, recreation experiences and their changing nature. The study challenges some of the long-held approaches to understanding recreation experience meanings especially in the context of rivers, through framing them as places rather than settings. It also lends support to the more recent and critical approaches to the importance of understanding place and place-making from a pluralistic position when conceiving human experience and meaning. Finally, it adds to the very slim body of river-recreation research specific to New Zealand and its uniquely Pākehā and Māori cultural context.
Preface

I would like to fully acknowledge and give my heartfelt thanks Dr Tara Duncan (Department of Tourism) and Professor Etienne Nel (Department of Geography), my supervisors, who have guided, encouraged and shared this PhD journey with me over the last three enjoyable years. Without their positive input, patience and creativity this thesis would undoubtedly have taken a different form and would have been considerably less than it is.

I would also like to thank all of the participants (both formal and informal) who helped create this thesis and who all gave freely of their time, memories and emotions which I hope I have done justice to.

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Special thanks and love go to Trudie Walters for her support, journey sharing and keeping my chin up; to Linda and Helen Dunn for their personal friendship, tremendous support and love, and regular feeding; and to Gadsby – who slept through most of it.

This thesis is dedicated with love to my parents Pauline and Derek Farminer, who have always supported me as only loving parents can do, in many ways and through many, often distant adventures, even if they did not seem sensible at the time.

“Attraversiamo!”
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Glossary of Māori terms used in the text

(Please note: the terms list here are accompanied by their most common English translations. However, such translations rarely reflect the complexity and multiplicity of meaning in Māori words, which can vary by regional and iwi dialect and customs (tikanga).

Aotearoa – New Zealand
Hangi – Oven pits
Hapū – Sub-tribe
Hikōi – Journey/trek
Iwi - Tribe
Kai – Food
Kaika - Campsites
Kāi Tahu Ki Otago – Iwi of the South Island/Otago region (comprising Waitaha, Kati Mamoe, Kai Tahu)
Kaitiaki - Guardian
Kaupapa Māori – Knowledge conceptualised in a Māori cultural world view
Mahinga kai – Food gathering
Māori – Indigenous peoples of New Zealand/Aotearoa
Mauri – Life force
Mihiki/Mogihi – reed raft
Ngāi Tahu – Main tribe of the South Island
Pākehā – European descended New Zealanders
Pounamu – Greenstone/jade
Rohe – Area (tribal)
Runanga – Elders/Councillors
Tangata whenua - People of the land (indigenous peoples of New Zealand/Aotearoa)
Taniwha – Water spirit, demon, chief
Taonga – Treasure, property
Tauranga waka – Landing places
Te Tiriti O Waitangi – Treaty of Waitangi
Te Wai Pounamu – South Island of New Zealand
Tīkanga – Lore (traditional knowledge/customs)
Tūpuna - Ancestors
Tūrangawaewae - A place where one has undisputed rights through ancestral delegation
Urupā – Burial places
Wai Māori – Freshwater
Wai mate – ‘dead’ water
Waiata tangi - Traditional songs of lament
Whakapapa – Genealogy/ancestry
Whānau – Family (often extended)
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING PLACE INTO RIVER AND RECREATION RESEARCH – UNDERSTANDING THE CLUTHA RIVER/MATA-AU: THROUGH PEOPLE’S RECREATION AND PLACE RELATIONSHIPS

1.1 Introducing Chapter One and the Thesis

Rivers are sites of multiple meanings and values – economic, political and socio-cultural – that have been shaped, claimed and contested into the present. In particular, the freshwater values that rivers represent have strongly dictated how people-river relationships are understood and valued, primarily through western, utilitarian economic frameworks which abstract and simplify rivers into unitary values and in doing so, overlook the complexities and richness that these relationships have to offer. Therefore, understanding the multitude of dynamic, complex, and often contested meanings held for rivers by people is a challenging task and one that this thesis contributes to by exploring the processes of how such meaningful relationships are created and have changed over time. This challenge is further complicated by the immense diversity of conceptualisations, cultural understandings and contexts which frame any such inquiry, and is also the very personal and subjective nature of how and why some people hold meanings for rivers. Add to this the temporal, dynamic and place dimensions that continue to produce new meanings and change existing meanings for rivers and the task of understanding becomes immense.

However, one way of addressing this challenge and gaining fresh insights into the people-river meaning relationship has been through selecting an in-route or gateway ‘theme’ through which a selection of these multiple meanings can be framed and explored in depth. This thesis has achieved this by focusing on the recreational experiences of a heterogeneous group of participants along the Clutha River/Mata-au in Otago, New Zealand to understand how their meanings for the Clutha have been created, shaped and changed over time. In order to understand, situate and contextualise

1 Since 1998 the Clutha River has had a dual name - the Clutha River/Mata-au, reflecting its Māori ancestry as required under the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (NZLII 2012). The river is most commonly referred to, and identifiable as the Clutha River and this name has been adopted throughout this study, with no disrespect intended to its formal dual name. The reader is also referred to the list of Māori terms used throughout this thesis situated on pages xiii-xiv.

2 Throughout this study Clutha River and the Clutha are used identically and interchangeably reflecting both the study participants’ and local customary ways of referencing the river.
these recreational meanings for the river, the broader place and experience meanings of participants have been examined in detail in parallel. Hence the results of the thesis reflect both these broader and recreational meanings in tandem. At the same time, the thesis also uses the conceptual lens of place to frame these meanings in terms of recreation-place relationships in order to provide a broader theoretical context within which to understand participants’ meanings for the Clutha River. The dynamic and temporal dimensions of these meanings are addressed through taking a time-depth approach to the participants’ recreational experiences over the course of their lives, so their earliest experiences and meanings for the Clutha can be reflected upon within the context of their present meanings. A range of relevant but interdisciplinary literatures from the fields of geography, recreation, leisure, tourism and river management are used to contextualise, contrast and bring greater insight to the conceptualisation and findings of the thesis. Overall the thesis argues and then demonstrates that place, simultaneously with time, is an integral element in both the broader creation of meanings for the Clutha River and the meanings of recreational experiences for people on the Clutha, and in influencing meaning change and consequently people-place relationships.

1.1.1 Purpose and structure of Chapter One

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a succinct overview of the following areas and is structured accordingly:

- **Part I**: the research contexts of the study – rivers, recreation and place;
- The research inquiry driving the study – the research questions;
- **Part II**: the fieldwork context of the study – the Clutha River – and the dominant discourses that have framed popular meanings for the river and the current study;
- The plan of the thesis.

Throughout the thesis the reader is referred to *Map 1 - Field Research Area*, situated at the end of the thesis. This is a map of the field research area which details all of the Clutha River locations discussed in this research. It has been designed so that the map may remain unfolded and easily referenced when reading through the thesis.
1.2 Part I: Research Contexts

As Figure 1.1 indicates, the research contexts of this study are situated within concepts of how rivers are valued and consequently framed, concurrent with recreation and place concepts. By examining these often intersecting and sometimes conflicting contexts so the key issues pertaining to people and river relationships have been identified and addressed in this thesis. The following section provides an overview of each of these contexts including a discussion of some of the identified ‘gaps’ in their research literature that have influenced the nature of the study both conceptually and methodologically. These contexts are further developed into a conceptual framework, presented in Chapter Two.

1.1: The research contexts of the study

1.2.1 Rivers: their valuation and framing

Rivers have been an important nexus for human development and expansion since our earliest beginnings. Providing the life-sustaining resource of fresh water, along with food sources, natural materials, water for irrigation and drainage, transport corridors, and foci for settlement and exploration, rivers and humans together form part of the global ecosystem (Buttimer 1985; Postel and Richter 2003). As human society has developed so its relationship with rivers has also changed; at times it is the river that has claimed its dominance during periods of flood and catastrophe. However, as the technological and economic sophistication of many societies has intensified, increasingly it is humankind that has dominated the river – diverting and channelling courses, building dams, extracting water, polluting and, in more recent times, effecting flow controls that would have seemed impossible to our early ancestors (Collier et al. 1996; Postel and Richter 2003). But the human-river relationship has not been all ‘business’; the spiritual, emotional and social-
cultural relationship with rivers has long been recognised through histories, diverse cultural and religious beliefs, aesthetic appreciation and more recently as a result of burgeoning leisure and recreational time and the growth of tourism (Postel and Richter 2003; Prideaux and Cooper 2009; Stokowski 2008). Rivers are not just providers of essential resources and spiritual inspiration, but are also places of meaning – of people, experiences, events, homes, livelihoods, symbols and identity markers that have multiple meanings and values for a vast array of peoples (Davenport and Anderson 2005; McCool et al. 2008; Stokowski 2008).

However, the recognition and consequent valuation of these diverse and dynamic meanings continues to be a subject of debate at many levels: local, regional, national and global, and falls within the even broader debate of our world ecosystem sustainability (Costanza and Farber 2002; O’Neill et al. 2008). The key point of this continuing debate is that current mainstream economic approaches such as (utilitarian) neoclassical welfare theory, are increasingly in conflict with the growing ecological economics movement that seeks to create a new economic paradigm based on an ecosystem approach (Spash 1999). Characteristic elements of neoclassical economics such as the commodification and maximisation of individual resources are considered largely at odds with the systemic or ‘whole-system’ approach and finite availability of resources that ecological economics pursues (Spash 1999). Another part of this debate rests on the acceptance in neoclassical economic theory of value commensurability - that there is a standard metric of value - which is established through money although, as O’Neill et al. (2008: p.78) point out, money is not necessarily a value in itself as some (mistakenly) believe but the ‘universal measuring rod’ of value. This concept is the foundation on which the majority of our current economic valuation and appraisal systems are based, including those that seek to value non-market goods and services such as those produced by the ecosystem; for example, production of the air we breathe and the provision of outdoor spaces such as rivers for recreation.

Within this global debate however, there is dispute over the appropriate approach to adopt when valuing these ecosystem goods and services which has yet to be resolved. It is observable that there remains a strong focus on the commodification approach to these and the valuation of more tangible benefits despite calls for a more evaluative and ethical approach (Spash 1999; O’Neill et al. 2008).

---

3 For example: cost-benefit analysis (CBA) and Total Economic Value (TEV) methodologies (Edwards-Jones et al. 2000).

4 For example see Costanza et al.’s (1998) controversial paper on The value of the world’s ecosystem services and natural capital which attempted a valuation of exactly this.
2008). The reliance on a monetary measure of value to ascertain the worth of non-market ecosystem services and particularly less tangible, socio-cultural aspects of these services, such as river and recreational meanings appears inequitable at best and problematical at worst. As Steenstra (2009: p.4) commented in her recent work on the integration of indigenous cultural values in water resource management approaches: 'The application of monetary reductionism to cultural and non-monetary aspects of water is arbitrary and the emphasis of economics on markets and prices is naive and simplistic...'. Similarly, Šunde (2009: p.353), discussing the management of the Whanganui River on the North Island of New Zealand, stated that:

‘Resource management and utilitarian views of water in New Zealand (and other countries) have been dominated by the reductionist approach. However, from an ecological perspective, reductionist explanations are inadequate because the Whanganui River is not simply a collection of parts...but is a complex system, and indeed, a living whole.’

Existing non-economic valuation and assessment methodologies (such as Non-Market Valuation (NMV)) are naturally subject-specific and have developed in accordance with the needs of different disciplines (e.g. ecology, hydrology, recreation, cultural heritage). However, an over-arching criticism of these approaches is the constancy of their evaluative criteria (how the individual attributes are scored) and the transparency of the overall value decision which often, in the final stages of assessment, requires a significant proportion of subjective or expert opinion\(^5\) (Edwards-Jones et al. 2000). It is this subjective and expert opinion that requires academic and industry research to support and develop the understandings of values for places such as rivers and the meanings that they hold which shape such values.

Traditionally rivers have been studied primarily in terms of their geographical, hydrological and ecological qualities but since the late 1970s they have been the subject of increasing interest from recreation planners and managers and latterly tourism researchers (USDA Forest Service 1977; Allan and Booth 1992; Prideaux and Cooper 2009). For example, the comparatively late development of academic research into river tourism was highlighted by Prideaux and Cooper (2009: p.1-2) in their opening chapter, which stated that ‘...this book represent(s) the first serious attempt to develop a coherent body of work that examines aspects of river-based tourism...’. Further on they suggested:

\(^5\) See Chapter Two, Section 2.3.4 for a New Zealand example: RiVAS – River Values Assessment System, a methodology developed for assessing specific river values such as angling, kayaking and wildlife values.
‘...it is apparent that rivers are an important but surprisingly neglected aspect of the global tourism industry. Yet rivers form the basis for many of the ecosystems that underpin ecotourism and other recreational activities, in addition to providing water to sustain urban growth, farming,...viticulture and the transport of goods and people.’ (ibid.: p.2)

This human-river relationship has been predominantly characterised by the nature and extent of the impacts of human activity on river ecosystems, focusing upon the internationally contentious issue of water management for both ecosystem functions, freshwater supply and power generation needs. Rivers are a geopolitical focal point for this debate, literally flowing through the interface between ecosystems, human water needs and hydroelectric power generation (Bakker 2011; Strang 2004). Across the world but especially in North America, China, the African continent, Australia and New Zealand, the battle between these three competing factors continues to challenge water managers and scientists alike; the considerably smaller, but not necessarily insignificant needs of recreation sits firmly within this power triangle. Poff et al. (2003) and Pflüger et al. (2010) both highlighted this competition, Poff et al. (2003: p.302) stressing the need to take a river ecosystem-wide perspective with more informed approaches including ‘social science knowledge about human values, perceptions, behaviours...integrated into the science that guides river management’. Pflüger et al. (2010: p.77) similarly emphasised that ‘sensible water allocation decisions require information about the socio-economic and environmental values of river flows’ and considered that such information, especially for ‘recreational and aesthetic purposes...are particularly scarce...’.

Recent work by Hillman (2009: p.1989), which included case studies from Australia and New Zealand rivers, highlighted the importance and continuing need for movement towards an integrated river management knowledge approach that drew together ‘social and biophysical dimensions into catchment-scale river management’. He also noted the importance of participation in gathering such knowledge, emphasising the need to understand communities and groups connected to the river ‘and in particular understand the contribution of its knowledge and values to planning and decision-making’ (2009: p.2009). Hillman concluded (ibid.; my emphasis):

‘The ongoing emphasis on ‘getting people to participate’ in pre-determined institutional structures, is itself indicative of an engineering mindset in the social dimensions of river management.’
It is this tension between understanding the values and meanings of rivers for these communities and groups, as opposed to their participation in pre-determined assessment frameworks that lies at the core of the research context of this thesis and rivers: their valuation and framing.

Closely tied to this issue are the regulatory frameworks for managing rivers and outdoor recreation that are directly informed by the values defined through such valuation approaches and which, as a consequence, frame our conceptualisations of what rivers and recreation mean. Referring back to Hillman’s comment about the predetermined institutional structures, or framed here as river management frameworks, the underlying values (or institutional meanings) are considered to already be embedded within such frameworks. A result of this is that no matter what the extent of participatory or inclusive approaches to address these values/meanings are, they are already decided to all intents. This is not to imply that the many community or interest group consultations undertaken by local government councils worldwide and particularly here in New Zealand are merely window dressing but that there is a fundamental flaw in how we generate and frame river (and broader socio-cultural) values in the current utilitarian economics-driven paradigm.

To illustrate this, in 2011 I participated as an observer in a series of river flow workshops hosted by Otago Regional Council to consult the local community on the desirable flow levels of the Waikouaiti River, situated north of Dunedin. Many values were discussed and raised - including recreation, irrigation, drinking water, Māori values, ecology and wildlife. What struck me during and at the end of the consultation process was that the range of flow levels for the river had already been ascertained by the river scientists, which were presented to the workshop to decide upon. Expert advice was provided on the flows necessary to sustain various levels of biological and ecological systems in the river with recommendations about the most desirable ones. It also struck me that the considerable list of meanings and values for the river and places along the river, raised and presented by the community consultees for the Waikouaiti River had no tangible means of connecting to the flow values on offer. I was left with the strong impression that each group was expressing their meanings for the river in different languages: one the language of science (economics) and one the language of meaning and place. With the current dominance of institutional framings for understanding and valuing rivers and recreation how can ‘other’ meanings

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6 See Chapter Two, Sections 2.3.4 and 2.3.5 for a detailed discussion of this topic.
7 Located on the south east coast of the South Island, NZ. For information on the consultation project see also http://www.orc.govt.nz/Documents/Publications/Regional/Water/minimum%20flow/Waikouaiti/Key%20themes%20from%20Workshop%202.pdf.
be understood, acknowledged and represented, particularly in respect of those people and their recreation meanings who do not necessarily fall within the accepted scope of current river recreation frameworks. This gap is explored and addressed in this thesis.

1.2.2 Recreation and place

In the last decade or so there have been a considerable volume of publications which have stressed the increasing importance of place, sense of place and place-based planning in recreation research (see Chapter Two, Section 2.4 for a detailed discussion of this literature). This reflects a broader trope of place in the many fields of geography, particularly cultural and social geography (Cresswell 2004). However, within this general place turn and particularly in outdoor recreation research, there has been little empirical research undertaken to explore, characterise and truly understand the relevance and assumed importance of place to people in their recreation ‘lives’. Equally the intersecting nature of place, recreation and peoples’ broader life experiences has received little attention (Kruger et al. 2008).

A relevant observation made by Goodson and Phillimore (2004: p.39-40; my emphasis) in the related context of tourism can, I suggest, be equally applied to the context of rivers and recreation research:

‘Given that tourism spaces are not physically but socially constructed, it is important to consider how the meaning[s] relating to those spaces are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed over time... the tendency in tourism research has been to focus on the tangible, and arguably the ‘objective’ and readily measurable interrelationships and interdependencies between people and places, frequently from an economics marketing and/or management perspective. A more person-focussed approach which takes account of the individual’s subjective experiences and perceptions and the roles these play in constructing the tourist...experience has so far received scant attention.’

As with tourism, I am arguing that recreation, specifically in outdoor contexts, has received equally scant attention in respect of the relationships between people, their recreation experiences and the creation of recreation and other places. The relevance of this gap to recreation and river contexts interconnects with the wider issue of the suggested dissonance in the assessment and valuation of natural environments (ecosystems and services) discussed in the previous section. Outdoor
recreation in general, and specifically along river corridors (so-called water and bank-based recreation), has traditionally been examined and framed in terms of its socio-economic values in the dominant utilitarian language of resource management (Stokowski 2008). Referring back to the previous discussion of valuation, the perceived imbalance in the recognition and assessment of river values (and meanings) beyond those accepted into mainstream economic valuation methodologies can be extended to recreation-related values and meanings. This can be further problematised by the additional dimension of peoples’ broader life experience meanings and place-making practices that frequently intersect with their recreational meanings. Brought together, these are points of discussion that do not appear to have been specifically addressed in recent or current recreation literature; the main debate focusing upon broader issues of water and recreation management (cf. Steenstra 2009; Stokowski 2008; Šunde 2009; Tipa 2009; Williams 2006). If place meanings are brought into the debate of valuation, then they further complicate and question a system of valuing that already struggles to cope with accepted ‘intangible’ values, such as generically assessed cultural and social values (Stephenson 2008).

Within the broader outdoor environment valuation context there has been considerable research focus given to developing assessment methodologies for many different aspects of the natural environment, ranging from broad, market-economy valuations of natural resources and non-market valuations (NMV) of natural sites, resources, and leisure and recreation activities through to ecological assessments, biodiversity significance assessments, conservation value assessments and cultural heritage assessments (Broadhurst 2001; Tribe 2004). In terms of outdoor recreation, NMV methodologies sit alongside accepted market valuation methods as the dominant economic approaches to valuing outdoor recreation activities and locations which do not have a ready market price (Tribe 2004). Methodologies for valuing the non-economic aspects of outdoor recreation, such as social, cultural and material aspects are based on a range of individually developed, mainly ordinal scale-based assessment methods that provide standardised value ‘scores’ capable of commensuration and integration into larger assessment frameworks (for example, TEV – Total Economic Value; Broadhurst 2001).

Before reconciliation of both the fundamental bases of value (which I suggest is interwoven with meaning) and the valuation methods for rivers and outdoor recreation – if that is either possible or

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8 Refer again to the RiVAS valuation methodology developed for New Zealand rivers; Chapter Two, Section 2.3.4.
desirable – a level of understanding needs to be achieved that would appear to be currently lacking. This thesis seeks to provide such an understanding (or more appropriately understandings) by exploring and examining the meanings people hold for rivers through their recreational experiences, built upon an inclusive place-based conceptual framework, capable of exploring, recognising and acknowledging the many different ways people see and ‘make places’ through their diverse life experiences and personal socio-cultural lenses. Therefore this need for a fresh understanding is at the core of my second research context: recreation and place.

1.3 Framing the Study: Research Questions

The three research questions outlined in this section have influenced and shaped the research framework structuring this thesis in a number of ways. Each main question generated its own raft of further questions which were refined and streamlined to arrive at a research project which could be implemented and reported on within the parameters of a doctoral study. Each question also informed the methodology of the research, whether culminating in a response to an identified issue (for example, using a qualitative methodology to understand people’s meanings or respond to the lack of grounded, situated empirical research in outdoor recreation) or whether resulting in the method to explore that question (for example, interviewing recreationists to discuss their different perspectives). Consequently, the original set of research questions underwent a reiterative process during the study period, reflecting the development of my own thoughts about the project and as an inductive reflection of the information generated from the field research.

1.3.1 Research questions

The following questions frame this study:

1. What are people’s recreation experiences and place meanings for the Clutha River and how do they describe and understand them?

2. How are meanings created and expressed by people through their broader Clutha River and recreational place-experiences and have these changed with time?

3. How have these recreational (and broader) place-experiences contributed to making places on the Clutha River and the concept of the river itself?
Through actualising these research questions, the overall aim of the thesis has been to generate a qualitative and empirically grounded example of recreation-place relationships in tangent with their broader, life-experience meaning perspectives, set within the real-world context of the Clutha River, and capable of informing both New Zealand and international recreation and geography research fields about rivers and place-meanings. This has been achieved in several ways:

- The development of a pluralistic conceptual framework through which to research place, rivers and recreation that acknowledges the many ways of understanding these dynamic and temporal concepts (Chapter Two).

- A research methodology that encourages diversity, heterogeneity and creative expression (e.g. stories) in its generation of empirical knowledge to capture and understand people’s meanings for rivers and recreation (Chapter Three).

- A field research methodology that takes a whole-river approach to understanding people’s meanings of rivers, recreation and place through an interpretive, qualitative methodology that has consciously strived to explore the multiplicity, indigeneity and cultural qualities of river knowledges (Chapter Three).

- An analysis methodology centred on theming and networking participants’ meanings that allows a detailed and visual analysis of the Clutha River data which has been extended to the international contexts of the study (Chapters Four to Seven).

- A contextualised discussion of the relevance of the study findings which reconnects the conceptual framework literature and research analysis with the research contexts of rivers: their value and framing, and recreation and place (Chapters Four to Seven).

The thesis makes an additional methodological contribution to the study of rivers, recreation and place through employing and adapting a thematic analysis and networks approach to analysing and presenting the empirical information. With the exception of one identified river place-meanings study which did not specifically look at recreation-place relationships or acknowledge its methodology specifically (see Davenport and Anderson 2005), no other studies globally have been identified to date which use this approach to understand this concept. It is hoped that by presenting a detailed explanation of the study methodology in Chapter Three, other researchers can
benefit from the reflections and advantages of using this methodology in both river-recreation-place research and across other social science-based fields.

1.4 Part II: The Clutha River, Otago, New Zealand

The second half of this chapter provides an outline of the geographic focus of the study – the Clutha River - which provided the sociocultural and geopolitical contexts for the research. Rather than provide a typical linear historical synthesis of the river (which is itself compiled from a (mixed) subjective position which is rarely acknowledged), I have identified several main historical discourses (or themes) from the available literature through which its character, history and significant events have been presented and perceived. These discourses or themes are defined as the:

- Big river
- Māori river
- Golden river
- Deadly river
- River of power

In addressing the various discourses of the Clutha River (used here in a general sense but acknowledging its ever-present interpretive/analytical ‘edge’ and my subject position nonetheless), its aim is to provide a contextual grounding for the study within which the participant interviews, their analysis and my interpretations can be situated. As such, this section does not attempt a comprehensive and linear ‘history’ of the Clutha (as noted), but instead takes a brief overview of each key or dominant discourse sufficient to inform the reader. The discourses presented are based upon my (informal) assessment of the diverse historical sources for the river and their repeated themes. They are not intended, however, to act as a detailed discourse analysis but to simply provide an alternative way of presenting an historical synthesis in line with the broader thematic methodological approach taken throughout this study (see Chapter Three for the study methodology).

Figure 1.2 illustrates the general location of the Clutha River and the main settlements along its course.

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9 The reader is referred to Map 1 at the rear of this thesis for more information on the geographical situation of the Clutha River and the fieldwork area of the study.
Figure 1.2: The Clutha River, Otago, New Zealand (Source: McKinnon 2011; Te Ara 2012. Note: the blue line on map is the Clutha River)
1.4.1 Discourses of the Clutha River

The big river

This discourse represents the factual (or scientific) information for the river that positions it as the largest river with the largest catchment in New Zealand. As Figure 1.2 illustrates the Clutha flows in a south-easterly direction from the outlet of Lake Wanaka in the Southern Alps across the Otago Region to a dual outlet southeast of Balclutha (forming a delta), before discharging into the Pacific Ocean at Molyneux Bay. Below Balclutha the northern branch of the Clutha River is named the Matau and the southern branch the Koau. Within the Otago region, the river crosses three district council boundaries: Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC), Central Otago District Council (CODC) and Clutha District Council (CDC). Overall management is guided by the Otago Regional Council (ORC).

The Clutha River is 338km long, making it the second longest river in New Zealand after the Waikato River on the North Island, but is the largest river by flow volume (almost double the Waikato) and the fastest at 614 cubic metres per second (cumecs) mean flow at its mouth (NIWA 2005). The typical flow pattern of the river between 1955 to 1986 was for flow peaks in November and December with an average flow of 570 cumecs; a low flow of 268 cumecs; and a flood flow of 1730 cumecs (MfE 2012).

The catchment of the river covers approximately 2,058,000 hectares (over 13% of the South Island) and its main tributaries are the Hawea, Cardrona, Kawarau, Lindis, Manuherikia, Tuapeka, Waitahuna and Pomahaka rivers (ORC 2012). The river is commonly divided into the Upper Clutha and Lower Clutha regions or catchments. The largest communities along the river are situated at Wanaka, Cromwell, Clyde, Alexandra, Roxburgh, Beaumont, Clydevale,

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10 The Clutha River was originally named the **Molyneux River** after one of the early surveyors of the area (not James Cook as usually cited) and subsequently re-named the **Clutha** (meaning *Clyde* in Gaelic; a Scottish river) by the early Scottish settlers of Dunedin and Otago (McKinnon 2010).
Balclutha and Kaitangata (see Figure 1.2).

Flooding has been an issue since the Otago region was settled by migrants from the 1840s onwards with two major floods in 1878 and 1978 which did substantial damage to settlements, particularly in the lower catchment of the river (Figure 1.3). Although not entirely immune to flooding, the Upper Clutha catchment has a considerable degree of natural flood protection, being set within substantial glacial terraces and gorges; however the lower catchment has little natural flood defence being extensively low lying (Lonie 1984). The lower course of the Clutha on the Balclutha/Inchclutha reach is heavily defended against flooding with stop banks that have raised the river bank up to 3 metres in height in sections which has resulted in the river bed height also rising in places (Goldsmith 2012).

The discourse of the Clutha River as The big river suggests a formidable natural force substantiated by scientific data that is monitored and controlled to a degree but which on occasion defies this control with devastating results. In particular the Lower Clutha section is represented as being under constant threat from the river and is an issue that must be addressed in council plans (cf. Goldsmith 2012). The factual data creating the discourse of The big river concept could be interpreted as perhaps ‘representing’ a broader discourse of the river which reinforces the idea of the Clutha as being an endless source of water (and power) supply and a sink for waste products but which, conversely, is simultaneously acknowledged as being vulnerable to pollution and over-allocation of its water.

A Māori River – the Mata-au

There are many Māori stories for the Clutha River/Matau-Au but one in particular provides a sense of their deep understanding of the river. The story goes:

‘In the Māori legend Te Pūrākau mo Kopuwai, the monster [or taniwha] Kopuwai, the water swallower, attempted to recapture his prisoner, a young Māori woman, who had built a mihiki (reed raft) and escaped down the Clutha River. Kopuwai sucked up all of the water in the river but Lake Wakatipu replenished its flow...and his captive escaped.’(Bagge 2002: p.2)

The significance of this story links directly to the Māori name of the Clutha – the Mata-au – whose common translation into English is a current or eddy in an expanse of water\(^\text{11}\) (Reed 1975). To

\(^{11}\) For an alternative, participant perspective of the meanings of Mata-au see Chapter Six, Section 6.2.1.
illustrate the importance of the river to the dominant iwi (tribe) of Otago, Ngāi Tahu, the following extended extract from the *Kāi Tahu Ki Otago Natural Resource Management Plan* (KTKO 2005: p.192) explains their relationship (past and present) with the Mata-au:

‘The Mata-au river takes its name from a Ngāi Tahu whakapapa [ancestry] that traces the genealogy of water. On that basis, the Mata-au is seen as a descendant of the creation traditions. For Ngāi Tahu, traditions such as this represent the links between the cosmological world of the gods and present generations, these histories reinforce tribal identity and solidarity, and continuity between generations, and document the events which shaped the environment of Te Wai Pounamu [South Island] and Ngāi Tahu as an iwi.

On another level, the Mata-au was part of a mahinga kai [food gathering] trail that led inland and was used by Ōtākou hapū [sub-tribes] including Ngati Kuri, Ngati Ruahikihiki, Ngati Huirapa and Ngāi Tuahuriri. The tūpuna [ancestors] had considerable knowledge of whakapapa, traditional trails and tauranga waka [landing places], places for gathering kai [food] and other taonga [treasures], ways in which to use the resources of the river, the relationship of people with the river and their dependence on it, and tikanga [customs] for the proper and sustainable utilisation of resources. All of these values remain important to Ngāi Tahu today.’

The Clutha River/Mata-au formed part of a network of routes that linked the coastal areas of the South Island with the inland valleys, plains and mountains, that allowed iwi access to many kinds of food sources and other resources such as pounamu (greenstone, jade) which was traded amongst iwi and later on, with European settlers (KTKO 2005). The headwaters of the river and its catchment ‘were the traditional focus of seasonal migrations for many of the hapū and whānau’ living in the Araiteuru and Murihiku areas (roughly Canterbury and Southland/Otago respectively; KTKO 2005: p.127). The knowledge of these traditional routes and places along the Clutha River/Mata-au is considered to be a taonga or treasure by current hapū as not only are some of the traditional mahinga kai locations still used but stories of their tūpuna and locations of their urupā (burial places) are maintained through retracing the trails on hikōi (journeys) and the re-telling of their stories to whānau (KTKO 2005).
The archaeological evidence for pre-European Polynesian/Māori activity along the Clutha River/Mata-au ranges is mainly represented by temporary, seasonal sites, interpreted as hunting camps or food processing sites where the remains of moa, ducks and eels were found. The earliest sites along the river in the Central Otago region dated from approximately 1200-1500AD after which they declined (possibly as a result of the moa extinction; MWD 1985). Two typical Māori site types in the Upper Clutha area included rock shelters with oven pits (or hangi) and moa cooking oven pits with evidence of stone implements used for processing food accompanying them (MWD 1985; Figure 1.4). A third type - stone quarries for tools – were found at Tiger Hills (north of Alexandra) and Coal Creek (near Roxburgh). Based on current archaeological evidence, the Upper and Central Otago areas of the Clutha River/Mata-au appear to have been little used after about 1500AD until European settlers began making in-roads into the interior of the South Island in the mid-19th Century (SPAR 2010). However, although the traditional Māori stories associated with the Clutha are difficult to date, they are a record of activities that may have extended well into this period so the idea of the ‘empty’ interior may reflect the poor survival of archaeological evidence rather than an actual absence.

The discourse of the Māori Clutha River/Mata-au suggests a river that has cosmological, customary and subsistence significance and which has been interacted with for over a thousand years. The discourse also points to a less visible presence of Māori along the Clutha compared with the later historic period of European use and settlement which left tangible remains in the form of towns, houses and industrial workings. To Māori, the discourse is a very tangible one that remains embodied and symbolic to iwi in the present and into the future, but for Pakēha the intangible discourse appears less evident (see KTKO 2005).

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12 A group (of eleven species) of very large, flightless bird endemic to New Zealand which became extinct about 1400AD. Their rapid extinction is generally associated with the arrival of Polynesian settlers to New Zealand through over-hunting and habitat change (Holdaway and Jacomb 2000).
The golden river

The Clutha river as The golden river is not just a metaphorical reference but a literal discourse of the gold first discovered at Gabriels Gully (modern Lawrence) in 1861, then along the Clutha River between Roxburgh and Cromwell in 1862 and the subsequent ‘gold rush’ that succeeded it (Murray and Murray 1977; SPAR 2010). The development of the Central Otago goldfields focused on either side of the river, was not only significant in itself but is credited for the establishment and settlement of Otago through the people, wealth and technology it attracted (Connell 1998; Figure 1.5). Towns such as Queenstown, Arrowtown, Cromwell, Clyde and Alexandra were established and flourished as supply towns to the goldfields and the miners who came and went, the goldfields eventually waning by 1890. Dunedin, as the main port to the goldfields, also benefitted from the people and supply traffic that passed through its doors although it too began to wane after the 1890s (Connell 1998).
Gold mining and particularly dredging created dramatic physical impacts on the Clutha’s banks and its environs, recorded in archive photographs, archaeological remains visible on the banks and along the small valleys leading into the river, and in the often extensive tailings left by dredging the river (McLean 2010; Figure 1.6). The Earnscleugh tailings along the bank of the Clutha at Alexandra are a ‘classic’ example of the reconstructive forces of gold dredging that impacted the river in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. It is interesting that although acknowledged in the historical accounts of gold dredging along the Clutha, it is seldom that the extent and deep impact of the physical changes left by the workings are brought into other discourses such as their impact on Māori sites, and the scientific discourse (e.g. ecological impacts).

Another element of the discourse of The golden river is the domination of European settlers in the representation of the goldfields with often only an historical ‘nod’ to the substantial numbers of Chinese gold miners that were also vital in developing the goldfields (Figure 1.7). At its peak between 1873 and 1885, there were estimated to be up to 5,000 Chinese gold miners in Otago, 40% of the total number of miners in the fields, and who were responsible for 30% of its gold output (Ng 2003). It is only recently that academic research has been accelerated on the role, influence and extent of the Chinese presence in the Otago goldfields, which has been considerably broadened by the archaeological record derived mainly from the excavations undertaken prior to the construction of the Clyde Dam in the 1970s and 1980s (MWD 1985; Ng 2003; Ritchie 2003).
The golden river discourse continues in the present Clutha River in another form - as a heritage and tourism destination where the goldfield history and archaeology of the 19th and 20th Centuries is blended with the internationally famed Central Otago wineries and vineyards. Many of these lie along the Clutha valley and take their name and brand from the various goldfields and mining iconography (e.g. Three Miners, Quartz Reef and Kawarau Estate; Carpenter 2012; Figure 1.8). As Carpenter (2012) notes, this combination of gold mining history, nostalgia and wine-branding provides a romantic and unproblematic image or discourse of the goldfields – ‘the past without pain’ – which fuses place and nostalgia to market wines and reinvent history.

Another facet of this ‘golden’ discourse that could be suggested is the romanticism of the Lonely Graves Historic Reserve at Millers Flat on the east side of the river (see Figure 1.9 overleaf). According to the traditional story, the body of an unknown man, thought to be a miner who drowned in the Clutha River around 1865, was buried by a local man at a remote site with a wooden headboard that read ‘Somebody’s darling lies buried here’; in 1912 the local man, named William Rigney, also died and was buried next to the grave (McKinnon 2011). Although often quoted as symbolic of the dangers that mining on the river held (the site lay within the area of the Horseshoe Bend goldfield), it is the romanticism that the story has acquired (and its recognition through designation as a Historic Reserve by the Department of Conservation) which has been actively drawn into the area’s folklore.\textsuperscript{13}

Overall the discourse of The golden river suggests a river that has had historical, archaeological, social and particularly economic significance for the Otago Region since the mid-19th Century. It is a discourse that weaves many threads but which has also obscured some (e.g. the Chinese miners) that are only now just beginning to be made visible. The Clutha River was essential to the existence of the whole discourse of the gold rush and subsequent gold mining and dredging and yet in

\textsuperscript{13} Epitomised by the Central Otago tourism site in their suggestion that ‘the Lonely Graves remain stirring monuments to the spirit and humanity of Central Otago gold miners’ (see http://www.centralotagonz.com/loneyly-graves; accessed 1\textsuperscript{st} October 2012), in spite of the recorded high crime rates and general violence in the fields in the 1860s.
reviewing the historic sources, so often the river is simply unacknowledged or merely a setting for the social and economic worlds that played out in Otago in that period. The Clutha River runs throughout the discourse but it is the human stories and their consequences that carry *The golden river* into a present discourse of goldfield heritage and tourism.

*The deadly river*

Today the Clutha has lost all of its larger rapids (for example the Cromwell Gap rapid and the Golden Falls and Molyneux Falls rapids in the Roxburgh Gorge) through the construction of two dams and their reservoirs at Roxburgh and Clyde which flooded them. Pre-dam the Clutha was a formidable river to both navigate and traverse, and some of the earliest activities of European settlers were to place boats or punts along the river, and construct cableways across the river to allow access to both sides of the valley (SPAR 2010). Māori peoples traditionally navigated the river in reed rafts called *mokihi* (or *mogihi*) and utilised a natural crossing point – a rock ‘bridge’ – over the Kawarau River\(^\text{14}\) between what became the European settlements of Queenstown and Cromwell (KTKO 2005). Although there do not appear to be any official statistics for the loss of life in the river, the historical discourse refers to a considerable loss of life from the earliest days of the European opening up of the interior of Otago, the gold rush and particularly the later 19\(^{\text{th}}\) Century gold dredging period when drownings and flooding were common (McSaveney 2009).

Returning to the Lonely Graves story, it also belongs to *The deadly river* discourse (the drowned man was actually thought to be a local butcher who drowned while taking his cattle across the river; Figure 1.9) and is used to highlight the force and deadliness of the water in the Clutha and its unpredictability. Deaths in the river have not just been part of the

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\(^{14}\) The main tributary of the Clutha River which flows from Lake Wakatipu at Queenstown through Gibbston Valley and the Kawarau Gorge to meet the river at Cromwell, known as ‘the meeting of the waters’; see Appendix D for photographs.
historical discourse of *The deadly river* with fatalities continuing into the present with latest death due to drowning recorded in 2011\(^{15}\) in the Lower Clutha section. The Clutha sustains a reputation for being a river that requires respect but when placed in its national river context does not appear any different to any other large New Zealand river, such as the Waikato, Buller and Waitaki\(^{16}\).

The discourse of *The deadly river* suggests a river that has taken its toll of human life since historical records began with the arrival of European settlement. The combination of early exploration, the gold rush and subsequent large-scale dredging of the Clutha has placed people in jeopardy and has contributed to the growth of the discourse. The substantial size and volume of the river also contributes to its continuing reputation as a river which requires respect.

*The river of power*

The discourse of the Clutha as *The river of power* really began in the late 19\(^{th}\) and early 20\(^{th}\) Centuries when the powerful flow of the river water was harnessed to drive the many gold dredges scattered along the length of the river from Wanaka to the Beaumont Gorge (Murray and Murray 1977). However the main phase of power generation – hydroelectric – began with the construction of the Roxburgh Dam and hydroelectric power station on the Clutha River, completed in 1956, which formed a reservoir behind the dam along the Roxburgh Gorge (Lake Roxburgh; Figure 1.10). The construction of the concrete gravity dam and station not only formed the lake but also the small town associated with its construction, Lake Roxburgh Village which remains today. Due mainly to being built prior to the growth in environmental awareness and regulation in New Zealand and internationally, the Roxburgh Dam raised little controversy and has been accepted as part of the river’s landscape since the 1950s (Bagge 2002). The Roxburgh power

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\(^{16}\) For example, there were 27 river fatalities in 2011 of which I can attribute approximately 3 to the Clutha River (see [http://www.watersafe.org.nz/page.asp?page=179](http://www.watersafe.org.nz/page.asp?page=179)).
station is capable of producing up to 320 megawatts of power and is currently owned and operated by Contact Energy (Contact Energy 2012).

In the 1960s a new hydroelectric power scheme was proposed for the Clutha centred on the Upper Clutha between Clyde and Cromwell. Construction on the Clyde Dam began in 1977 amid huge controversy and protest\(^{17}\) and was completed in 1989 with a reservoir forming behind it (Lake Dunstan) by 1993 (Bagge 2002; Powell 1978; Figure 1.11). Lake Dunstan flooded the Cromwell Gorge between Clyde and the junction with the Kawarau River at Cromwell and formed a wide lake north of Cromwell inundating the former area of Lowburn and the lower end of the Kawarau River. The Clyde Dam is New Zealand’s largest concrete gravity dam, is capable of producing up to 432 megawatts of power, and is also currently owned and operated by Contact Energy (Contact Energy 2012).

The most recent proposals for further hydroelectric power generation schemes on the Clutha River, potentially on either the Upper or Lower Clutha by Contact Energy were placed on indefinite hold on 1\(^{st}\) May 2012, due to the forecasted poor economic outlook (ODT 2012).

\(^{17}\) In short, the Clyde Dam project was part of the incumbent New Zealand Government’s wider ‘Think Big’ scheme to grow jobs, power generation and industry which included exploring hydroelectric power on the Clutha River. The original scheme was for a network of up to seven dams on the Clutha and Kawarau Rivers but in the end only one was constructed, at Clyde, amid opposition that lasted over ten years at both local and national levels, incited by the loss of natural values, environmental damage and local businesses (Bagge 2002; Powell 1978). Paul Powell’s 1978 book *Who Killed the Clutha?* documented his and the protest movement’s struggles and ultimate failure against the NZ government led by Robert Muldoon.
Much has been written both in publications and online about the Clyde Dam and the recent investigations into further hydroelectric power generation on the Clutha River (see Bagge 2002; Powell 1978; Save the Clutha\textsuperscript{18} and Mighty Clutha\textsuperscript{19}). The dominant discourse of The river of power has swapped between a pro-dam position in the mid-20\textsuperscript{th} Century to an increasingly anti-dam position which came into its own in the 1970s-80s, reaching its apogee in the recent dam proposals (Figure 1.12).

1.4.2 The absent discourse(s) of the Clutha River?

It is interesting that there does not appear to be a substantial discourse for the Clutha River as a recreational river, unlike other rivers in New Zealand such as the Buller, Wanganui and Clarence Rivers (Mackay 1978). The construction of the Clutha as a recreational river lies far more in formal planning documents such as the district plans of the three district councils than from a wider, popular discourse of recreating on the river. And yet, as analysed and discussed in Chapters Four to Seven, the Clutha River has been, and continues to be used as a place for many kinds of recreation, but in my opinion, it is not an element that has been sufficiently strong to create and sustain its own discourse of recreation. Indeed it is noticeable that recreation does not even filter into the other dominant discourses of the river outlined above (except perhaps into the deadly river), in spite of its identified presence in more personal discourses of the river as discussed in this thesis.

Bringing these different discourses of the Clutha River together, it is fairly clear that the dominating theme for the river is one of resource, demonstrated through the many historical accounts of its powerful flow, rich gold deposits, natural food sources, and abundant supply of water for irrigation, themes that continue into the present day. Acknowledged within this theme of resource are more subtle threads recalling deaths in the river and adversity in harsh conditions. However, in the present these more subtle themes lack any strong representation of recreation (or tourism)

\textsuperscript{18} http://savetheclutha.blogspot.co.nz/
\textsuperscript{19} http://mightyclutha.blogspot.co.nz/
activities, with the result that every day and familiar recreational experiences on the Clutha have been largely obscured.

### 1.5 Outlining the Thesis

The following section outlines the form and structure of the thesis by providing a brief overview of each chapter and the key points they address. The chapters are designed to build, incrementally, on the contents of each other as they progress to the final chapter which summarises and maps the thesis and its findings. **Chapter One** has provided an introduction to the whole thesis by outlining the key research contexts framing the study: place and recreation in the context of rivers; it has also introduced the study focus, the Clutha River, and the prevailing discourses of the river. Also set within Chapter One are the research questions driving the study which have raised issues of how people understand and give meaning to their river recreational experiences, the wider meanings of their experiences and how (and if) these river recreational place-experience meanings contribute to making people’s places on the river and the river itself as a ‘place’.

**Chapter Two** will discuss the conceptual framing of the study by critically engaging with the literatures associated with *place*: sense of place, place meanings and place-making; the cultural values of rivers; and outdoor recreation and its associated sub-literature regarding rivers. Through exploring and reviewing the multiple concepts of place and recreation a research position has been argued for that adopts a pluralistic, multi-dimensional and fluid idea of place and how places are made, which has then been used to frame equally dynamic ideas of recreation on rivers and meaning creation.

**Chapter Three** then engages with the methodology of the study, firstly from an ontological and epistemological perspective and then from a methods perspective. The research philosophy underpinning the study is an interpretive one based upon a social constructivist ontology that also acknowledges concepts of Actor-Network Theory and critical realism, ultimately adopting a position of critical pluralism. The research methodology is based upon hermeneutic principles that see human speech and actions as ‘texts’ requiring interpretation through a reiterative and multi-subjective process of exploration. This hermeneutic position has then been integrated into the field research methods of semi-structured interviews and textual analysis using a thematic analysis network approach to provide a framework and interpretation of the participants’ meanings for their recreation experiences and the Clutha River.
Chapters Four to Seven present the detailed analysis and findings of the four thematic networks (or global themes) of the study. These are:

- **Knowing the Clutha** (Chapter Four) – which focuses on how participants have come to know and understand the river through their diverse life experiences and how they express their meanings for the river, its places and their experiences through a fundamental place-experience construct.

- **Clutha River Meanings** (Chapter Five) – which focuses on the broad range of meanings expressed for the river by participants both beyond and including some of their recreational place-experiences, and in doing so demonstrates the interconnectivity of recreation meanings with participants broader life-course meanings.

- **Recreation Meanings** (Chapter Six) – which focuses on the specifically cultural and recreational meanings participants’ expressed, particularly focusing on their recreation-place meanings and the kinds of factors that have influenced their change over time such as personal and river changes, and time/temporality itself.

- **Changing Meanings** (Chapter Seven) – which focuses on developing understandings of change and how this has been demonstrated in participants’ expressions of meaning for the Clutha River. These include physical alterations to the river system, changes in river regulation and management, and personal changes, all of which are argued as being tied to the intrinsic and always-present temporal aspect of place and meaning.

For each chapter, the interview data and its analysis are described and illustrated with text extracts that in turn support a wider discussion of the analyses, drawing out the findings of each thematic network, and finally locating and discussing them in their relevant contextual literature to develop their analysis more deeply and connectively.

Finally **Chapter Eight** brings the thesis to a close by summarising and mapping the main findings of the study, discussing their significance in terms of the research contexts, research questions and relevant literature. The chapter also looks ahead to areas of future research regarding broader cultural understandings of outdoor recreation, Māori relationships with recreation and places, river management practices and recreation frameworks, and the possibilities of developing more
integrated and holistic evaluation frameworks for heritage/recreation/landscapes centred on a pluralistic understanding of place meaning concepts.

The study now moves forward to discuss the conceptual framework of the thesis in *Chapter Two: Framing the Clutha River in Meaning – Place, River and Recreation* and how it relates to the research contexts outlined in this introduction.
CHAPTER TWO: FRAMING THE CLUTHA RIVER IN MEANING - PLACE, RIVERS AND RECREATION

2.1 Introducing Chapter Two

Having outlined and discussed the research questions framing this thesis in Chapter One and having identified the different contexts or discourses of the Clutha River - geographic, political, historical and cultural - this chapter turns to address the primary concepts framing this thesis. The purpose of the chapter is to discuss in detail the literature relevant to the conceptual framing of the research and through doing so, to build an argument justifying the use of recreation as a way of making meaningful experiences and places for people, which in turn contributes towards the wider ‘making’ of (river) places in multiple and complex ways. This argument is then further developed and examined through the research methodology (Chapter Three) and empirical and discursive analysis stages of the research in the remainder of the study (Chapters Four to Seven).

2.1.1 Chapter structure

Chapter Three is shaped by the three primary conceptual themes of the research as follows:

![Figure 2.1: The conceptual themes of the thesis](image)

Each conceptual theme in Figure 2.1 is addressed in the following manner:

- a brief overview of key foundational literature relevant to this study is provided;
• a detailed discussion of the differing approaches and critical areas of contention for each theme which have influenced the position of the study and its argument is presented; and;

• a discussion of the literature within a specifically New Zealand cultural context is outlined.

The chapter ends by outlining the wider theoretical argument drawn from each conceptual theme and discusses these in relationship to the research aims stated in Chapter One. Finally the chapter looks ahead to Chapter Three and how the theoretical argument was addressed in practice through the field methodology and interpretive analyses.

Before delving into the first conceptual theme it is important to both recap and illustrate how the research as a whole and the individual conceptual themes have been framed in this study so that it is clear why some areas of the academic literature have been included, while others which could possibly have been addressed have been excluded.

2.1.2 Framing the Clutha: a cultural geography perspective

The conceptual framing of the research of how (and if) peoples’ river recreational experiences and meanings contribute to the making of rivers as places and how this is understood in broader cultural and regulatory contexts is presented in Figure 2.2. Choosing to take a cultural geography approach to this research situates the study, allowing to be more precisely located or framed conceptually, and so hopefully addresses the obvious critique of not acknowledging the many possible alternative approaches that could have been applied to examine the topic (Patterson and Williams 2005). As cultural geography integrates many other fields within it, so the incorporation of cultural, historical, social, economic, political, indigenous and other perspectives in this research sits well as a conceptual and methodological approach (Anderson 2010).

Cultural Geography can be defined in many ways but in this study Anderson’s (2010: p.3) description of what cultural geography is (or does) has been adopted; he states that:

‘What cultural geography seeks to do, therefore, is explore the intersections of [geographic] context and [human] culture. It asks why cultural activities happen in particular ways in particular contexts...It operationalises this interest through identifying that the product of the intersection between context and culture is place.’
Sitting within this cultural geography frame is the conceptual frame of *place, sense of place* and *place meanings* which also forms the first conceptual theme of the study. As Figure 2.2 shows and Section 2.2 subsequently discusses, the place concepts engaged within the context of this study are approached from a cultural geography perspective whereby *place* is broadly conceived as:

‘...place has become a moment and a location, concurrently shot through with lines of movement that constantly (re)combine to change its form and substance. Our ‘stories’, activities, and practices are not outside place or played out on place; rather, they meet and move together to form place, however provisionally.’ (Anderson 2012: p.574)

The references to *moment, location* and *movement* by Anderson mirror contemporaneous ideas of temporality, geography and multiplicity that are foundational to the conception of place in this thesis and which are examined in Section 2.2 to follow. The second conceptual frame of *cultural*
and regulatory meanings of rivers shown in Figure 2.2 is also positioned within a cultural geography understanding from the standpoint of rivers as intersections (or Anderson’s (2012) contexts) of cultural meanings within which their regulation is both culturally determined and an expression of specific cultural practices. The research concept is further refined by being placed within a recreational experience and meaning frame (and the third conceptual theme) which deliberately narrows its conceptualisation in order to practically explore and examine recreational understandings of human experience and meaning in relation to places. As Figure 2.2 suggests, the Clutha River is thus at the centre of this conceptual framing, the situated context around which a conceptual argument has been constructed that seeks to understand how place and experience meanings are created through recreation and broader, interlinked experiences, and how these interact with the cultural and regulatory meanings of the Clutha. These concepts are now explored and discussed in the remainder of Chapter Two.

2.2 Place, Sense of Place and Place Meanings

2.2.1 Introducing the literature themes

As a way of introducing the following section, Figure 2.3 sets out the different themes within the conceptual literature that address the ideas of place, sense of place and place meanings engaged with in this study. Using this approach illustrates how the literatures have been interpreted and proposed as interconnecting, making them transparent and accessible to the reader in line with the broader epistemological and methodological positions of this thesis.

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20 The use of this style of thematic diagram has been deliberately chosen to reflect the thematic networks analysis approach explained in Chapter Three and used in the analysis Chapters Four to Seven of the study.
2.2.2  *Place* - a ‘simple’ idea, surely?

The idea of place is quite simple. Really. My place, your place, the place, a nice place, in place, out of place, a place for everything and everything in its place. ‘Place is a word that seems to speak for itself’ as Tim Cresswell says in his opening paragraph of his book *Place – a short introduction* (2004: p.1). However, as with many common sense, taken for granted, everyday words, these simple uses and understandings belie more complex, ambiguous and often hidden ones, although *place* may potentially top the list of such words. For example, when talking of *place* we can mean a physical or terrestrial location (for example, the place where two rivers meet), a socio-political geographical construct such as New York, a social position such as head of the family, a socio-political statement such as there’s no place for them in our country, and a philosophical observation (be-*ing* in place) amongst a considerable range of other meanings and interpretations (Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Wattchow and Brown 2011). These are all mainly one dimensional, traditional geographical/social/political examples. Add in the complex, problematising and often contesting perspectives of many postmodern lenses such as mobility, gender, race, power relations and globalisation, and a
picture begins to build of the *ultra*-complexity of the place concept (Cresswell 2002\(^{21}\)). Nevertheless place appears to continue to be anchored (not unjustly as this thesis illustrates) by its dominant geographic influence, even as it is increasingly conceptualised in *relational* terms\(^{22}\) (Gustafson 2001; Massey 2006; Anderson 2010). To quote Cresswell (2004: p.2; my emphasis) once more, ‘Place is *everywhere*’ - so place, whether as terrestrial location, a thought of something/somewhere/someone/self, or as a way of describing a relational/hierarchical value, is in a way always *located* – whether in terrestrial or relational space, time or thought.

Defining concepts of place may be considered a difficult exercise in light of the previous statements but nevertheless such an exercise has value for expanding the discussion in this research context. The philosopher, J.E. Malpas (1999: p.13) has written about this very quandary from a philosophical stance:

‘The notion that there is an intimate connection between person and place, and also between self and the environing world, is thus neither a peculiar idiosyncrasy...nor a left-over from pre-modern societies...There is good reason to suppose that the human relationship to place is a fundamental structure in what makes possible the sort of life that is characteristically human, whilst also being determining...of human identity.’

2.2.3 *Concepts of place*

As Section 2.2.1 noted, the concept of place has been and continues to be written about extensively from a wide range of disciplinary and theoretical perspectives but it is the field of geography that continues to dominate this discussion (for examples see Cresswell 2004; Eyles and Williams 2008; Farnum *et al.* 2005; Feld and Basso 1996; Gustafson 2001; Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Light and

\(^{21}\) Cresswell’s (2002) division of place concepts into two broad categories of ‘sedentarist’ and ‘nomad’ metaphysics to represent respectively the more traditional (‘modern’) bounded, rooted and authentic concepts and the (‘postmodern’) hyper-mobile, mixed identity and bound-less concepts, is one of the more succinct ways that place has been represented in writing. Subsequently his middle ground position – that ‘...places are never complete, finished or bounded but are always becoming – in process’ (Cresswell 2002: p. 20) and ‘Place is constituted through reiterative social practice...’ (p.25) – finds a sympathetic home throughout this thesis.

\(^{22}\) See Anderson’s (2012) development of his place conceptualisations towards the idea of relational places that become the nexus for the related concepts of *assemblage* and *convergence* – he uses an example of the surf(ed) wave to demonstrate how, through taking an ‘actor-centred approach the thresholds between subject and object, surfer and wave, are fused to make a coalesced, unitary entity/process’ (2012: p. 583). In this way, he emphasises the ‘...unreliable, inconsistent, wholly provisional, and unstable’ nature of places whether marine or terrestrial (*ibid.*).
Smith 1998; Massey 2005; Relph 1976; Tuan 1974; Williams 1995). Of the many potential geography-directed definitions three broad fundamental perspectives have been tentatively identified (Relph 2008; and Figure 2.3):

- Place as an ontological concept – as a way of knowing the world (the being theme);
- Place as locations of social and geographic meaning and experience (the meaning, dwelling & culture themes);
- Place as (ongoing) intersections of flows and movements of people, things and practices (the intersections & relational themes).

These are now discussed in turn to illustrate the gradual construction of the pluralistic place concept engaged with in this study’s conceptual framework.

Place as ‘being’

Returning to the three fundamental place perspectives, place as ontological concept has a distinctly philosophical pedigree which has been developed particularly in the twentieth century, in the works of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Casey and Malpas (Cresswell 2009). Heidegger’s much invoked concept of dasein or ‘being-in-the-world’ is fundamental to this conception of place and is seen by many theorists as:

‘...the key to understanding the relationship between people and the world. ‘Being’ is characterised by existing physically in the world – taking up space and existing in relation to other physical objects (including other people). From this perspective, it is the relational encounter with the world that brings the world into existence for each person.’ (Holloway and Hubbard 2001: p.69)

Alongside and developing this phenomenological stance, Merleau-Ponty developed the idea of place ‘as the product of everyday habitual mobilities’ (Cresswell 2009: p.7) incorporating the idea of the body, not just the mind, as being conscious of/in the world (or more precisely the objects in it) – a kind of ‘bodily intentionality’. The everyday, habitual practices of movement (for example, walking to work or driving) are considered by Merleau-Ponty to embody largely unconscious bodily knowledges that themselves contribute to being-in-the-world/place (Cresswell 2009). Casey (1997:}
p.336) traced this growing theory of the embodiment of place from the writings of Aristotle and Plato through to his contemporaries, reflecting that:

‘...every place is everywhere...thanks to the fact that a single place is capable of reflecting the whole universe of space. A place is the event of this reflection. As such an event, place accomplishes what is begun in the body: it possesses inclusiveness...but reaches out to everything that is, to all constructed as well as natural things.’

Malpas (1999: p.15) further explores this philosophical line of thought, as first suggested by Heidegger, through his proposal that:

‘It is, indeed, in and through place that the world presents itself suggesting that ‘...the very possibility of the appearance of things – of objects, of self, and of others – is possible only within the all embracing compass of place.’

Indeed Malpas’ whole philosophical thesis, that ‘there is no possibility of understanding human existence – and especially human thought and experience – other than through an understanding of place and locality’ (ibid.: p. 16), is the strongest advocate of the importance and relevance of place to philosophy and fields beyond. Put in its simplest form ‘it is not...that place is something only encountered in experience, rather it is that place is integral to the very structure and possibility of experience’ (Malpas 1998: p.33; my emphasis). Relph in turn summarises the theoretical developments of place by Casey and Malpas as follows:

‘...it is not a bit of space, nor another word for landscape or environment, it is not a figment of individual experience, nor a social construct, and it is certainly not susceptible to quantitative excavation. It is, instead, the foundation of being both human and non-human; experience, actions and life itself begin and end in place.’ (2008: p.36)

In this way then, place as human-existing or ‘being-in-the world’ is the very essence of be-ing (i.e. alive) whilst both perceiving and co-constructing our world(s) simultaneously, continuously and inter-relationally.

*Place as ‘locations’ of meaning*

Place as locations of social and geographic meaning and experience has been the scholarly domain of predominantly (human) geographers since the 1960s onwards and foremost amongst these are
the writings of Relph, Tuan, Seamon and Buttmer amongst many. These geographers conceptualised place as located, rooted and experienced, epitomised in Tuan’s (1977: p.6) often cited comment ‘What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value’. Tuan and Relph in particular, conceived place as the very opposite or counterpoint of space - ‘an encompassing reality that allows things to be located in it or move across it’ (Relph 2008: p.35). Place was situated in space along with everything else but representing the embodied cultural, social and personal experience of individuals. As Cresswell (2008: p.55) commented, ‘This is the most important contribution...to human geography - the distinction between an abstract realm of space and an experienced and felt world of place’. The principal geographical contribution to this conception of place is to locate such individual experience of embodiment (and being) and how people create meaning from this experience in the physical and temporal worlds. For example, Tuan’s (1977) approach to conceptualising place was primarily twofold:

- Seeing some place(s) as having a distinct character and spirit which can be experienced individually and socially (symbolic places);

- Place as creating (or engaging) a sense of place in individuals that develops through repeated experience (thinking and feeling) and familiarity (time in place), resulting in the creation of both identity with, and of a place.

The creation of place or more specifically a sense of place is therefore almost a transactional relationship between physical places (or locations in the terrestrial geographic sense) and people over time that is also created inter-subjectively, from the meanings (and emotions) shared by people for places. As such, people (society) share and (re)create meanings collectively as well as individually and hence socially create places as much as they physically create them. Space and place then are separate and yet indivisible, what Relph perceives ‘as dialectically structured in human environmental experience, since our understanding of space is related to the places we inhabit, which in turn derive meaning from their spatial context’ (Relph (1976) cited in Seamon and Sowers 2008: p.44). Tuan (1977) and Relph (1976) both emphasise the localness of place, suggesting that the situated familiarity and temporal perspective (heritage) that repeated encounters and everyday practice create, add a notion of authenticity to place that is susceptible to change and erosion from ‘modern’ development. Such a rooted and sedentary (to use Cresswell’s
term) concept of place and sense of place has been frequently criticised by (largely) critical authors such as Massey (2004), Harvey (1990), Pred (1984) and Anderson (2010) with accusations of romanticism, oversimplification and the universalising of discourses that evoke ‘the meaningfulness of place’ for everyone (Massey 2004: p.7); their critiques and place conceptualisations are addressed later in this section. Suffice to say that the concept of place and sense of place put forward by the more ‘modern’ human geographers such as Relph (1976) and Seamon (2000) remains a fundamental component but not the only component in understanding what place is and how it interrelates with human be-ing and experience.

Place as dwelling

Bridging to some extent the strongly geographic focus of place and sense of place with the numerous and contested concepts of environment and landscape23, Ingold takes some of the ideas of place and merges them with the concept of dwelling, a philosophical idea originally developed by Heidegger and further developed by both geographers and philosophers from the 1990s onwards (Cloke and Jones 2000). The concept of dwelling used in this context describes the continuing formation of landscape (or places) through human interaction/activities (or ‘tasks’) over time which leave their traces both on and in the world. This landscape or ‘taskscape’ was in fact one, which could be distinguished by its temporality or ‘time-depth’ (Ingold 1993). By connecting Heidegger’s human being-in-the-world with the embodied practices that this entails in practice (e.g. simply living) so the human world is created (and continues to be created), and is made visible through the forms (natural and built) seen as landscape (Ingold 1993; 2000). As Ingold (1993: p.155) explains:

‘…a place in the landscape is not ‘cut out’ from the whole [space], either on the plane of ideas or on that of material substance. Rather, each place embodies the whole at a particular nexus within it, and in this respect is different from every other. A place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there…And these, in turn, depend on the kinds of activities in which its inhabitants engage. It is from this relational context of people’s engagement with the world, in the business of dwelling, that each place draws its unique significance.’ (my emphasis)

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Echoing this idea of an interdependent place-people relationship through dwelling is Crang’s (1998: p.103) proposition that:

‘...places provide an anchor of shared experiences between people and continuity over time. Spaces become places as they become ‘time-thickened’. They have a past and a future that binds people together around them.’

This is further supported by Stephenson (2008) who notes in her study of landscape cultural values in the South Island of New Zealand that ‘the localised values create a distinct identity that comprises the relationships between people and the landscape’ (2008: p.136). Landscape and place then are the result of ongoing human living (dwelling) in the world and the accumulation of human experience embedded in and expressed as the world - when one perceives a landscape or place, she is seeing/experiencing not just the physical survival of material forms but traces of human be-in(g) and therefore culture in those very same forms. As Stephenson (2008: p.130) notes, this ‘engagement with the land and its human and non-human components continuously generates both cultural knowledge and bodily substance’. Through such ‘world-making’, Ingold (1993: p.152) attempts to dissolve the naturalistic and culturalistic binary of a ‘natural’ landscape external to human activity placed in opposition to a ‘cultural’ landscape existing only as a cognitive or symbolic ‘ordering of space’.

This concept of dwelling is developed further by Cloke and Jones (2000) using the example of an apple orchard in Somerset, England to illustrate their conceptualisation of dwelling and place. The key difference in their work from Ingold’s theorising concerns the rather fixed, romanticised, authentic view of landscape that he proposes which Cloke and Jones view as being at odds with the ‘multiembodied multipractised business of moving’ that being-in-the-world involves (2000: p.664). Instead, they prefer to emphasise a much greater sense of movement, unfixedness, and constantly changing perspectives/viewpoints in their concept of dwelling and place, of ‘being in the landscape’ - not just gazing at it from a fixed position - and experiencing ‘an embodied embeddedness’ (2000: p.663). In their words ‘Being in, and moving through, landscape is different from gazing upon it

24 For an alternative (archaeological) perspective on this see Johnston (1998: p.57) who employs the terms explicit (‘a static screen through which the ‘real’ world is filtered creating a culturally perceived reality’) and inherent (‘the process by which humans understand/perceive the world around them’) as different approaches to perceiving the landscape. He makes the interesting comment that ‘Landscape is, in the broadest sense, contextual’ (ibid.: p.56).

25 Cloke and Jones used ANT (Actor Network Theory) as theorised by Bruno Latour, on which to build their conception of dwelling, place and landscape. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, Section 3.2.3.
from a point which always seemingly puts you at the edge of it, or even outside it’ and as such ‘dwelling is an embodied and an imaginative embeddedness in landscape’ (ibid.).

This recognition of the relentless movement of people and things through the everyday practices of living (in places) can be applied on multiple scales and perspectives – each working simultaneously and interconnectedly. Cloke and Jokes (2000: p.663) echoed Ingold in their assertion that ‘the oneness of dwelling is formed of a complex multiplicity of practice and representation...spatial proximity alone cannot map the boundedness of dwelling...’ They concluded that dwelling ‘needs to shed this reliance on idyllic local boundedness and instead reflect a view of space and place which is dynamic, overlapping and interpenetrating’ and recognise that ‘meanings flow into and out of space in complex ways (2000: pp.661-662). The notion of an authentic, fixed place as posited by Tuan and Relph amongst others was rejected by Cloke and Jones (2000: p.664), in favour of one which captured:

‘the complex interpenetration of places with other places...the flows of ideas, people, and materials which coconstitute and coconstruct those places; and dynamic...ways of understanding embodied engagements with landscapes.’

To summarise the conceptual frames thus far, place it seems is always on the move (or in process) even when it appears to be fixed and bound – whether temporally, symbolically, cognitively or physically. Place can be many places even to one person and it is through being in place and experiencing place(s) that an embodied co-constitutive relationship is formed which simultaneously creates meaning and ‘anchors’ meaning in and through places. To use Cloke and Jones’ phrase, we are always embedded in place whether physically, socially, politically or imaginatively (or all concurrently) but this embeddedness should not automatically imply a comfortable and rooted existence for everyone. As noted in Section 2.2.2, such potentially universalising discourses of place have the power to ignore, veil and ultimately eradicate the being of those whose embeddedness is uncomfortable, contested and marginalised (Massey 2004; Anderson 2010). Before addressing these more fluid, intersecting and increasingly critical concepts of place, a short diversion is required to demonstrate how the combined components of place (as being, as locations of meaning and as dwelling) have been drawn together into a dynamic model representing their interrelationships.
Place as process, culture and value

A related piece of research which has relevance for exploring the cultural aspects of place and landscape specifically in New Zealand, was undertaken by Stephenson who developed an approach to both exploring and expressing the many values of place and landscape (Stephenson 2005; 2008; 2010). Stephenson’s study constructed a Cultural Values Model (CVM) that was conceptually grounded in a number of the studies discussed above; in particular, she references Ingold’s work on the temporal perspective of the landscape. Stephenson’s research is positioned as a response to the inadequacy of the planning system in New Zealand (and in countries with comparable regulatory frameworks) to recognise ‘the nature and range of values expressed by those who feel they ‘belong’ to the landscape’ (2008: p.128) and the lack of a holistic framework that would:

‘...conceptualise landscape values-as-a-whole, in a way that incorporates the very different assessments of value that might be made from within different disciplines, as well as the values expressed by ‘insiders’ for a given landscape.’ (2008: p.129)

Taking an interpretive and qualitative approach to her study, case studies from Akaroa and Bannockburn furnished the research with individual responses that provide a broad range of differing understandings of landscape and people-landscape relationship values. In developing the model, three basic components are identified (see Figure 2.4 for an illustration of each component):

- **Forms** – physical, tangible and measurable aspects of landscape, place or space;
- **Relationships** – people-people relationships, people-landscape/place relationships and ecological relationships;
- **Practices** – human practices and human/natural processes.

These are seen as ‘inseparably interwoven as the dynamic landscape’ and the model proposed ‘that these dynamic interactions help generate cultural values, and are also generated by them’ (2008: p.135). Stephenson (*ibid.*; my emphasis) adds a temporal quality to the model by suggesting the dynamic interplay of these three components over time, in the sense that:

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26 As Stephenson (2010: p.10) notes, her ‘interest is not in how these terms might be differentiated, but in their convergence, what this reveals about how people value and respond to their wider surroundings’.

27 Both in the South Island of New Zealand.
'It expresses the concept that landscape is created from the dynamic interaction of forms, practices and relationships, occurring over time, and that landscape values are contingent on elements from both the past and present. *Landscape is thus always changing.*'

Perhaps not unsurprisingly this parallels the similar conception of place discussed at the end of the preceding section – *that place is always on the move*. Therefore, by enlarging the conceptions of these three components of landscape it is possible to integrate them with the three components of place discussed so far (as *being*, as locations of *meaning* and as *dwelling*). This is illustrated in Figure 2.4 in purple.

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**Figure 2.4:** The forms, relationships and practices interpreted as generating cultural values of landscape (in grey) and their proposed dynamic interrelationships with the components of place (in purple); (adapted from Stephenson 2008: p. 134)
Place has been posited as being at the centre or nexus of the three interweaving and overlapping components rather than ‘people’ to indicate the ontological and fundamental role that place has in human and non-human existence. This reflects the comments of Cresswell (2004) and Malpas (1999), already discussed in Section 2.2.1 and of the philosopher Casey (1993), who reflected that ‘place serves as the condition of all existing things...To be is to be in place’ (Casey 1993 cited in Seamon 2000: p.162; my emphasis). As with the components in Stephenson’s conception of landscape, the suggested place components are also equally inseparably interwoven so their placement in Figure 2.4 is simply to position them indicatively in relation to their landscape counterparts.

By acknowledging the temporality of the landscape (and in my conception, place) Stephenson further develops the conceptual framework into a model which integrates the components, their temporality and dynamic character to show the always-continuing process of landscape and value formation. A final element added to the model - the introduction of time-depth – offers an alternative perspective of people’s time in place (as opposed to Ingold’s conception of landscape time-depth) which proposes how this influenced the creation and interpretation of cultural landscape values in the present. The full Cultural Value Model (CVM) is shown in Figure 2.5.

![Figure 2.5: Dynamic processes of landscape and values formation - the Cultural Values Model (Stephenson 2008: p.136)](image)

The model identifies two levels or depths of values created by time-depth: ‘...surface values are the perceptual response to the directly perceived forms, relationships and practices, while embedded values arise out of an awareness of past forms, practices and relationships.’ (ibid.: p.136; my emphasis). Stephenson also notes that ‘... some of the Māori respondents made no reference at all to surface values: for them, all significance lay in the embedded values of the landscape’ (ibid.). Figure 2.5 demonstrates the whole process of landscape (alternatively place) formation illustrating the multidimensional, temporal, dynamic and always in-process conceptualisation of both landscape and cultural values creation.
The relevance of the CVM to the conceptualisation of place in this study is based on the proposition that the relationships, forms and practices of landscape formation (and which generate landscape values) are directly related/comparable to the three concepts of place discussed so far, as proposed in Figure 2.4 (being, locations of meaning and dwelling). However there are two critiques of the CVM model that require addressing in order to argue this convincingly. These are the implied linearity of the model in terms of its conception of temporality, and its lack of capacity to acknowledge or represent the more complex, contested, shifting and critical perspectives of place that have already been alluded to. The first point is supported by Anderson’s (2010: p.50) comment that ‘Places...do not necessarily correspond to a straightforward time line, moving forward from the past to the future, but meanings linger, re-erupt, or disappear, as human cultural activity affects them’. Stephenson acknowledges this aspect of temporality in that ‘places are not unitary in space and time, but include subterranean landscapes, with time irrupting [sic] through place to bring the past into contact with the present’ (2008: p.130). However the CVM, mainly through the limitations of representing time in a graphic form, implies the generation of landscape/values in a continuous and smooth progression from the past to the present, with limited scope for illustrating the uneven and often disrupted meanings for places.

Similarly, the CVM lacks the capacity to accommodate the often multiple, contemporaneous and (contested) parallel meanings (equated here with cultural values) that different people generate for their places over time. In doing so it fails to represent the non-linearity of meanings that are embodied (in place and people) through being and dwelling and which are selectively perceived, represented and practiced by people (Battista et al. 2005). As already noted, Cloke and Jones (2000: p.662; author’s emphasis) stress the importance of acknowledging ‘the complex multiplicity of practice and representation’ in the context of dwelling and place, and I suggest that it is the representational element that is lacking in the CVM if adapted to conceptualise place. In all fairness, these critiques may be unjust as the model did not set out to detail such complexities (it is a model after all and therefore by its nature reductionist), but in order to argue for its expansion as a CVM of place and meanings generation (not just landscape and values), then the preceding points will require further development, perhaps as a future research study.

This critique leads into the final element of place research, the recognition of often problematical and critical ways of understanding place which take an intersecting and relational perspective on place and meaning. These concepts are explored more deeply in the following section.
The exploration of broader, more inclusive and often socio-politically contested concepts of place developed both alongside and following on from the earlier theoretical discussions of place which began in the 1970s. The expansion of place theory from its philosophical and geographical origins into the more politicised discourses of globalisation, mobility and representation resulted in research with increasingly diverse theoretical lenses such as social and cultural theory as well as ‘critical’ geographies such as belonging, difference, resistance, identity and responsibility (Anderson 2010; Crang 1998; Cresswell 2002; Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Massey 2004). The linking theme (if there is one) between such a diversity of approaches or lenses can be loosely summarised as a (largely postmodern) response or critique to the idea of a rooted, romanticised and authentic conceptualisation of place (and concurrently identity) that can be revealed through inquiry. The rooted appeal of the core concepts developed by humanistic geographers such as Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977), were seen as obscuring, marginalising and excluding a whole raft of social, cultural and political issues concerning gender, class, ethnicity, modernity, power relations, colonialism and mobility that were interpreted as shaping postmodern concepts of place. As Cresswell (2002: p.15-16) notes:

‘Place, roots and authenticity are hardly the favoured characteristics of postmodern theorists. Indeed postmodern worlds are ones in which nothing is certain or fixed, and where fixity appears it is as an illusion.’

This turn against what was seen as a bounded, often idealised and essentialist concept of place and identity raised a number of issues for both conceptualising and operationalising place in research – the most critical being the near-rejection of place as an ‘objective’ reality in favour of more mobile and subjective concepts. This was expressed by Brey (1998: p.260):

‘...the geographical disembedding of places has led to changes in our very conception of what a place is...places are no longer just understood as inhabitable physical locations, but as any relatively stable environment that holds certain immediately available goods...such places include places that emerge out of the blending of different physical places by electronic media, and nowadays even software constructions in cyberspace.’

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28 For a overview of the concept of mobility see Adey (2010).
Themes of movement, flows, embodiment, every day practices, reiterative processes, and multiplicities of cultural and personal identities permeate these critical conceptions of place (Cresswell 2009; Gustafson 2001; Massey 2005). To take just one example, Massey’s work on place (1994; 2005) focuses upon the positive involvement that mobility has on creating place - place as ‘actively constituted by mobility – particularly the movement of people but also commodities and ideas’ (Massey cited in Cresswell 2009: p.8). Through the movement of people, objects and things, and ideas so places are constituted, whilst being simultaneously viewed ‘through local details to grasp their connection to global patterns and processes’ (Relph 2008: p.38). Such a ‘progressive’ or ‘global sense of place’ as Massey (2005: p.131) describes it carefully interweaves the humanistic-challenging notions of mobility (or un-rootedness), the time-space compression of ‘modernity’29 and heterogeneity of identity into an expansive concept. Cresswell (2002: p.26; my emphasis) summarised Massey’s views on place as:

‘...intersections of flows and movements – they are highly particular only because of the unique way they embody the outside. So rather than thinking about places as bounded and rooted we can think of them as open and permeable – based on a politics of inclusion rather than exclusion. To think of place as an intersection – a particular configuration of happenings – is to think of place in a constant sense of becoming through practice and practical knowledge.’

Massey developed this idea further addressing the problematical (and partly ontological) concept of place that the many conceptions of mobility generated vis-à-vis if the world is mobile, then there can be no place/s and hence no sense of place/s (Cresswell 2009). She emphasised the temporal aspect of mobility citing the different scales of geological and biological processes that have and are constantly taking place on/in the earth whilst its human and non-human populations also continue to be on the move, raising the question ‘If there are no fixed points then where is here?’ (Massey 2005: p.139). Places become a collection (or ‘constellation’) of spatio-temporal events and ‘here’ is no more (and no less) than our encounter, and what is made of it. It is, irretrievably, here and now’ (Massey 2005: p.139). The locus or ‘coming together of trajectories’ (ibid.: p.141) as Massey

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29 The idea proposed by David Harvey (1990) that the effects of globalisation are in part created by the increasing speed of travel and communication which has effectively shortened the amount of time it takes for information and people to travel world distances and simultaneously has also compressed the concept of distance/space. For a discussion and critique of the concept of time-space compression, see Massey (2005, Chapter 9).
interprets these spatio-temporal events and their intersections *is place*. Concurrent with these theoretical developments, Massey (2006), alongside Sack (1997) and Thrift (1999), also sought to develop the idea of space and place as *coalescing* – in removing the binary of space and place so each is recognised and understood (or ‘thought’ together) as constitutive of the other (Agnew 2005). As Agnew (2005: p.90) comments:

‘Places are woven together through space by movement and by the network ties that produce places as changing constellations of human commitments, capacities and strategies. Places are invariably parts of spaces and spaces provide the resources and the frames of reference in which places are made.’

In this way postmodern issues such as globalisation and the effects of ‘placelessness’ on place were not dismissed but re-framed (more positively in Cresswell’s (2009) view) to ‘consider the connections between place and [the] wider world and this opens up place to a more global sensibility’ (Cresswell 2009: p.8). In accepting this more co-constituting, intersecting, inclusive and unbounded conception of space/place, so the significance of the *relational* is raised, which was explained by Massey (2004: p.7; author’s emphasis) when she stated:

‘If we sign up to the relational constitution of the world – in other words to the mutual constitution of the local and the global – then this kind of counterposition between space and place is on shaky ground. The ‘lived reality of our daily lives’, invoked so often to buttress the meaningfulness of place, is in fact pretty much dispersed in its sources and its repercussions. The degree and nature of this dispersal will of course vary between individuals, between social groups and between places, but the general proposition makes it difficult seriously to posit ‘space’ as the abstract outside of ‘place’ as lived. Where would you draw the line around ‘the grounded reality of your daily life’? ...the habitual now routinely draws in engagement at a distance. The burden of my argument here is not that place is *not* concrete, grounded, real, but rather that space – global space – *is so too.*’

This supports and converges with Cresswell’s (2002: p.26; my emphasis) ‘anti-binary’ view that ‘Place as practice and practice as placed [sic] always relies on the *symbiosis* of locatedness and motion rather than the valorization of one or the other’. In doing so it strengthens the argument for place(space) as the ‘product of practices, relations, connections and disconnections.  We make

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30 For conceptions of *placelessness* and *non-places* see Relph (1976) and Augé (1995) respectively.
space [place] in the conduct of our lives, and at all scales, from the intimate to the global’ (Massey 2006: p.90). In this way too it connects Stephenson’s (2008) core conceptualisation of the cultural place/landscape model as a dynamic and temporal configuration of relationships, practices and forms with an intersecting and relational conception of place that situates the model in a more strongly spatial, temporal and relational framework. By integrating these progressive (to use Massey’s term) elements of place into the CVM, its capacity for recognising (and operationalising) the multiplicity and fluidity of constructions of place, meanings and values may be realised.

In summing up, if place, space and time are unified entities, always unfinished which we (as ‘trajectories’31) simultaneously, co-constitutively create and embody (i.e. in being and becoming) then it is through ‘our’ perceptions and lived experiences (our ‘convergences’) – whether local and/or global - that place will assemble.

2.2.4 Meaningful places – a sense of place and place meanings

Within the geographic threads of place which, as demonstrated, has not been entirely abandoned in postmodern critiques and research, another way of understanding and even defining place that connects the ostensibly geographical and social senses of the word, is as meaningful locations – spaces that have been imbued with (or alternatively have accumulated) meaning by people over time (Cresswell 2004). To recap the idea of cognition, place-making and meanings, Robert Mugerauer (1985: p.51) discussed how humans perceived and interpreted the environment concluding that:

‘...both the primary interpretive experience [of environment] and the secondary scientific abstraction are themselves possible only because the environment and people always and already are given together in language.’

Language as a means to express meaning is critical in this respect32 and Mugerauer (1985: p.51) continued on to comment ‘we always find ourselves in the midst of an already interpreted

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31 Massey (2006) continues to develop this theme in the context of political responsibility through the equation of time and space (and hence place) in which both human and non-human lives are seen as ‘a multiplicity of trajectories’ or ‘stories’ and through which space ‘is a dimension that cuts through stories/trajectories, but not to stabilise them into a surface...Space in this sense is inherently imbued with time. Space is a simultaneity of unfinished, ongoing, trajectories’ (2006: p.92).

32 Both from an epistemological and methodological standpoint; see Chapter Three, Sections 3.2.4 and 3.3.1 for detailed discussions of meaning/language/experience relationships.
environment’, implying as a result that the environment/places already ‘hold’ (or *coalesce* to use Massey’s term) meanings even before they are experienced (if they ever are). Meanings then – whether learnt, experienced or ‘imaginary’ - are an integral component in the process of both knowledge and place creation. Similarly the meanings humans ‘associate’ with space to make place (*if* the Tuan and Relph position is adopted) are created and expressed in language – through sensuous experience, perception, cognition and naming/identification amongst others. Such a fusion of meanings and knowledge through place can be linked to the expansive concept of the ‘geographic imaginary’ through its ‘...appreciation of the significance of space, place and landscape in the making and meaning of social and cultural life’ (Schwartz and Ryan 2003: p.6). Taking a very broad definition of the geographic imaginary\(^\text{33}\) as:

‘...the mechanism by which people come to know the world and situate themselves in space and time...[through the] practices and processes by which geographical information is gathered, geographical facts are ordered and imaginative geographies are constructed...’

(Schwartz and Ryan 2003: p.6)

So *place* becomes even more a point of convergence and negotiation for human (and non-human) meaning, knowledge and experience, whether through direct perception (*e.g.* real experiences in/of places) or whether in the (geographic) imagination of individuals and groups.

*Place Meanings*

There is a select but significant literature focusing on the construction and nature of place meanings which provide important insights and structure for these often taken-for-granted concepts. Research by Gustafson (2001) examined the meanings people held for places where they had lived and places which were important to them, and then asked them to rate their attachment to five spatial ‘places’ (their community/village; city; country; Sweden; Europe) (Gustafson 2001: p.9). In his analysis, Gustafson identified three key themes: self, others and environment, which could be combined in multiple ways to reflect and map the different relationships between people and places that produced their place meanings. The study also identified four underlying dimensions of meaning: distinction, valuation, continuity and change, which Gustafson (2001: p.13) interpreted as organising ‘the attribution of meaning to places in more basic ways’ such as being identifiable,

\(^{33}\) See also Harvey (1990).
valued, or ‘connected to the life path of the individual’. Conceptually, the study findings identify most closely with the place as process position advocated by Agnew (1987) and Massey (1994; 2005), stressing the relational and evaluative nature of meanings for places.

A second key study by Manzo (2005), considered how place meanings were constructed by people living in New York in the contexts of their significant experience in places, their residences and their emotional relationships with places over their life courses. In particular, Manzo focused upon the more negative or ambivalent place meanings her participants expressed in order to understand the ‘complex and multi-faceted phenomena that comprise our emotional relationships to places’ (2005: p.67). Using a grounded theory methodology, the study findings suggested that people-place relationships were complex due to the ‘diversity of places and experiences’ (Manzo 2005: p.82) that intertwined in positive and negative ways to produce meanings. In the many conclusions reached by the study, Manzo noted the significance of time, continuity and the often incremental nature of the formation of place meanings, comparable to Gustafson’s findings (2001). Manzo (2005: p.75) also commented that participants’ meaningful life experience stories suggested that it was the ‘experience-in-place’ that was important rather than the places themselves; as a consequence she focused her study on the experiential themes of her participants and in doing so, shifted the emphasis from place meanings to experience-in-place meanings. Although this may seem a subtle transfer of conceptual focus, in my view it actually raises significant interpretive differences in how place meanings are generated, sustained and disrupted. I suggest that by focusing on experience over place, the ontological position of place as proposed by Heidegger (1962), Malpas (1998) and supported by Relph (2008) is relegated to a secondary position after human experience, contrary to their supposition that ‘…experience, actions and life itself begin and end in place’ (Relph 2008: p.36)34. In the end this may simply be a case of semantics, but I have deliberately adopted throughout this thesis the phrase ‘place-experience meanings’ to show and maintain the primacy of place in the conceptual framing of this study.

Sense of Place

Returning to the idea of place as meaningful locations, Agnew (1987) suggested that this is constituted by three elements: location (the where, whether fixed or moving), locale (the material setting, whether real or imaginary) and sense of place (the subjective and affective attachment)

34 See this chapter, Section 2.2.3 for more discussion of this position.
(Cresswell 2004). An obvious critique of this threefold separation is that the creation of cyberspace or virtual space and consequently virtual places\(^{35}\) has almost negated the material element of locale. However, as Cresswell (2004: P.7) notes, if materiality is extended to ‘imaginary’ materiality then *locale* remains a viable notion in creating meaningful places.

The concept of *sense of place* has already been touched upon briefly, but in discussing it further it is important to recognise that there is more than one conceptualisation. The distinction between the interpretations is important due to the numerous ways researchers have framed their methodological approaches in different disciplines and research areas based on these differing interpretations. Conceptions of sense of place have been usefully summarised by Relph (2008) in his more recent work on place which separated out three basic approaches that he interpreted were negotiated when actualising the sense of place concept:

- *sense of place* – the ontological perspective of human being-in-the-world;
- *sense of a place* – the affective attachment developed for specific places;
- *sense of places* – the perception of the differences, interrelationships and interconnectedness of different places.

It is important to note that Relph’s division is in many ways an artificial one, or at least one that intentionally separates out what is often a simultaneous and integrated human emotional-cognitive event. For example, Feld (1996) provides a ‘sensuous’ interpretation of such complex events when he says that ‘as place is sensed, senses are placed; as places make sense, senses make place’ (Feld 1996 cited in Casey 1996: p.19). A crucial aspect of this interpretation to consider is that ‘place’ is where we are, at any given time (so our bodies/selves moving in space create place *cf.* Massey’s *intersections*) and not just when we are in specific places (or *locales* in Agnew’s terms). In addition, sense of place/s/of a place have dynamic, temporal and historio-geographical interrelationships of their own which influence the creation and balance of both inclusive and exclusive perspectives of individuals and groups about places (Anderson 2010). For example, a strong sense of a place amongst diverse social and ethnic groups, whether located in a particular place or not, can lead to exclusionary and insular attitudes and practices. When sense of a place leads to a sense of

\(^{35}\) For an example see [www.smallworlds.com](http://www.smallworlds.com).
ownership then conflict\textsuperscript{36} often arises, whether positive, as in rousing support for heritage conservation action or negative, as in the exclusion or expulsion of ‘undesirable’ individuals or social groups (Cresswell 2009; Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Mee and Wright 2009; Relph 2008). Relph (2008: p.39; my emphasis) contributes to this debate by positing that such parochial tendencies can be offset to an extent with the development of a pragmatic approach in which ‘an extended sense of place...leads to an appreciation of differences and challenges insularity’. How this appreciation is fostered appears to lie in the hands of the many institutional structures in society, both at national and particularly local levels. Relph (2008: p.41) suggests that:

‘To be effective, a pragmatic approach to place has to infiltrate political and planning thought and practice at the local, municipal level, because this is the scale at which place-attachment [sense of place] is most apparent...However, the...challenges confronting the twenty-first century cannot be addressed only by actions at the local level...they will require multilateral agreements and national policies to direct strategies for adaptation and mitigation.’

Within this study, it is elements of these national and regional policies and planning practices which feature within the regulatory context of rivers and recreation. These regulatory meanings alongside the cultural meanings of rivers are addressed in Section 2.3.

2.2.5 Place research in the New Zealand context

A selection of studies are briefly reviewed here in order to understand how place has been conceptualised in the New Zealand research context. An early and ‘isolated’ study undertaken between 1987-89 carried out an interpretive investigation into how the phenomenon of sense of place itself was formed (Hay 1988; 1998a; 1998b). Hay’s study of 270 members of the Banks Peninsula area (in Akaroa and Okains Bay) east of Christchurch encompassed both Māori and Pākehā peoples, residents, transients and out-migrants, in order to understand cross-cultural differences and similarities in forming a sense of place. Using an interpretive, individual and group interview methodology, Hay (1998a) identified a number of trends that appeared to be common in developing a sense of place about an area. These were summarised (Hay 1998a: p. 261) as:

\textsuperscript{36} It is recognised that this is an extremely simplistic, ‘black-and-white’ example. For the many grey areas of place contestation and geographies of exclusion and difference see Cresswell (1996); Sibley (1995); Smith (1999).
'Long-term residents on the Peninsula were found most often to be embedded in their place, placed both on the land and in a community. From this rooted context, they found their place in both the social order and the world, demonstrating the importance of situatedness...The shared meanings and values for long-term respondents of Pākehā and Māori communities showed that each group had its own existential space; these values also helped determine the character of their social spatiality.'

From Hay’s strongly humanistic perspective, he concluded (1998a: p. 261) that understandings of sense of place should be expanded to:

‘…include people’s feelings of being personally placed on the land and in communities (that are based on propinquity), showing the importance of not only social interaction but also ancestry (in the location), the dwelling experience, being an insider, and rootedness.’

He also concluded that for Māori, the Peninsula has strong spiritual and territorial meanings that were reaffirmed by community rituals and periodic gatherings of whanau (extended family and friends). Hay (1998a: p.262) observed that ‘Their communities resemble those of traditional agrarian societies, differing in a cosmology that spiritually links them to the land’. Although Hay did raise the issue of the effects of increasing population mobility on more sedentary populations like those of the Banks Peninsula, he acknowledged that ‘the sample of Peninsula respondents is not as residentially mobile as the national population’ (1998a: p.262). He also argued that there is little in-depth discussion of the social and political complexities and negotiations of the formation of sense of place as raised by writers such as Cresswell (2004) and Anderson (2010).

A more recent study that looked at the contribution of community and physical setting to the construction of sense of place, personal identity and place attachment was undertaken on the West Coast of New Zealand by Sampson and Goodrich (2005; 2009). The authors argued for an integrated understanding of place by taking both a social construction and material reality (but not environmental determinism) position. They explained their epistemological position in the following way (Sampson and Goodrich 2009: p.906):

‘Many scholars have applied quantitative methodologies to understanding sense of place...not only has this tended to reduce sense of place to measurable components...but it has also diminished the importance of community in providing an understanding of how identity is
formed in relation to place. We argue that sense of place is better understood in terms of the relations between parts, rather than the parts themselves.’

The research focused upon two rural communities in the Westland region – Whataroa and Harihari – employing an interpretive methodology based on an analysis of narratives from unstructured interviews with both key institutional players and community members with follow-up interviews several years later. The authors first explored the idea of people’s attachment to their locations/communities highlighting the importance of genealogical place attachment for many (for example narratives of birthright and lineage) but also attachment through ‘community involvement and contribution’ (2009: p.910). In terms of creating identity, they identified that ‘Both the collective rhetoric and shared narratives of community provide a very useful function in the production of individual identity and attachment to place’ (ibid.), citing a strong anti-government rhetoric displayed in the communities as an example.

The study also identified that individual narratives frequently referenced the physical setting (landscape) of the surrounding area in very positive terms, despite its frequently perceived isolated nature. This persistent rhetoric of isolation is ‘somewhat of a paradox...as much a product of people’s historical accounts...as it is part of the present’ (2009: p.912) which was interpreted as being an important part of the creation of place and identity for the participants, and linked back to the social constructionist paradigm of Sampson and Goodrich (2009). They concluded that ‘the particularities of the setting define possibilities and give rise to the range of ways in which practicing place can occur’ (2009: p.912). In summary, Sampson and Goodrich advocated a ‘more integrated theoretical perspective’ which takes into consideration the socially constructed nature of place, the contribution of the social community and the physical environment in creating a sense of place for Westlanders.

Finally a very different and specifically Māori understanding of ‘feelings for’ place that could be associated with the (Western) concept of sense of place was discussed in a study of waiata tangi (traditional songs of lament) taken from the tribal area of Taranaki on the North Island of New Zealand (Smith 2004). In her study Smith illustrated the key concepts that Māori recognised in their cosmology, their interaction with the land and their sense of belonging that may contribute to a

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37 Other facets of the study looked at the effects of the early closure of the ‘core and iconic timber logging industry’ on the two communities in 2002, which produced a very strong and vocal anti-government reaction (Sampson and Goodrich 2009: p.907).
Māori ‘sense of place’. She proposed that concepts such as *tangata whenua* (people of the land) and *tūrangawaewae* (a place where one has undisputed rights through ancestral delegation), *whakapapa* (genealogy going back to cosmological ancestors) and geographically-linked tribal cosmologies all contributed in explaining and understanding how Māori perceive, relate to and express their relationship with their environments - social, physical and temporal. Smith’s study divided the natural world into three ‘scapes’ – landscapes, seascapes and skyscapes – and discussed how these ‘scapes’ were represented in the *waiata tangi* in themes such as ancestral, metaphorical and symbolic places. The author also identified differing levels of perception of their natural environment recognised by Māori:

- As observers in which landscape visual elements are viewed ‘as scenery’;
- As the meanings given to perceptual elements such as the association of thunder with disaster;
- As ways to focus ones attention for introspection both on a personal level and intergenerational level (going back to the very origins of your tribe/ancestors);
- As ways of claiming ownership (e.g. by place *naming*) and kinship and recognising ancestral responsibilities (such as *kaitiaki* or guardianship) (Smith 2004: p.14).

In her analysis of whether the Māori ‘feelings for’ place concept equated to the Western concept of ‘sense of place’, Smith (2004: p.16) defined feelings for place as ‘sense/feelings (an emotive response), and place/land (the setting that gives rise to such a response)’. It is important to clarify this definition in light of the alternative (Western) conceptions of sense of place, discussed in previous sections, so that a clearer understanding of what Smith is comparing ‘feelings for’ place against, is appreciated. It is therefore very much concerned with the physical and geographic sense of place concept rather than ontological position although this division is itself is a Western construction and may not necessarily apply to Māori conceptualisations. Smith interpreted the ‘scapes’ specific to the Taranaki coastline as ‘imbued with strong, widely held and historically-grounded values associated with family connections, natural resources, and commitments to a particular locality, its people, and their historical and social settings’ (2004: p.16). One significant point that Smith (2004: p.16) also identified from her study was that:
‘A Māori sense of place would not only look back but would also incorporate an awareness of the generations to come – those who may have lost title to ancestral lands but can never be disinherit ed from or dispossessed of...ancestral associations.’

Rarely are references made in sense of place literature to the inclusion of an awareness of future generations in contributing to sense of place unless in the context of the loss of sense of place or the increase in what Relph conceived as placelessness (Relph 1976). Finally the study concluded that Māori ‘feelings for’ place could be considered as a distinct concept of sense of place although not necessarily directly equivalent to the Western concept (this is left open for future research). Therefore for Smith (2004: p.16-17) a Māori sense of place was conceived as:

‘Anything that makes Māori people ‘Māori’ in terms of their tūrangawaewae and tangata whenua status...including traditional markers of identity such as respect for and association with kin groups that trace their descent lines back to those homelands and ancestors...Values and meanings such as these, born of Māori myths of origin and whakapapa connections, past experiences and environmental forces, among many other determinants of identity, are based on strong ties between people and place.’

In summary each of these studies, which have taken a strongly interpretive and qualitative approach to their research, have contributed an understanding of people and place that is situated in the geographic and political contexts of New Zealand. The studies illustrate the variety, diversity and groundedness of place concepts in their particular research areas which also hold overlapping elements and integrate well with many of the more general place understandings already discussed.

Moving now to the next conceptual theme, the study outlines and examines the many cultural and regulatory meanings of rivers, and how they have come to be recognised more as institutionalised resources than culturally-shared symbols and places.

2.3 The Cultural and Regulatory Meanings of Rivers

2.3.1 Introducing the literature themes

Figure 2.6 sets out the selected themes within the conceptual literature that address some of the ideas relating to the cultural and regulatory meanings of rivers engaged with in this study. As can be seen, four key themes have been identified each of which are considered to be relevant to, and
intersect with, aspects of the place literature discussed in the preceding section (Section 2.2), and similarly are relevant to the recreation literature discussed in Section 2.4 ahead. Because of the extensive and international nature of the literature available for review and discussion on this context, the literature for each theme is approached selectively and strategically with a view to providing a brief international context for the literature followed by an overview of situated New Zealand literature relevant to the context of this study. Likewise, international literature addressing both Western and indigenous perspectives of rivers are discussed which anticipate the officially bi-cultural status of New Zealand.

Figure 2.6: The conceptual literature themes of the cultural and regulatory meanings of rivers

2.3.2 Cultural meanings of rivers

The concept of cultural meaning is closely interwoven with the idea of cultural value that is derived from the broader range of human values and which can be defined as ‘desirable goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people’s lives’ (Schwartz and Sagiv 1995: p.93). The research field on human values has a long pedigree arising out of the fields of philosophy and psychology in particular, but expanding during the 20th century into the fields of anthropology, sociology and marketing amongst others (Watkins 2009). Early work by Hofstede (1981: p.24) acknowledged the complex and competing definitions of culture; he proposed his own personal definition:
‘...that culture is the collective programming of the human mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from those of another. Culture, in this sense, is a system of collectively held values.’

In a way, this definition provides a non-descriptive umbrella for the many alternative definitions of culture which seek to identify those elements, such as ideas, symbols, language, material artefacts and environmental responses that constitute culture. For instance, Cohen (2009) identifies these as the material, subjective and social cultures that constitute culture. As Hofstede (1981: p.24) comments ‘culture is to human collectivity what personality is to an individual’. Alternative definitions of culture derived from cultural geography have interpreted culture as:

‘the medium through which people transform the mundane phenomenon of the material world into a world of significant symbols to which they give meaning and attach value.’

(Cosgrove and Jackson 1987: p.99)


‘“culture’ is symbolic, active, constantly subject to change and riven through with relations of power. And in all cases culture is, perhaps, not a thing but rather an identifiable process, an analytic category, a mappable level or sphere. For cultural geographers culture exists.’

And finally, Stephenson (2008) interprets a dynamic definition of culture in which:

‘People are considered to live culturally rather than in cultures, with the generative source of culture being human practices rather than in representations of the world.’ (citing Ingold 1994; 2008: p.129; my emphasis)

One aspect of these cultural practices is the diverse range of meanings and practices surrounding and central to fresh water and in particular rivers (Stokowski 2008). As Swyngedouw (2004: p.134-5) noted:

‘Water embodies, simultaneously and inseparably, bio-chemical and physical properties, socio-economic and political characteristics, and cultural and symbolic meanings. These multiple metabolisms of water are structured and organized through relations of power, that is relations of domination and subordination, of access and exclusion, of emancipation and repression.’
But rivers are not just their water. The margins, banks, terraces and gorges that rivers frequently cut through are also often conceptualised as ‘the river’ and have been subject to the same heated disputes of power and domination that Swyngedouw (2004) referred to. Indeed, in certain western systems including New Zealand, the margins along the ‘waterway’ are designated as reserved land for public use (in New Zealand, a 20 metre wide strip known as the Queen’s Chain) and have developed their own cultural and political meanings as both part of the ‘river’ and as ‘places’ simultaneously (Cullum et al. 2008; Gibbs 2009). Strang (2004) referred to the concept of water and rivers as forming ‘cultural landscapes’ in which access to rivers and their margins were increasingly problematical and disputed, not least due to changes in the local communities adjacent to the rivers (e.g. the influx of non-locals or ‘others’), and the increasingly polarised claims of competing (cultural) groups regarding their rights and relationships, often advanced as ‘traditional’, with rivers and the lands bordering them.

The cultural meanings attached to rivers include symbolic, religious, spiritual, social, as well as indigenous meanings and have been explored extensively; these are discussed in the next section.

**Spiritual and symbolic meanings of water and rivers**

Water, often in the form of rivers, features heavily in most early religious and mythical stories as foundational symbols of life and creation reflecting a long-understanding of its role in creating and sustaining life on Earth (Buttimer 1985; Postel and Richter 2003; Stokowski 2008). For example:

‘Water is the original symbol of life, and as such, it represents creation, absolution, and physical and spiritual renewal. Across all time, people of all cultures have attributed to water a beauty, mysticism, and power beyond compare. Of the four basic elements, water has the appearance of being the most human-like, the most alive.’ (Stokowski 2008: p.19)

From the 26th century BC Mesopotamian stories of Gilgamesh and the Great Flood to the comparable biblical flood and Noah’s Ark, from later Arthurian legends of lakes and rivers to the fountain of youth, water and rivers have been central to human culture and mythology. As Stokowski (2008: p.25) commented ‘water is the fluid powering creation mythology in all cultures’. Other stories or themes that combine mythological and symbolic elements in their make-up include

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38 See Stokowski 2008 for a detailed discussion of the symbolism of water in historical and cultural contexts.
flood stories symbolising cleansing, renewal and redemption as well as marking annual flood or inundation cycles that allowed fertile agricultural production, such as in the Nile Valley in ancient Egypt (Sadoff and Grey 2002; Strang 2004).

Similarly the idea of spiritual renewal through immersion or partial immersion in water has an ancient lineage and represents strongly symbolic acts of initiation, conversion, purification and renewal of faith – linking a range of established religions including Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, and Islam (Stokowski 2008; Strang 2004). The much quoted example of the River Ganges in India, a conflicting symbol of both purification and pollution to Hindus and non-Hindus respectively, is a prime example of the symbolic and sacred importance of rivers in religious practice (Perry 2009). The purification of both the living and the dead through immersion in the River Ganges is seen as a critical rite of passage in the Hindu religion, with many thousands of Hindus making the pilgrimage to Varanasi and Haridwar each year. The Ganges itself is worshipped concurrently as a deity (the goddess Ganga) and despite the increasingly polluted water, is still considered ‘pure’ by Hindus. An interesting point of note made by Perry (2009: p.17) in relation to the conflicting meanings of the Ganges is that:

‘These are clearly very different socio-cultural constructions of the same river...Consequently, these socially constructed meanings of the Ganges say more about how people identify themselves with others and the natural world than they do about the bio-physical attributes of objects and spaces. However...all of these river “realities,” despite their contrasting meanings, are valid, at least to the groups that hold them.’

Such diversity and rivalry in the symbolic meanings of fresh water and rivers is not a new or modern phenomenon. It is interesting to note that the mystical and spiritually symbolic power of water is often attributed to indigenous or pre-modern cultures in today’s western-dominated societies, as if there was some kind of ‘disconnect’ in modern society that has moved beyond such deeply sensed and universal beliefs (Hillman et al. 2008; Strange 2004). Likewise, employing everyday knowledges and understandings of watercourses, for instance to navigate across landscapes, is still recognised from indigenous perspectives. However, a reliance on modern technology (e.g. maps, compasses and GPS) appears to have seemingly replaced our more instinctual understanding of the primal essence of water (cf. Feld 1996). The modern symbolism of rivers as boundaries or more specifically marking boundaries to political areas (e.g. countries, provinces, counties and prefectures), has a
long history which has gained momentum in the modern era with increased global-scale colonisation and conflict (Sadoff and Grey 2002). As Sadoff and Grey (2002: p.392) state:

‘Rivers are thus as closely linked with the economic and political fabric of human society as they are with the landscape...Today’s international rivers are also interwoven with the geopolitical map...Africa is a case in point; lines drawn on maps in London, Paris, Berlin and Lisbon have left over 60 rivers crossing national borders, with more river basins per country and more countries per river basin in Africa than in any other continent.’

In another example, Havrelock (2011) discusses the continuing re-construction of the River Jordan as both the national border between and a crossing point for the ancient peoples of Israel and Palestine to its present status as a dividing line between the two warring cultures. In her study, Havrelock traced the ‘mythology’ of the river as an ancient line of division through references in the Bible and concluded that within the context of the river-land relationship:

‘The point is that the land is not an object or even really a place that can be fixed in time, but rather an act of narration with the power to determine where Israel belongs.’ (Havrelock cited in Alter 2012: p.27)

In constructing the land of Israel (and excluding the lands and people ‘outside’ of it) so the River Jordan assimilated that same narrative power to define and divide. The symbolic power of rivers to (b)order places of all scales has become the dominant feature of modern socio-political and spatial framings (Anderson 2010). However there are alternative conceptions of the symbolic nature of rivers as meeting places or places of intersection (but without denying their potential for conflict), as Anne Buttimer (1985: p.263) suggests:

‘Socially speaking, the beach, oasis, river or stream has been the meeting place for humans and animals throughout history. Water functions as magnet and shrine, in whose presence all kinds of communication barriers seem to dissolve.’

Buttimer explores the concept of using water as a metaphor for bringing knowledges/understandings together as opposed to the pervasive fragmentation of knowledges that currently exists, particularly in her context of academia. However, contrary to this perhaps rather idealised observation, water and especially freshwater are today more commonly seen as commodities, resources to be used and not ‘wasted’, an object of human interest (Stokowski 2008).
Because of this dominant utilitarian paradigm, freshwater has been and continues to be disputed, fought over, politicised, restricted, monopolised and divisive - a symbol to some of modern Western thinking itself (Linton 2010; Postel and Richter 2003; Strang 2004).

Research linking themes of place, water symbolism and cultural meanings has been undertaken by a number of authors from dominantly indigenous perspectives. Anthropological research by Feld looking at the Kaluli people of Bosavi, Papua New Guinea, investigated the language and naming relationships of the people with their surrounding tropical rainforest home and in particular, the many waterways that flow through their lands (Feld 1996). Using the concept of acoustemology – ‘local conditions of acoustic sensation, knowledge, and imagination embodied in the cultural particular sense of place resounding in Bosavi’ (Feld 1996: p.91) – Feld explores Kaluli place naming practices and poetic song texts, demonstrating the centrality of ‘flow’ to both practices. Flow, as he suggests, describes how ‘the inseparability of rainforest waters and lands is encountered and imagined to be like the flow of voice through the body’s contours’ (ibid.). Through analogy between voice/sound and water flows, the Kaluli people perceive and express their relationship to water and land through songs that reflect the flow of the water and which:

‘Linking what Bergson calls the “reflecting” and “absorbing” powers of the body, Kaluli sing about waterways, sing with water, imagine song as water flowing like an embodied voice. Here the poetics of place merge with the sensuousness of place as soundscape and with the sensuality of the singing voice.’ (Feld 1996: p.134)

This unique (indigenous) perspective of water flows is ideologically a long way from the widely held utilitarian perspective of water and emphasises the culturally specific meanings of water that require consideration when addressing its symbolic and cultural values.

Two separate but relevant studies undertaken by Goodall (2002) and Toussaint (2008) respectively, discuss the varied and culturally specific meanings and conceptions of rivers from Australian Aboriginal and non-aboriginal perspectives. Goodall’s work explores the understandings of the Yuwalarraay peoples of the Darling floodplain, New South Wales, identifying the differences and similarities in their cultural outlooks that have joined them together in an uneasy alliance against the expanding cotton industry and its mass irrigation schemes. Of particular note is her observation (2002: p.39) that:
‘Water and water pathways are central to the way Aboriginal people speak about their land, and many traditional stories about land are about networks of watering places...I have come to recognise how, instead of the earth and stones I saw as the permanent and substantial underlying structure of the land, they saw the rivers, the springs and the overflow channels as creating the defining shape and character of their country.’

And yet Goodall (2002: p.40; my emphasis) comments that it is observable that both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural groups relate to the country (land and water) in a similar manner:

‘They [white residents] convey an understanding of the land as a patchwork of people and their named possessions, the social networks which they regard as the essence of the ‘bush’...what Aboriginal people are referring to is a peopled land and a network of story and family, which is deeply grounded but is nevertheless a network of human relationships.’

Toussaint’s work with the people of the Kimberly region in northern Western Australia examines their attachments to the Fitzroy River developed through the various local conflicts and disputes over water (Toussaint 2008). Using the work of Arturo Escobar, Toussaint frames people’s attachment to water as being ‘constantly created and re-created by people’s social and political engagement with that place’ (2008: p.48), and she observes that for both the indigenous (Aboriginal) and non-indigenous groups living in the Fitzroy Valley, the river has become ‘a site of meaningful engagement’ (2008: p.57). Through such political, ecological and social engagement, both in terms of group friction and attachment to place, so place-based cultures develop meaning and acquire new forms of (river) symbolism that reflect current and ongoing relationships in place.

Cultural meanings of rivers: New Zealand

Moving the discussion of the cultural meanings of rivers to the specifically geographic and culturally complex context of New Zealand, a number of observations can be made. New Zealand is a young country by western political terms but in cultural terms it has been the subject of human colonisation since the 13th Century CE when Polynesian explorers and colonists traversed the Pacific Ocean to found settlements initially along the coastal areas of Aotearoa/New Zealand (King 2003). In the eight hundred years following their arrival, the Polynesian settlers developed their Stone Age

39 New Zealand was ‘discovered’ by western explorers initially in 1642 by Abel Tasman and again by James Cook in 1769.
culture of agriculture and fishing into the culturally sophisticated Māori culture. The arrival of European traders and then settlers in the early 19th Century followed by more extensive settlement and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti O Waitangi) between the British Crown and the Māori peoples in 1840 (Roberts 1996), changed the cultural make-up of New Zealand irrevocably.

The social, political and cultural development of New Zealand since the Treaty with the continued arrival of emigrants, means that today, it is a country of many cultures with mixed, sometimes competing, but dominantly western cultural values. A resurgence of awareness and the importance of Māori cultural values, so closely embedded in their relationship with their customary lands and fishing grounds, began in the 1970s (Mills 2009). The formation of the Waitangi Tribunal by the New Zealand government in 1975 has also contributed in part to the Māori resurgence through legally recognising individual Māori iwi rights including access to former iwi lands for customary food gathering practices (mahinga kai) and particularly river rights (Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2012; Tipa 2009; Williams 2006).

Reflecting for a moment on these issues, it is important to consider how to address them when two distinct cultural world views are represented within one political nation. Combining two world views in one discussion is more challenging than it may appear, as such fundamentally different perspectives tend to be addressed from each standpoint leading perhaps inevitably to comparison and division (dialectic) rather than real discussion and contemplation (dialogue). A similar separation of perspectives has been noted by other authors in the context of the planning and resource management frameworks in New Zealand (e.g. Šunde 2008). Therefore, in order to promote a more dialogic process, the following section discusses the cultural values and meanings of rivers through a thematic approach that integrates both Māori and non-Māori cultural perspectives.

Spiritual and symbolic meanings of New Zealand rivers

In some ways it is easier to comment upon Māori meanings of rivers more than non-Māori meanings as their spiritual and symbolic world views have been considered more homogenous and defined in comparison to the diverse spiritual and symbolic understandings associated with New Zealand’s

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40 The Waitangi Tribunal was established by the New Zealand government to hear the grievances of Māori iwi regarding land claims, customary rights and recognition of Māori cultural values; see Mills (2009) for an overview of the history of the tribunal.

41 For a detailed outline of Māori world view concepts in general, the reader is referred to Barlow (1991).
emigrant population (Bishop 1998). However, caution is needed in such universalising, as Māori groups or iwi understandings can be as equally diverse although, as Tipa notes (2009: p.99) ‘common themes and foundations exist among them [Māori] in terms of beliefs, values and knowledge’. In Māori culture, water (wai\textsuperscript{42}) is central to their world system as it is seen as the western equivalent of the primordial waters from which life was created (in Māori culture by atua – gods - through their procreation) and through the creation of other primary deities such as Ranginui (the Sky Father) and Papatuanuku (the Earth Mother); water represents their relationship to each other (in the form of tears and mist respectively; Douglas 1984; Robb and Bright 2004; Tipa 2009; Williams 2006).

Such close relationships are also considered a central element in Māori culture through whakapapa (genealogy) whereby all things are related regardless of their origination (i.e. cosmological or human) or materiality. As Tipa (2009: p.99) notes ‘Māori see themselves as being part of the environment. No distinction is made between the inanimate and the animate or between abiotic or biotic’. Additional concepts that imbue the natural world with life and interconnectedness include mauri (life force), wairua (spirit), whanaungatanga (kinship) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship), and together these constitute part of the fundamental world view of Māori (Barlow 1991; Tipa 2009). As noted previously, certain near-universal threads run through many of the world’s cultural cosmologies and belief systems and the idea of water as a primordial and life-giving element is common to both Māori and many western-based systems (Robb and Bright 2004).

Water bodies in the form of both lakes (roto) and rivers (awa) feature as important elements symbolising wai and particularly Wai Māori (freshwater\textsuperscript{43}). Unsurprisingly the different states and conditions of Wai Māori are recognised in Māori language (for example Wai Mate – ‘dead’ water) and many of these have continued in modern use in place-names such as Waimate in the South Island. Indeed the ubiquity and survival of ‘wai’ in New Zealand place-names is evidence of the importance and prominence of water in both Māori and non-Māori cultures (Kennedy and Jefferies 2009). Rivers for Māori are sites of multiple significance: spiritual, symbolic and cultural - the latter perhaps epitomised by the concept of mahinga kai (customary food gathering and other resources,

\footnote{The deity of all water is Parawhenuamea who is seen as the personification of rivers and streams (Williams 2006).}

\footnote{As in many cultures, Māori distinguish between Wai Māori (freshwater), Wai Tai (saltwater) and Wai Mataitai (brackish water; Tipa 2009). See Kennedy and Jefferies (2009) for an excellent and detailed account of current understandings of water in Māori culture, both past and present from a Kaupapa Māori research perspective.}
their gathering places and traditional access routes; Douglas 1984; Townsend et al. 2004). The cultural practices of *mahinga kai* also serve to connect the symbolic meanings of rivers with their broader economic values for Māori that also include tourism, recreation and water extraction (Robb and Bright 2004).

Little academic research has been undertaken on the spiritual and symbolic values and meanings of rivers to Pākehā or non-Māori New Zealanders with the focus of research strongly placed on utilitarian values such as drinking water, power generation, and ecosystem services (see Robb and Bright 2004 for an example of this approach). River meanings however have been reflected on through other media such as in literature, poetry, art and television. The book *Faces of the River* by Young and Foster (1986) and the 2010 television series *Rivers* by Craig Potton both examine the key rivers of New Zealand from a mixture of cultural perspectives, looking at the ways in which the different rivers have shaped the land and influenced local and national culture. As Potton (2010) says:

‘Māori have a unique and defining relationship with their awa (or river) and New Zealand’s artists, writers and filmmakers have all been greatly inspired by these waterways. These rivers tell us much about the progress and evolution of New Zealand as a nation – and the way in which they have lured generations seeking to make their fortune from greenstone and gold, hydro-power, wine and tourism.’

A quote from the Clutha River long-time activist, Paul Powell in *Faces of the River* (1986) provides a further spiritual dimension in which concepts of identity and freedom are symbolised through New Zealand’s rivers:

‘...I’ve always felt that the Clutha is freedom. Like the mountains, it represents to me the attitudes of freedom that New Zealanders should have. It’s light, it’s life. It’s very much alive, with a wonderful sense of God’s creation. It produces an appreciation of harmony.’ (Young and Foster 1986: p.194)

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44 As an example in Robb and Bright’s chapter ‘Values and uses of water’ in the *Freshwaters of New Zealand* (2004) they address in order: ecosystem services; recreation; tourism; Māori values; spiritual, cultural and historic values; domestic water; stock water; industrial water; hydro-electricity; irrigation and commercial freshwater fisheries.
Seeing that the Clutha River became the field research area for this study, understanding the cultural diversity, complexity and richness of meanings for New Zealand’s rivers as reflected in the above quote, became a research imperative. John Mackay, writing of his river canoeing adventures in the early 1970s, summarised what has been presumed for many Pākehā to be a common cultural/spiritual meaning for rivers:

‘There’s something fascinating about the flowing of a river. Rivers are the great prime movers of nature. The wind and the clouds move too, but they’re ephemeral, dispersed, blowing out of the sky and disappearing. Only rivers move inexorably and forever through the country linking one place with another, yesterday with today. And as you site on the bank watching it all flow by...there’s something about it that’s very refreshing to the soul, very soothing.’ (Mackay 1978: p.103)

Rivers as symbolising a coming together of nature, time, constancy, spiritual renewal and peacefulness is fundamental to Mackay’s comment and although a Māori perspective is more likely to invoke a deity, ancestor (tipuna) or a statement of identity in any similar reflection, the spiritual and symbolic values and meanings of rivers to both Māori and Pākehā New Zealanders do share overlapping cultural meanings. It is how such meanings are identified, legislated around and ultimately managed that substantial differences have arisen in New Zealand and continue to be a source of contention and debate (Bishop 2010; Steenstra 2009; Šunde 2008). This is returned to later in the discussion of regulatory frameworks for rivers.

**Historic values**

As with Māori New Zealanders, for many Pākehā and other non-Māori people, their historical connections with rivers are interwoven with the diverse symbolic and spiritual meanings held for them. As Robb and Bright (2004: p.42.3) comment:

‘There are unlikely to be many New Zealanders who do not identify with a river or lake that features in their childhood play, holidays, adventures, family histories and/or whakapapa.

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45 This section is particularly pertinent to the history of Chinese people in New Zealand and especially the Clutha River and Otago since the mid-19th century when they constituted a key part of the development and exploitation of gold in the region. See Ng (1993) and Ng (1999) for a comprehensive study of the Chinese miners in Otago in 19th and early 20th century.
Rivers, lakes, springs and geothermal systems influence how people identify with and have pride in where they live.\(^{46}\)

Rivers such as the Waikato River in the North Island have immense historical and political as well as spiritual value to Māori communities but equally a river such as the South Island’s Clutha River has comparable value and meanings to non-Māori communities. Young and Foster stated this colourfully in their opening chapter on the Clutha River (1986: p.189):

‘In another hundred years, the Clutha will have an attachment to the people of Otago that will be like that which the Waikato has long had with its Māori population. The ancestors are here, buried along its banks, drowned in its aquamarine depths, their memories caught in the bubbles of its vast, deliberate flow.’

History in terms of whakapapa can be applied to both Māori and non-Māori cultural perspectives although Māori will see their whakapapa as leading back to not just their human ancestors but their cosmological and natural (e.g., ancestral mountains and rivers) ancestors (O’Regan cited in Douglas 1984: p.9). Most European-descended New Zealanders are more likely to trace their ancestry in New Zealand as far back as the arrival of their earliest family and then perhaps back to their country of origin, remaining firmly rooted in an anthropocentric past. The role of rivers in creating and maintaining a sense of history for both cultures and also as an integral part of their intertwined history since the European colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand began in the early 1800s is evident through each culture’s knowledge-bases, and literary and oral traditions (Young and Foster 1986). For Māori, traditional knowledge or Matauranga Māori, held in forms such as Te Reo (language), waiata (songs or songs of lament) and whakatauki (proverbs) talks about rivers and other landscape features as a way to both recollect their cultural meanings to individual iwi, hapu and whanau, and to mark their place — historically and geographically - in tribal memory (Harmsworth 2002; Smith 2010).

For Pākehā, New Zealand history (as it was ‘made’) was recorded through established and more formal approaches (actual ‘histories’, surveys, legal documents and newspapers for example). There is a strong argument (and to some degree acceptance in post-modern academia) that these histories were also undertaken as conscious acts - as a way to establish the dominance of their political and

\(^{46}\) Such a universalising statement neglects to acknowledge those New Zealanders for whom rivers and water in general have not been part of their lives. For an alternative discussion of the exclusion of some cultural and ethnic groups from the ‘New Zealand’ way of life see Lovelock et al. (2011).
colonial ideologies (Bishop 1998; Pihama et al. 2002). Rivers have been part of European and other immigrants' histories since their earliest arrival in the 19th century featuring as means of access, exploration and conquest of the islands, and subsequently routes of communication, trade and adventure (Mackay 1978). Some rivers became the foci of industry and economy, such as gold mining, irrigation and farming (and in the 20th century hydroelectric power and water supply) and with this increasingly utilitarian use it can be argued that their symbolic and historic meanings have become subsumed by their economic values to New Zealand (Robb and Bright 200447). However, the historic values of the rivers remain in terms of the places (settlements), the identities (people and regions) and the national images they have helped create, whether Pākehā or Māori or combined.

*Customary values and practices*

Customary values and practices (*tikanga Māori*) is a phrase used in Māori contexts to describe the traditional cultural practices and customs of Māori which preserve the *mauri* of all things through practices such as *mahinga kai, wai taonga* (treasured waters) and *kaitiakitanga* (Bess 2001; Townsend et al. 2004). *Tikanga Māori* is also recognised to varying degrees in New Zealand law including within the 1989 Education Act and the 1991 Resource Management Act (Mead 2003). Pākehā New Zealanders do not possess such a distinct system of customary values and practices in the same way that Māori communities do, their customs largely being embedded within broader societal, religious and political systems. New Zealand law is based upon English common law but the social and religious values and customs of Pākehā are far more mixed reflecting their heterogeneous origins (Noakes 2011). One aspect that could be proposed as a form of customary practice is the western-conceived idea of leisure and recreation as contributing to social values and actions (Williams 2003; Rojek 2005). Through participation in leisure and recreational practices both Pākehā and Māori New Zealanders share a common aspect of customary practice that has different meanings for each culture. As Smith noted in the context of such differences (1998: p.61):

‘Māori attitudes to leisure are as diverse as their lifestyles. This diversity is different to that of Pākehā for it incorporates a spiritual dimension not normally present in Western societies, which links Māori and the environment in a network of family relationships.’

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47 For example, Robb and Bright (2004: p.42.11) have estimated the economic value of just the Manawatu-Wanganui River region alone as $2.4 billion for development uses (e.g. agriculture and hydropower) and $283 million for *in situ* uses such as fishing, jet boating and hunting.
Concomitantly Williams concludes that in Western society (2003: p.4) ‘Put simply, leisure is what people make of it. Fundamentally, too, leisure is a practice, not merely a product...’ emphasising the practice qualities of leisure and recreation rather than simply being interpreted as activities. There has been much discussion of the interrelationships between societies, culture and leisure and recreation and how they interact with each other to influence both group and individual behaviour and development (Rojek 2005). Suffice it to say that such broad customary practices - whether accepted as such or not - provide an opportunity for further discussion of the cross-cultural meanings of rivers (and recreation) that can potentially benefit New Zealand.

2.3.3 Politics of water

Although an established field of study in its own right and forming the conceptual framework for other areas of water-related research, it is necessary to touch upon the current politics of water as a (literature) theme in this study focusing upon how it has influenced the understandings of rivers and their watery contents. It is hard if not impossible to separate politics and culture but often the political ideologies (and driving economics) of governments and institutions has overridden the cultural and social meanings of ‘things’ (such as water) to reframe them for their own ends and purposes (Swyngedouw 2005). For example, the privatisation of water and its supply has been the focus of much academic study, particularly from political ecology and historical geography standpoints (see Bakker 2010; Linton 2010; Strang 2004; Swyngedouw 2005). It is hard to give a proper representation of such a broad and complex field so only those points relevant to the current study are addressed here.

Recognising Water as (social) process and not a ‘thing’

Strang comments in the opening line to her book The Meaning of Water (2004: p.1) that:

‘All over the blue planet, even in the most rained-upon nations, people are engaged in conflicts over water. There are debates about who should own it, manage it, have access to it, profit from it, control it or regulate it. Nothing on earth, not even land, is more contested.’

The control of water, specifically freshwater, is a debate that is engaging not just politicians, activists and academics but ‘ordinary’ people as well, whether in standing up for their ‘rights’ to access clean drinking water (a debate in itself), irrigate their land or have the freedom to choose their suppliers
and prices (ibid.; Bakker 2011). For many people in countries outside of the West, systems of water supply, such as on the African continent, and the availability of freshwater is a matter of life or death as the extended droughts in Ethiopia and Somalia have sadly highlighted. Even countries as ‘clean and green’48 as New Zealand have not been immune to water shortages and increasingly dry summers, as Strang (2004: p.1) again notes ‘Even in...New Zealand, hot summers are leading with increasing frequency to dry rivers, droughts and the prospect of insufficient water at the time of year when it is needed the most’.

Bakker (2011: p.190) expressed her view of water in the following way:

‘Water is both political and biopolitical...As it cycles, water transgresses geopolitical boundaries, defies jurisdictions, pits upstream against downstream users, and creates competition and conflict over its uses as a source...and sink. Water is thus intensely political in a conventional sense: it is implicated in contested relationships of power and authority.’

Water then is a highly current and contentious issue increasingly at the heart of international power struggles but how it has come to be so (beyond its basic life-supporting quality) has only recently been the subject of academic study. For example, how water has been and is conceived and hence considered by people is the subject of Linton’s (2010) book What is Water? He undertakes an historical examination to try to understand the nature of, and then reframe the current water debate by interpreting water as a ‘process rather than a thing’, co-constituted through a network of social relations between humans and water (ibid.: p.4). As he explains:

‘The “water process” is that out of which every specific instance of water gets abstracted, including scientific representations such as H₂O. On this view, things such as H₂O do not constitute the fundamental reality of water but, rather, are fixations that occur at the nexus of the water process and the social process of producing and representing scientific knowledge...Every instance of water that we can think of occurs as a product of the water process and various kinds of social processes and practices. It is in this sense that we discuss the social nature of water – not that society produces water per se, but that every instance of water that has significance for us is saturated with the ideas, meanings, values, and potentials that we have conferred upon it.’ (ibid.: p.4)

48 A long-standing, award-winning Tourism New Zealand slogan which has caused much debate on its ‘authenticity’. See Bell (2008) for research on the 100% Pure New Zealand brand.
Linton (2010) goes on to argue that the complication of water beyond its (Western) accepted abstract conceptions primarily as a resource to be managed (one of its many ‘fixations’), lies ‘at the root of what is often called the water crisis’ and that such a crisis (which in his view does indeed exist) ‘stems from the fact that we can no longer presume a simple identity for water...’ (ibid.: p.5).

Water has become central to many power structures (e.g. governments, institutions and economic organisations) that have and continue to use certain fixed conceptions of water to support, influence and even reify their particular networks of social relations to the disadvantage and exclusion of those with alternative conceptualisations of water. As Linton (2010: p.13) suggests:

‘The meanings of water that get fixed in any particular time and place can therefore be seen as a function of the relative power of different social actors.’

The modern reduction of water to H₂O is put forward by Linton as the ultimate abstraction or fixation of water in which water has become *deterritorialized* or *placeless* (to use geographical terms), an argument supported by Strang when she comments that water has become ‘a metaphorical abstraction...in which it ceases to be particular to any place or group’ (Strang 2004 cited in Linton 2010: p.18). This deterritorializing and objectification of water (into ‘global water’) is seen as having led to an incompatibility between different ways of knowing water and people; a position Strang (2004: p.3) also argues based on her study of the River Stour in England in which:

‘The ethnographic data suggest that the meanings poured into water have proved highly consistent over time...A clearer view of the undercurrents also suggests that the contemporary arrangement of water ownership and management in the UK...is fundamentally at odds with these powerful meanings.’

In summary, one (simplified) way of interpreting the foundations of the current water crisis (and concurrently politics of water) is the separation of water from its social networks of production and representation and the ongoing fight to control and claim ownership of it on an increasingly global political and spatial scale. Part of this fight for control intersects with the equally disputed and broad arenas of water privatisation and water rights which are now touched on briefly.
Water ownership

Situated in an overtly Marxist position, the political ecologist Swyngedouw (2005) has written on the international issue of water privatisation, taken up by other authors including Strang (2004) and Bakker (2011), which he sees as:

‘The water sector, together with many others, has become one of the battlefields over which “accumulation by dispossession” [privatisation] tactics are waged, often won by capital, and occasionally lost.’ (2005: p.83; my emphasis)

Swyngedouw explained his definition of privatisation in the following statement:

‘The official terminology for “accumulation by dispossession” is of course “privatization.” As the latter term suggests, privatization is a process through which activities, resources, and the like, which had not been formally privately owned, managed or organized, are taken away from whoever or whatever owned them before and transferred to a new property configuration that is based on some form of “private” ownership or control. Privatization, therefore, is nothing else than a legally and institutionally condoned, if not encouraged, form of theft.’ (2005: p.82; my emphasis)

Bakker (2011: p.6) proposes a moderated view of the water privatization debate in which there is less polarisation between public, private and community governance and supply structures and which recognises that ‘we cannot categorically refute private sector involvement in water supply, nor simplistically defend government provision’. In her view (ibid.: p.6) there is a need to:

‘...expand our focus beyond formal supply networks, develop an understanding of the roles that both public and private actors play in governance of urban water supply for the poor, and pay closer attention to the practices of urban water use in developing countries...’

The privatisation of water is particularly relevant to the related topics of ownership and dams particularly in New Zealand where it has and continues to have major debates with regard to both. For example, at the time of writing, water rights between Māori and the Government are a contentious issue currently being debated via a national hui (discussion) and in the ongoing

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49 In the context of urban water supply.
50 See Mahon 2006 The Water Thieves for an individually (Kiwi) New Zealand perspective of the current politics of water regarding the Hurunui River in Canterbury.
Waitangi Tribunal. The issue of Māori water rights was prompted by the sale of shares in some state owned assets including several power companies with existing water consents for power generation (largely through hydroelectric plants) which has intersected with the broader issues of Māori property rights currently under permanent inquiry. There also looms the possibility of a case being brought before the New Zealand High Court by the Māori Council to halt the asset sales and establish their water rights prior to any future market flotation by the Government (Otago Daily Times 2012b). The position of Māori water rights is at present unclear although one commentator has argued that in accordance with Tikanga Māori (traditional practices/lore), prior to 1840 individual Hapū exercised ‘ownership and control over all land and resources within their territory. This included the waterways and the water resource that flowed through their territory’ (Hitchcock 2012). This is in direct opposition to (British) common law which operates in New Zealand (as a Crown entity) and under which water is not considered to be owned by anyone with the Government retaining the right to ‘allocate use rights’ (ibid.). Whatever the eventual outcome of the water rights debate in New Zealand, it is almost guaranteed it will neither be quick or accepted by all parties.

Dams and water

The current Māori water rights debate is a timely highlight of the contested intersections between water politics, power generation and control, and rivers both in New Zealand and internationally. The material and often symbolic nexus of this contentious intersection are the hydroelectric power stations or dams littered along many of the world’s great (and small) river networks. From a macro-management perspective, a wealth of detailed and site-specific research exists from North America and internationally on the issues of river management, dams and dam removal, largely from an ecosystem and ethics perspective (for example, World Commission on Dams 2000; Bednarek 2001; Gudorf and Huchingson 2003; Renöfält et al. 2010). However, less research has been undertaken on the effects of dams or their removal on, for instance, the recreational aspects of this hotly debated field (see Collier et al. 1996; Loomis 2002) and even less research has been undertaken in New Zealand, a country recognised internationally for both its hydroelectric power generation and tourism (Robb and Bright 2004; Young et al. 2004). The hydro-power aspect of the debate is particularly current in New Zealand (as of 2012) with a considerable number of proposed dam projects either in their initial stages of development or in the process of gaining consent (Murdoch and Ward-Holmes 2010). In the context of this thesis, the Clutha River has already been subject to
two hydroelectric power developments which attracted an active protest phase that lasted well over a decade (Memon 1989; Powell 1978; see also Chapter One, Section 1.4). With the recent announcement from Contact Energy to place future hydroelectric power options on hold for the foreseeable future (Otago Daily Times 2012a), the future debates over the Clutha’s water are now likely to focus on issues of sufficient irrigation supply and water quality (ORC 2012).

2.3.4 River regulatory frameworks

The regulatory and governance frameworks that create, formalise and manage water and rivers across the world are highly diverse, usually specific to their national and regional political and environmental contexts and have and continue to change over time as international approaches and attitudes to river management have likewise changed (Hooper 2006; Kaika 2003; Savenije and van der Zaag 2000). However:

‘We seem to understand that, as much as water may divide groups of people and pit countries against each other, water as the most basic human need appears to mobilise countries in both regions [referencing the EU and Southern African Development Community] toward common thinking, and a common agenda.’ (Savenije and van der Zaag 2000: p.12)

This ‘common agenda’ has been instrumental in the development of new integrated water resource management (IWRM) frameworks which are being adopted around the world and feature particularly in Europe and Australasia (Davis and Threlfall 2006; Hooper 2006; Kaika 2003). IWRM has been defined as:

‘...a process which promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.’ (Global Water Partnership 2000 cited in Mitchell 2005: p.1335)

As an example of IWRM, the European Union’s Water Framework Directive, which was formally adopted in 2000, acknowledged a change in emphasis from state-led water directives to multi-agency governance, the increasing fragmentation and changing roles and scales of centres of power, and the rise in significance of environmental protection (Kaika 2003). As Kaika (2003: p.300) notes, the EU water framework directive:
‘...introduces a new approach to water management based on river basins (an integrated approach), linking for the first time physical planning with water resource planning. Secondly, it stipulates that water quality cannot be seen outside emission controls and groundwater protection (a combined approach).’

In New Zealand an early form of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) was adopted through the restructuring of its national resource management legislation culminating in the 1991 Resource Management Act (RMA) which proposed the sustainable management of air, land and water resources through a framework that focused upon the ‘management and mitigation of adverse environmental effects of activities’ (Davis and Threlfall 2006: p.85). Within the RMA the specific management of freshwater (and as a consequence rivers) is managed through a ‘hierarchy’ of national and regional policy statements, regional plans and resource consents through which ‘the primary responsibility for integrated management of most freshwater and other natural resources lie[s] with New Zealand’s 12 regional councils and four unitary authorities’ (Lennox et al. 2011: p.1383; Davis and Threlfall 2006). In tandem with the RMA, the Local Government Act 2002 enables regional councils ‘to identify local sustainability priorities and implement long-term action plans within a participatory sustainable development governance framework’ (Painter and Memon 2008: p.228). The RMA also recognises and actively incorporates Māori perspectives and representation in New Zealand’s natural resource management which, by de facto, includes rivers.

However, the RMA has been criticised for ‘focusing narrowly on effects-based management...and, in many cases, failing to achieve its goal of sustainable management’, its over-riding of Māori interests (Lennox et al. 2011: p.1383) and its inability to address ‘long-standing and newly emergent water conflicts within a sustainable development framework’ (Painter and Memon 2008: p.228). IWRM in general is not free of its critics either and Linton (2010: p.241) in particular notes that:

‘Although it does perhaps integrate the interests of different stakeholders, IWRM is still water resources management. Stakeholders and participants are thereby consulted but not so as to

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51 See Davis and Threlfall (2006) for a comprehensive account of the IWRM and the RMA. See also Lennox et al. (2011) and Painter and Memon (2008) for recent overviews and critiques of IWRM in New Zealand.

52 For example, on 1st July 2011 the New Zealand Government issued the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2011 which ‘sets out objectives and policies that direct local government to manage water in an integrated and sustainable way, while providing for economic growth within set water quantity and quality limits. The national policy statement is a first step to improve freshwater management at a national level.’ (MfE 2011: p.3).
elicit how different players may relate to water in ways other than as a resource whose natural disposition is to be managed.’ (author’s emphasis)

IWRM and alternative meanings of water

Linton’s critique of IWRM highlights some of the arguments made for integrating the cultural meanings and values of rivers into regulatory frameworks which have been seen as lacking by a number of researchers (for instance McCool et al. 2008; Steenstra 2009; Strang 2004). Integrating diverse cultural meanings and values into existing river regulatory frameworks (whether resource, recreation or general planning frameworks) has been, and continues to be a subject of interest to both researchers and managers (Sadoff and Grey 2002; Jaspers 2003; Flanagan and Laituri 2004; Toussaint 2008; Hillman 2009).

In the majority of western-based planning systems, rivers and their catchments are represented primarily as resources to be managed, controlled, allocated and conserved (McCool et al. 2008; Postel and Richter 2003; Hillman 2009). This dominantly resource-driven paradigm has made problematical the inclusion of cultural meanings into river management frameworks with the focus being placed more on the collection and analysis of scientific and empirical data. The habitual separation of cultural meanings and values from the multitude of other river values (e.g. ecological and economic) in river management appears to reflect a broader western scientific and economic attitude that addresses the varying elements of culture independently of other types of knowledge (Hillman 2009). However in many non-western cultures such a separation between the different knowledges and their management does not exist or is understood and practiced in alternative ways (Steenstra 2009). For example, the growth of interest in ‘indigenous knowledge’ in water and river management is reflected in a growing body of work that is situated mainly within the environmental disciplines (Berkes 2009; Tipa and Welch 2006).

Reflecting the gradual move towards integrating different types of knowledge and meanings into existing environmental and resource management frameworks, recent work by Mick Hillman (2009: p.1988) examined the claims for a new paradigm shift in river management that moves ‘away from top-down, reach-scale engineering towards catchment-scale planning, community participation, ecosystem science and adaptive management’. Through an analysis of current literature and selected river management projects Hillman (2009: p.2005) reached a number of conclusions, a key point regarding adaptive management being:
‘...the lack of deeper reflection on the range of knowledge required in river management and [the] limited attention given to socio-cultural values means that inclusive processes are frequently not in place to generate the basis for such learning. In particular, lack of inclusion of local knowledge in management planning further risks creating the perception of tokenism, promoting community disaffection and a slide back to top-down control and the ongoing dominance of historic stakes and use-values.’

The inclusion of cultural meanings, values and in particular indigenous values in such new river management paradigms appears to suffer from the same paucity of understanding and integration. Such values and practices, as Hillman (2009: p.1996) also observes, often comprise experiential and place-based knowledges and are ‘closely linked to the principle of participatory and adaptive management’. Hillman (2009: p.2005) further concludes:

‘...an authentic paradigm shift means...making the essential connections required for integrated river management. Connections should operate both within and across layers of knowledge and management principles. Such integration remains elusive.’

Some of the key points raised in this recent analysis are partially reflected in other international studies noticeably those with a cultural values/indigenous perspective. Just one example of this is the issue of water management rights in the Wind River Basin in Wyoming, USA which was discussed by Flanagan and Laituri (2004) in their work on Native American water rights and local cultural knowledge. Their examination of the level of integration of indigenous cultural values with existing water resource management frameworks compared the Wind River Water Code developed by the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho peoples with Wyoming Water Statutes through a process of interviews and the development of a cultural database of the tribes. They found that cultural perspectives between the two water codes differed in three specific areas: defining and prioritising beneficial use, stream preservation, and instream flows. The adoption by the tribes of the Wind River Water Code, which embraces ‘a Euro-American strategy to codify American Indian perspectives for resource management’ by integrating ‘culturally specific information into a [Euro-American legal] management code’, is interpreted as the most significant breakthrough in cross-cultural integration for the Wind River Reservation peoples by the authors (2004: p.269). However Flanagan and Laituri (2004: p.269) also note that:
‘...the document is only a preliminary step, as the practice and implementation of water law indicates that Wyoming Water Law will take precedence over tribal water regulations.’

Such a statement is equally significant in terms of recognising the limits that Euro-American framed legislation places on the further integration of indigenous (and alternative) cultural meanings and values of water and rivers. This reflects the broader conclusions reached by Hillman (2009) on the dearth of deeper cultural integration at a paradigmatic level in water and river resource management.

*New Zealand’s river regulatory frameworks – an increasingly (bi)cultural approach*

The introduction of cultural values into alternative\(^{53}\) river management frameworks in New Zealand has been slowly developing over the last 10-15 years (Woods and Howard-Williams 2004). A number of initiatives have been put in motion, in part stimulated by the perceived international shift towards a more integrated river catchment paradigm (*cf.* Hillman 2009) and in part by the Treaty of Waitangi settlements that have focussed upon freshwater and river management by iwi (Woods and Howard-Williams 2004; Steenstra 2009). The crux of the situation reflects many of the comments made by Hillman as discussed earlier, whereby the existence of two main systems of river management knowledge - one Western science-based and one Māori matauranga-based - are to varying degrees in contention. This is summarised more succinctly in Tipa’s (2009: p.115) comment:

‘...there is a pressing need to reconceptualise water management policies, especially those in relation to allocation, in a way that makes human values equal in status to extractive uses and ecosystem needs...it is essential that the processes of science and management consider the values held by indigenous communities. What is right is a question of individual values.’

Aside from the RMA, there is no one, over-arching policy framework specific to the geopolitical and socio-environmental context of rivers with which to inform regional policies and plans. This makes the consistent integration of cultural and community (or place-based) values problematical, an issue intensified by the growth in Māori representation and management interests\(^{54}\). Indeed the issue of co-management between Government and Māori communities of such natural resources has been

\(^{53}\) But still remaining under the aegis of the RMA framework.

\(^{54}\) The RMA (Sections 6(e), 7(a) and 8) and National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2011 both require that Māori cultural values be taken account of. As already noted, there has been criticism that despite such directives engagement with Māori knowledges remains more on paper than in practice.
addressed from a number of viewpoints such as the conservation estate, community resource management and integrated catchment management by various authors (respectively Taiepa et al. 1997; Tipa and Welch 2006; Fenemor et al. 2008). The development and progress of such co-management has been described by some commentators as follows:

‘The extent of consultation and the influence of cultural values on a policy vary by region...this is in part due to the weak language of the RMA...and the low participation rate of iwi in the process...Although local governments increasingly appreciate the need to understand and incorporate Māori cultural values, the conflict between the neoclassical approach of sustainability that underpins the RMA and sustainability based on Māori ideology remains an obstacle.’ (Steenstra 2009: p.7)

One fundamental example of the perceived gap between Western science-based and Māori conceived river management paradigms is the scale and integration of management practices. This can be demonstrated through the Māori philosophy of *ki uta ki tai*\(^{55}\) (mountains to sea) framework of whole catchment management which understands a ‘river’ as being its entire catchment area with all elements (e.g. tributaries, land masses, coastal areas and ecological communities) interconnected, interdependent and possessed of *mauri* (life-force/spirit). As Tipa (2009: p.104) states:

‘...this conceptualization of a catchment confirms a deeper understanding that a catchment constitutes soil, water, flora, fauna, and the relationships between them. They are acknowledging that rivers connect the entire landscapes from the mountains to the sea, and conversely that rivers are linked to their catchments.’

The development of the Cultural Health Index (CHI) by the Ministry for the Environment and Ngai Tahu over the last ten years is a practical expression of this philosophy and provides an holistic evaluative assessment framework through which iwi are able to:

‘...evaluate the health of streams and rivers within their *rohe* [districts] that expresses and accommodates their values and beliefs while at the same time enabling effective communication and working relationships with water managers.’ (Tipa and Teirney 2006: p.1)

\(^{55}\) This concept is specifically recognised by Ngai Tahu iwi of the South Island.
The implementation of the CHI on a number of South Island rivers over the last ten years has proven the efficacy of the method which integrates and evaluates both cultural and biological stream health indicators and local management practices and knowledge into one comprehensive assessment. It has also provided some interesting results with regard to Māori cultural-driven knowledge of local streams that have been shown to sit reliably alongside mainstream, science-based biophysical assessments\(^56\) (Townsend et al. 2004). Townsend et al. (2004) also note that only one third of the CHI has ‘western’ equivalents (the Cultural Stream Health Measure) leaving the remaining two thirds of the methodology (site status and mahinga kai) as significant additional forms of knowledge creation and evaluation.

An alternative management framework, developed by a government-funded research collaboration between scientists, community stakeholders and local government that has recently been developed along more conventional Western scientific principles is the Motueka River Integrated Catchment Management project (Fenemor et al. 2008; Phillips et al. 2010). Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) has a different methodology that partially bridges the gap between Western scientific and Māori management approaches through utilising catchment-based biophysical knowledges and social process. Fenemor et al. (2008: p.449) describe ICM as:

‘...a process that recognises the catchment as the appropriate organising unit for understanding and managing ecosystem processes in a context that includes social, economic and political considerations, and guides communities towards an agreed vision of sustainable land and water resource management for their catchment.’

The specific inclusion of social process is seen by the researchers as ‘a way to break the ‘paradigm lock’ between scientific expertise and locally-based knowledge’ (2008: p.449). The trialling of the ICM on the Motueka River catchment in the South Island included community participation from both Māori and non-Māori representatives with a considerable number of collaborative management initiatives developed over the ten years of the project. The inclusion of a strong cultural values element in the project is a significant advance for river management frameworks and, alongside the development of modelling tools such as IDEAS\(^57\), is likewise significant for recognition of the need for both technical and social knowledges (Phillips et al. 2010). An additional

\(^{56}\) Such as the Macroinvertebrate Community Index (MCI) and Stream Health Monitoring and Assessment Kit (SHMAK).

\(^{57}\) ‘Integrated Dynamic Environmental Assessment System’ (Phillips et al. 2010).
point of interest raised by Phillips et al. (2010: p.759) and particularly relevant to this thesis was their comment that ‘we have also recognized that people’s sense of place and belonging creates the conditions for implementing research results for sustainable outcomes...This raises the question of how science can harness and strengthen that sense of place’. The recognition and grounding of place within developing integrated river catchment management frameworks in New Zealand is a positive sign that the importance of place usually assigned by geographers may finally be reaching a wider audience in the scientific community58.

A final river management framework that is currently in its final stages of development is the River Values Assessment System (RiVAS), another collaborative research project between government, local government, and driven by Lincoln University researchers (Hughey and Baker 2010). The framework has developed a comprehensive and systematic methodology for assessing a range of specified values associated with rivers such as salmon fishing, kayaking, native birds and irrigation59 (Hughey and Baker 2010). RiVAS is based on a multi-criteria analysis (MCA), top-down, expert-led methodology that aims to provide ‘a standardised numeric scale...and an expert panel based approach’ (Hughey and Baker 2010: p.3) capable of defining the primary attributes of river values and their key indicators (Hughey et al. 2011). As such RiVAS provides a methodology for establishing a metric against which river values (and therefore rivers) can be assessed, ranked and managed according to a regional council’s policies. In my view, a key critique of the assessment system is the top-down, universalising approach embedded within the framework that appears to leave little scope for identifying potentially unique and strongly place-based values. As such, this leaves the values under assessment as pre-determined categories rather than place-based responses to local values and meanings. The RiVAS assessment methodology also places a strong emphasis on ‘expert-led’ opinion to complete often significant gaps in the empirical data for a particular river, and this demonstrates little relation to the calls for grounded, situated and community-led knowledges to inform river management that were discussed previously in this section (for example, Hillman 2009; Steenstra 2009; TIPA 2009; see also Williams 2000b).

58 It is also encouraging that the value of place concepts are beginning to be recognised in the river rehabilitation field as well – see River Futures: An integrative scientific approach to river repair (Hillman et al. 2008) for an excellent example of this change in approach.

59 The full range of values assessed so far include: Angling values; Recreational values; Scenic/landscape/natural values; Tangata whenua [Māori] values; Wildlife/conservation/ecological values; Irrigation/hydro-electric development values (Hughey and Baker 2010: p.7).
2.3.5 River recreation frameworks

Having addressed the cultural meanings of rivers, the politics of water and provided an overview of the regulatory frameworks pertaining to rivers, it now remains to address the final area in this theme of **Cultural and regulatory meanings of rivers**: the regulatory frameworks relating to river recreation. Reflecting back for a moment on the cultural view of rivers, Stokowski (2008) notes in her discussion of the symbolic nature of water and contemporary recreation resource management that water has traditionally been thought of in basically utilitarian terms - ‘...water is essentially a **backdrop** to the social and individual experience of recreation’ (2008: p.23; my emphasis). She goes on to note that:

‘...traditional recreation research and management approaches tend to objectify water. Water is defined as a resource and is characterized by observable features and qualities...It is evident that water has functional, aesthetic, and symbolic meanings, but the symbolic characteristics are often down-played or ignored in current research.’(2008: p.24)

However, Stokowski (2008: p.49) concludes her argument in a more positive tone, suggesting that:

‘The symbols associated with the current conditions [of recreation management] are those that favour control over nature, agency progress, and managed human encounters with nature. Behind these images, though, are many examples of people – individually or collectively – seeking meaningful encounters with water and other natural elements. The symbolic power of water known to the ancients and members of earlier cultures has not disappeared. It is hidden behind the prevailing resource management philosophies of contemporary land management agencies.’

Stokowski’s idea of ‘seeking meaningful encounters with water’, as reflected in river recreation, is an important thread in this thesis, interlinking such diverse concepts as the creation of place and self, embodiment (both sensory and representational) and the cultural meanings of rivers which has already been touched upon. Echoing the issues already noted in the broader river regulatory framework critiques, a review and analysis of North American management paradigms of water-based recreation (McCool et al. 2008: p.237) saw the integration of diverse cultural values and especially their symbolic values into current institutionalised and utilitarian planning frameworks as problematical; as they suggested:
‘Water has symbolic value, most fundamentally as representation of life. Although these symbolic values are tightly held by many groups and individuals, they are difficult to identify, measure, and discuss within the classical paradigm of rational comprehensive planning: How does one explain the spiritual values of a waterfall? The meanings of a lake where one was married?...However, their difficulty...does not mean they are unimportant...’.

The McCool et al. (2008) conclude that these fundamental challenges are the result of three deeply embedded positions:

- water permeates the western land ethic and as such is a major point of conflict;
- water management institutions are largely the product of 19th Century development and have institutionalised an instrumental view of water that lacks mechanisms for considering non-instrumental uses; and
- recreation, used in their context ‘as a shadow measure of symbolic value’ (McCool et al. 2008:p.239) is growing, creating impacts on water resources but conversely is becoming susceptible to impacts on its meanings from river management decisions.

Generic recreation management frameworks such as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) have continued to be used in outdoor recreation planning and management contexts since their development in the late 1970s in North America (Broadhurst 2001) but no frameworks have been specifically designed for river recreation management to date (Booth and Farminer 2011). This is partly due perhaps to the slower growth of river recreation participation (certainly in Europe, but less so in North America and Australasia) as compared to other types of outdoor recreation, and partly due to the difficulties of framing research for rivers that often extend for long distances and cross regional (and national) borders (Booth and Farminer 2011). ROS as a recreation management framework is based on the concept that ‘a range of...settings is required to provide for the many tastes and preferences that motivate people to participate in outdoor recreation’ (Pigram and Jenkins 2006: p.43) where ‘settings’ are considered as the environment or the behavioural setting where recreation is undertaken (Broadhurst 2001). By providing a range or spectrum of such recreational settings/experiences (for example, from wilderness-natural-urban to difficult-manageable-easy) so the expectations of recreationists and visitors could be planned and managed for (Broadhurst 2001.). However ROS is not without its critics; for example Pigram and Jenkins (2006: p.45) critiqued the ‘top-down’ approach of ROS and its rather ‘blueprint’ approach to
identifying and managing recreational settings/experiences that, if not allowed to reflect natural changes in recreational tastes and fashions, risked limiting the recreational experiences for visitors.

In New Zealand recreation planning began to be developed from the 1960s onwards, mainly at local government level but with increasing central government input in the 1970s with the introduction of new legislation such as the Town and Country Planning Act 1977 (Perkins and Booth 2000). Perkins and Booth (2000: p.324) note though that the reorganisation of the local government level recreational management frameworks after 1989 (and reconstituted further under the 1991 RMA) resulted in the ‘fragmentation and dilution’ of recreational planning in New Zealand. Currently outdoor recreation is addressed in practice within local government District and Regional Plans60 (or separate recreation plans where they exist) with strategic guidance provided at a national level by the government organisation Sport New Zealand61 and the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Recreation Council (also administered through Sport New Zealand). The situation since Perkins and Booth’s 2000 critique of the recreational planning framework in New Zealand does appear to have improved slightly with some increased funding and emphasis on recreational planning management, but as noted in the Sport New Zealand Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2009-2015 (Sport New Zealand 2012: p.7), there remains a lack of leadership, competition for resources, a lack of a coordinated research agenda and recreational access issues on many levels.

In relation to river recreation frameworks, Booth and Farminer’s report Scoping Study For Assessing River and Lake Recreation in New Zealand (2011) reviewed the existing literature on river and lake recreation research and examined methods for measuring recreation participation on rivers and lakes. Their report identified that ‘Lake and river management plans, prepared mainly by regional councils, abound and their recreation component, if included, often addresses types of use, values and related management issues’ (2011: p.10). The report also found a small body of earlier management-related literature that mainly focused on the development of recreational values (e.g. Egarr and Egarr 1981; Galloway 2008; Sutherland-Downing and Elley 2004) but little or no literature

60 The New Zealand Department of Conservation (DoC) has established its own visitor management strategy and outdoor recreational management frameworks since its inception in 1987 under the Conservation Act. DoC originally incorporated a ROS approach in its management plans but has gradually moved over to VIMS (Visitor Impact Management Strategy) and most recently the DMF (Destination Management Framework) demonstrating a strategic change from recreation management in public conservation areas to the management of the visitor experience. See [http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/role/policies-and-plans/managing-recreation-opportunities](http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/role/policies-and-plans/managing-recreation-opportunities).

specifically focused upon management frameworks for river recreation in New Zealand. The ‘state of knowledge’ summary section of the report indicated that overall very little empirical data exists about river recreation in New Zealand (with the exception of the National Angling Surveys and some national level recreation data) and that ‘there has been a significant lack of progress in systematically building a knowledge base for river and lake recreation, with the exception of freshwater angling’ (Booth and Farminer 2011: p.11). This is despite previous similar and recent statements that:

‘New Zealand is a country strongly influenced by rivers: they are significant landscape features and shape our environment...They are highly valued for recreation and for their mauri (life force), and also simply for their own sake.’ (New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) 2011: p.1; my emphasis)

The NZCA report Protecting New Zealand’s Rivers (2011) from which the above quote is taken recommends that greater protection is needed for rivers in New Zealand ‘that remain in or are close to, their natural state or have outstanding wild, scenic and amenity characteristics’ (ibid.: p.43). Overall the lack of specific river recreation research and management frameworks both internationally and in New Zealand is a gap that remains to be addressed (Booth and Farminer 2011) and which offers opportunities for bringing together social, environmental and place-based understandings of river recreation alongside the resource and economic-based understandings already in play. With this in mind, it is now time to address the conceptualisations of (river) recreation experience and meaning and their role in forming place meanings and places themselves.

2.4 Recreation Experience, Meaning and Place

2.4.1 Introducing the literature themes

Figure 2.7 sets out the selected themes within the conceptual literature that address ideas relating to how people’s recreation experiences are understood, how recreation experiences have been related to place and place-making, and how river recreation in particular has been conceived and studied in terms of human experience and the different concepts of place. Once again the breadth of the recreation literature is acknowledged and as with Section 2.3, the literature for each theme has been approached with a view to providing a conceptualisation of recreation experience and place, in the first instance from an international context and then focusing on the identified New
Zealand research context. In terms of defining ‘recreation’, there has been considerable debate regarding the differences between recreation and leisure and their associated activities, with many, often overlapping, interpretations proposed (see Veal 1992 for an early example of this debate; Jenkins and Pigram 2003). More recently, Jenkins and Pigram (2003: p.412) have defined recreation as referring to ‘activities, either active or passive, enjoyed either outdoors or indoors, which take place during leisure – as opposed to non-work – time. Thus the concepts of leisure and recreation are intimately related; one is time, the other is ACTIVITY.’ (emphasis in original).

Figure 2.7 The conceptual literature themes of recreation experience, meaning and place

2.4.2 Meaningful human-environment experience

The significant contribution of human experience to the formation of values and meanings of/in places has already been addressed in the preceding sections (specifically Section 2.2). The current section explores further the ideas surrounding the formation and interaction of human experience in and with its environments with attention focused upon outdoor recreation environment experiences. Although already stated previously (see Chapter 1), the environment in the context of this thesis is considered to be both the material world around us and the socially constructed worlds of cognition, experience, meaning, memory and behaviour that we employ to successfully negotiate the material world. The continual coalescence of these two worlds very much reflects an environmental psychology view of the environment through human-environment interrelationships.
where ‘the environment influences and constrains behaviour, but behaviour also leads to changes in
the environment’ (Bell et al. 2001: p.7).

A substantial body of research exists on the structure of human experience which has been driven
particularly by the fields of psychology and environmental psychology (Hartig and Evans 1993; Williams 2004; Rojek 2005; Farnum et al. 2005; Ibrahim & Cordes 2008; Ritchie and Hudson 2009). There are many extant reviews of the development of environmental psychology that, similar to the
development of humanistic geography, began to attract interest in the early 1970s (see Berno et al.
1998; Bell et al. 2001; Ibrahim & Cordes 2008 for overviews). Bell et al. (2001) in particular provided
a comprehensive overview of the many environment-perception and environment-behaviour
theories that have been developed since the early 1970s, proposing their own ‘eclectic model’ that
attempted to integrate the main six theoretical perspectives in environment-behaviour
psychology.

An early but interesting area of research undertaken by Ittelson et al. (1976) was on the nature of
environmental experience, its formation and characterisation by people and some of the modes
(ways) of experiencing the environment. They identified five basic or primary modes of
experiencing the environment (Ittelson et al. 1976: p.201-205):

- **as external physical place** – as something detached and existing independently from people
  themselves whether structured physically, spatially and/or socially;
- **as self** – the environment experienced as ‘part of themselves’ (1976: p.202) and
  identification with aspects of both the physical and social environments including other
  people in the environment;
- **as social system** – as ‘a separately existing, autonomous social system or cultural network’
  (1976: p.203) of social interrelationships;
- **as emotional territory** – ‘the environment experienced solely in terms of the emotions and
  associations that one feels’ (1976: p.204); and

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62 For more on this transactional epistemology see Chapter Three, Section 3.2.4.
63 These include: The arousal perspective; The environmental load perspective; The understimulation
perspective; Adaptation level theory; The behaviour constraint perspective; and the environmental stress
perspective (Bell et al. 2001: p.103-131). These theories are very much focused upon understanding human-
environment behaviour with less emphasis on the nature of the experience itself.
• **as setting for action** – although experience and actions are considered inseparable, here the environment becomes merely a setting in which actions take place, the environment making such actions possible.

Invoking what could be expressed as a critical pluralist approach to their own conclusions, the authors concluded that ‘environmental experience is the continuing product of an active endeavour by the individual to create for himself a situation within which he can optimally function and achieve his own particular pattern of satisfaction...’ (Ittelson *et al.* 1976: p.206). This way of theorising the nature of human-environment experience is one of many perspectives that have been addressed by researchers. Alternative approaches to conceptualising this relationship include early work by Ulrich (1983) that was further developed by Kaplan and Kaplan (1989), which pursued a *psychoevolutionary* approach to the human experience of nature. This conceptualisation framed the human-nature experience in terms of an evolutionary adaptation of both affective and aesthetic responses to different environments. Ulrich’s (1983) earlier research initially proposed a separation between the perception and cognition of these experiences, a view which has now become largely redundant (Hartig and Evans 1993: p.444). As Hartig and Evans (1993: p.444) note, the extensive research undertaken by the Kaplans ‘do[es] not impose the division between perception and cognition depicted in Ulrich’s model. Rather, they assume that perception is inherently cognitive and that thinking in turn depends on the structures that emerge from perception’.

Concurrent with this theory, Kaplan (1995) has also proposed an attention restoration theory that posited natural environments as restoring **directed attention** (or concentration) fatigue in people through a similar genetically-founded basis of informational familiarity. Work by Hartig (1993: p.21) on the transactional perspective of the nature experience suggested that ‘The human-nature transaction is a long running process in which natural selection and culture have come to play mutualistic roles’. Within this perspective Hartig does not privilege either the evolutionary (or adaptive) concept of human-environment experience as espoused by Ulrich (1983) and the Kaplans (1989), nor alternative, purely socio-cultural (social construction) concepts, advocating a degree of **pluralism** that sits well within the epistemology of this thesis.

As a way of summarising the many concepts of the human-environment experience relationship, Williams (2004), in his overview of environmental psychology and natural resource management,
identifies four underlying paradigms for conceptualising the human-environment relationship, based on earlier work by Saegert and Winkel (1990). These are summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm</th>
<th>Concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive</td>
<td>Biological and psychological survival motivates behaviour. Psychological functions evolved to address: knowledge of environments; coping with stressful environments, and environment as a restorative or therapeutic medium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity structure/goal</td>
<td>Humans viewed as rational, information-processing, decision-makers rather than survivalists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural</td>
<td>Shift from adaptive and goal-directed explanations of behaviour towards meanings as socially constructed within everyday life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual/expressive</td>
<td>Sociocultural and individual level processes that recognise the potential for individuals to assign intangible and relatively unique meanings to places and things.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within Williams’ context of natural resource management, he makes the pertinent comment that (2004: p.343; my emphasis):

‘...adaptive and goal-directed uses and meanings...address relatively tangible environmental meanings that can be linked directly to physical properties of the environment...[and are] readily integrated into the utilitarian philosophy...In contrast, cultural and expressive forms of meaning...have received little attention...’

This comment echoes the Utilitarian - Meanings debate discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.2.1 whilst concurrently linking resource management (the disciplinary ‘home’ of most recreation research) into the wider context of human-environment experience and meaning.

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64 Adapted from Williams 2004: p.338-342.
Recreation experience and meaning

Ibrahim and Cordes (2008) using earlier work also by Williams (2004), made an alternative suggestion that there are three ways of conceptualising human-environment relationships in the context of leisure/recreation experiences and the environment:

- **Experiential aesthetics** – the meaning of the setting in the person’s experience (for instance in terms of physiological arousal);
- **Environmental cognition** – the meaning of the setting in the experience, which is a reflection of one’s perception of the setting (for instance the environment as a source of information for undertaking recreational activity); and
- **Behavioural ecology** – directly observable behavioural patterns in the natural setting - for instance the setting (environment) is used to analyse behaviour in specific spaces at specific times (Ibrahim and Cordes: p.64-65).

Similarly Berno et al. (1998) reviewed the psychology of leisure, recreation and tourism experiences both from international literature and also specifically in a New Zealand context. From their contextual focus on the psychology of leisure rather than the environment itself, they cited the importance of John Neulinger’s (1974) research on the psychology of leisure which proposed that leisure was more a *state of mind* which required two factors: perceived freedom and intrinsic motivation (Berno et al. 1998: p.289). Although parts of this theory have since been brought into question with regard to whether freedom itself is illusory and more dependent on social factors for perception, the influence of Neulinger’s work remains. Berno et al. (1998) also discussed the contribution of the work of Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) to leisure theory, citing their division of leisure experience research into three approaches: *definitional* (how people define their leisure experiences); *immediate conscious experience* (on-site experience/activities); and *post-hoc satisfaction* (the satisfaction sought through leisure; Berno et al. 1998: p.290). Berno et al. (1998) identified a further typological category, *antecedents* which addressed *causes* such as motivations, attitudes and social group.

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65 These approaches however can perhaps be considered as more methodological differences in the approach to conceptualising recreation experience as opposed to the paradigmatic differences cited by Williams (2004).
Moving more specifically towards understandings of recreation experience within the broader and interrelated contexts of leisure and tourism research, research by Lee et al. (1994: p.195) reviewed previous conceptions of leisure which they initially characterised as moving from ‘an objective paradigm to a subjective one’. Employing Mannell and Iso-Ahola’s (1987) three stage approach to leisure experiences, Lee et al. examined the mixed leisure experiences of a small group of people separating out their experiences into definitional and post-hoc phase interviews and self-taped records of their immediate conscious experiences. The authors identified a number of characteristics of leisure experiences which included:

- **Definitional perspectives** of leisure which included: enjoyment/fun; relaxation; and freedom of choice;
- The **complexity of the leisure experience**: occasionally both stressful and unpleasant experiences formed part of the overall leisure experience;
- **Significant changes** between immediately recalled experience observations and retrospective or post-hoc ones (Lee et al. 1994: p.202-206).

Lee et al. (1994: p.209) concluded:

‘Leisure is not a unitary concept, but is often composed of many characteristics. Therefore, an experience that is not always pleasant may be identified by individuals as leisure. The experience of leisure is transitory and complex and people’s interpretation of leisure experiences change over time.’

Although undertaken within the context of the leisure experience, such observations are equally applicable to understanding recreation experiences (Berno et al. 1998; Broadhurst 2001). A more recent review paper by Ritchie and Hudson (2009) focusing on consumer/tourist experience research provides an excellent summary of the many ‘streams’ of experience research and theoretical frameworks employed in this specific area. Key theories critiqued by the authors include Csikszentmihalyi’s ‘Flow’ theory addressing ‘the importance of experiences in providing a sense of exhilaration...deep sense of enjoyment...the optimal experience’ (Ritchie and Hudson 2009: p.112); and Mannell and Iso-Ahola’s (1987) work on the *Psychological nature of leisure and tourism experience* from the perspective of the relationships and differences between tourism and leisure experiences.
Relevant recreation experience-environment concepts which can be sourced from the field of tourism experiences and their environments have been be summarised as follows (Ooi 2005):

- Cognitive psychology approaches;
- Personal benefits approaches;
- State of mind and depth of experience approaches;
- Phenomenological approaches on the immediacy of personal experiences;
- The relationship/differences in perception between locals and tourists experiences of places;
- Staging experiences approaches.

It is worth noting here that there are many alternative ways of conceptualising leisure/tourism experiences (for example, Rojek 2005). A relevant recent theory which helps to tangentially connect recreation experience with sense of place theory is Ooi’s (2005) *Theory of tourism experiences: the management of attention*. Ooi identifies three characteristics of the tourism experience which are applicable in conceptualising recreation experience (Ooi 2005: p.51-2):

1. **Experience’s arise out of people’s different social and cultural backgrounds** which lead to diverse interpretations of a single tourism product;

2. **Experiences are multifaceted.** They arise from activities and the physical environment, as well as the social meaning embedded in the activities, which means that people have different experiences even if they are doing the same activity in the same location;

3. **Experiences are existential.** They are embodied in people in that they are personally felt and can only be experienced by those people.

Although Ooi’s (2005) research focus is specifically on managing attention to tourism products (for example, in tourism locations and environments), his definition of the *characteristics* of tourism experiences could be as equally applied to recreational experiences of place. This proposition is discussed further in the next literature theme of recreation experience and place.
2.4.3 Recreation experience and place

Recreation and place I: sense of place concepts in recreation research

In Section 2.2, some of the many understandings of place and place-making conceived under the broad framing of cultural geography were outlined but it is apparent that these more ontological, progressive (to use Massey’s term) and complex concepts of place are a considerable distance away from the recreational conceptualisations of place discussed here. This dichotomy in place conceptualisations across research fields is an example that is reflected at a smaller scale in the conceptual and methodological divergence that is apparent in the field of recreational place research, or more precisely, sense of place research (Williams and Patterson 2008). In fact it would be more accurate to state that place in recreation research has, until only very recently, been conceived almost solely in terms of sense of place with little research addressing other understandings of place as discussed in Section 2.2.3.

A number of review papers have been produced that provide a comprehensive discussion of the sense of place concept in outdoor recreation research and it is notable that the majority of this research has been generated in North America with a modest input from Europe and even less, from Asia or the southern hemisphere. Two key review reports were Farnum et al. (2005) Sense of Place in Natural Resource Recreation and Tourism: An Evaluation and Assessment of Research Findings and Kruger et al. (2008) Understanding Concepts of Place in Recreation Research and Management. Both reports were generated from the longstanding recreation research programmes of the United States Department of Agriculture (‘USDA’) Forest Service, which has a mandate for managing outdoor recreation in the United States and which has traditionally been driven from a natural resource management position. The research reviews provided detailed discussions of sense of place concepts, their development, dominant paradigms and current perspectives both in North American and wider recreation contexts. Farnum et al. (2005: p.2) identified the underlying conceptions of place as strongly spatially based (so a sense of place located in recreation places) reflecting their dominant resource-framed paradigm, and acknowledged a level of ambiguity evident in past research that was ‘...exacerbated by the fact that definitions of sense of place and related constructs are often dependent upon whether they are approached from a quantitative or qualitative paradigm....’.
Farnum et al. (2005: p.5) conclude that despite the variability of definitions in recreation research, sense of place is ‘...referring to both affective and cognitive components of place’. Research undertaken by Patterson and Williams (2005) developed this further, identifying three main ontological positions for sense of place: telic (end state), autotelic (process orientated) and intentional (person-world indivisibility), each capable of subdivision into several differing conceptual perspectives, for example adaptive, opportunity structure, socio-cultural and individual/expressive (see also Williams 2004). Several comments can be made regarding these divisions. Firstly, the underlying theme of these approaches to sense of place is strongly *behaviour* focused, which itself appears to reflect their dominant psychological research foundations. Second, the majority of recreation sense of place research can be characterised as either telic or autotelic in position which has been heavily influenced by the dominant North American quantitative (positivist/psychometric) approach to research. This contrasts with the strongly phenomenological paradigm that has influenced sense of place research in the geographical and philosophical fields (Patterson and Williams 2008). If this observation is extended further into the philosophical/ontological conceptual explorations of place/sense of place, discussed in Section 2.2.3, then an even wider gap in conceptual positions is apparent.

The opposing sedentarist and nomadic metaphysics of place outlined by Cresswell (2004a) and the place as process, practice and intersection proposed by Seamon (1980), Pred (1984) and Massey (2005) expands the gap even further. There is no issue of reconciling these paradigmatic gulfs (if that is even desirable) but awareness and full comprehension of them is critical to understanding the current conceptualisation of sense of place in recreation research (Patterson and Williams 2005; 2007). As Patterson and Williams (2005: p.368) comment ‘...a thorough understanding...also requires an understanding of the normative philosophical commitments of the paradigm that guides its empirical development’. Finally, they conclude (2005) that it is largely through the paradigmatic route of *autotelic, socio-cultural, meaning-based* models of behaviour that the substantial distance between phenomenological and telic paradigms in recreation research will begin to be brought slightly closer.

It is worth noting that some hostility remains to developing more phenomenological approaches to investigating sense of place in recreation, as reflected in Stedman’s (2003b: p.827) statement:

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66 As discussed in this Chapter Two, Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.
‘...common conceptions about sense of place rooted in phenomenology – that it does not seek to predict, is holistic, and observer-dependent – are barriers to reconciling sense of place with practical, concrete resource management objectives.’

Further illustrating the tensions/dichotomies of approaches to sense of place, Farnum et al. (2005: p.5) from their strongly transactional position comment:

‘Although we acknowledge that physical attributes present in a location may play a role in the construction of sense of place, sense of place itself refers more to the interpretations and representations of those attributes as well as the social dynamics of the landscape.’

This in turn contrasts with Stokowski’s (2008: p.49) purely social constructionist perspective which posited that:

‘...“sense of place” should refer to the broad discourses that are contextualised around specific places...A resulting sense of place should be seen as a working definition, not an “absolutely real” sense of place reported by a respondent in reply to a researcher’s query.’

And finally returning to Stedman’s (2003a: p.671) partly environmental determinism position, his view that:

‘...the physical environment itself contributes to sense of place through specifiable mechanisms. Although social constructions are important, they hardly arise out of thin air; the local environment sets bounds and gives form to these constructions.’

In fairness, Stedman does not advocate a purely deterministic view of the physical environment as creating sense of place, however he does strongly advocate a ‘positivistic hypothesis testing’ approach (Stedman 2003b: p.828) leaving little room for interpretive and relativist epistemologies. Associated with the positivistic approach to sense of place recreation research, five interpretations are commonly operationalised: place attachment, place meanings, place identity, place dependence, and place satisfaction (Farnum et al. 2005; Williams 2008). These have been summarised as ‘Sense of place, or the meanings and attachments held by an individual or group for a spatial setting...’ (Stedman 2003b: p.822). Place identity and dependence have generally been considered as elements within place attachment, and place satisfaction is often considered on its own as a measure of the ‘...general judgement of the quality of settings’ (Farnum et al. 2005: p.5). As suggested in the introduction to the current theme, there is a considerable epistemological (and
ontological) distance between these conceptualisations of place as *sense of place* and those which have emerged from the field of geography, a position that is increasingly interpreted as hampering the development of outdoor recreation planning and management (Kruger *et al.* 2008; Stedman 2008). Calls for understanding how outdoor recreation interacts with the wider socio-cultural worlds of people and how and in what ways outdoor recreation experiences contribute to the ontological place-world and human place-making are growing in strength (Brooks *et al.* 2006; Williams 2008).

*Recreation and place II: setting, environment and place relationships*

An interconnected area of recreation place research that has received attention beyond the confines of the sense of place construct has been the relationship between recreational experiences and their environment or *setting*67. As Williams (2007: p.30; my emphasis) states:

‘A key aspect of understanding the relation between settings and experience is recognizing that experience is not merely a psychological *reaction* to the setting... but something *created* by the individual or group through active engagement *with* the setting.’

Referring briefly back to the earlier work by Hartig (1993), Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987), Lee *et al.* (1994) and McIntyre and Roggenbuck (1998), the idea of a dynamic and transactional relationship between recreation and leisure experiences and their environment(s) – whatever the combination of natural, built or social foci – has been strongly argued. To cite from McIntyre and Roggenbuck’s study (1998: p.417):

‘...there is a transaction among environmental context, mood states, focus of attention and perception of risk and competence which shapes the character and quality of the experience. The environment, in a sense, forms a frame within which individuals have the power to create their own experiences.’

The environment however does not remain static in this transactional process but also changes during the experience in response to alterations in people’s perceptions of it, creating a dynamic

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67 Note the use of the word *setting* as used here is not to imply that the physical environment (whether natural or built) is merely a backdrop for human actions (as already noted in Ittelson *et al.* 1976) but simply as a word frequently used in recreation research literature derived principally from North America. *Recreational setting* has been used extensively due to its incorporation into the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) framework (Pigram and Jenkins 2006).
and continual process of human-environment interaction\textsuperscript{68} that does not really start or end as such with each new experience but carries on \textit{infinitum} as the person lives out their life (Kyle and Chick 2004; Williams 2008).

Returning back to recreation experience and its environment, another divergence can be observed in the research literature and in conceptions of this relationship. The dominant route taken by many recreation studies (of largely North American origin as noted previously) has been to conceptualise recreation experience and its environment purely in terms of the relationship between the physical setting/scenery and the experience itself (Williams 2007). Many aspects of this specific relationship have been addressed in studies of recreational impacts, experience satisfaction, recreation behaviour, motivations and specialisation amongst others (USDA Forest Service 1977; Manzo 2008; Stedman 2008). Concurrent with these studies, the dominant research methodology has been a quantitative one with a preference for metrics of the different aspects of the recreation experience-environment relationship, rather than the richer, more qualitative and pluralistic perspectives provided by non-psychometric approaches (Riese and Vorkinn 2002; Williams and Patterson 2008).

There is a much smaller but growing body of literature on the qualitative and meanings-centred approach to the recreation experience-environment relationship which is likewise gaining momentum in outdoor recreational research (Kruger et al. 2008; Manzo 2008). Some of this work has already been discussed in terms of recreation and place concepts but there is an obvious overlap with recreation experience-environment concepts. In short, by conceptualising these perspectives as a \textit{relationship} instead of the more static ideas of ‘setting’ or ‘environment’, through ‘using a place or community metaphor, recreationists experience and come to know and value actual places’ (Williams 2007: p.31). Therefore through reframing recreation settings or environments as \textit{meaningful places}, so deeper and different understandings of the relationship between recreation (experience) and place are opened up for exploration, understanding and acknowledgement. However Williams (2008: p.22) has sounded a cautionary note on the implications of this on natural resource management frameworks:

\begin{quote}
‘Once resource managers begin to recognize places as repositories of meaning, they must also come to terms with the fact that more than one set of meanings is possible as various
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{cf.} Ingold’s (1993) ‘dwelling’ perspective; Chapter Two, Section 2.2.3.
communities of place and interest compete to represent the meaning of a place according to their own systems of meaning.’

By placing the emphasis on understanding and articulating the nature of these relationship(s), their construction and contestation (what Williams (2008) terms a ‘sociopolitical’ approach), further insights into these relationships can be generated. However, as Williams (2007: p.31) also noted there are limitations to this approach which can produce generalisations that miss important localised, place-based understandings that can be ‘captured in narrative form (histories) as meanings, practices and rituals’. To cite Williams (2008: p.22; my emphasis) once more:

‘...the socio-political approach must admit that landscape meanings are but a temporary snapshot of a continuous social and political process of negotiation and contestation. Much of the political conflict in natural resource planning is over whose meanings for the landscape will prevail.’

This statement constructively ties together the ‘progressive’ place concepts supported in this thesis (Section 2.2.3) and the issues surrounding and within the politics of water and rivers discussed in Section 2.3. Likewise the ‘whose meanings’ question echoes the current political decision-making issues of whose water, whose access to rivers, and whose resource – which are critical to both the broader water debate and recreation management issues proposed in this thesis. If the idea of place as (socio-political) process is extended to outdoor recreation experience (and place) then this also draws a parallel with the Cultural Values Model work of Stephenson (2008), discussed previously (Section 2.2.3 and Figure 2.4), vis-à-vis her processes and relationships part of the model. These processes refer to the range of dynamic human-land-ecological relationships, human practices and human/natural processes that occur in forming meanings and values for people in places. Therefore outdoor recreation experiences and places, and the values and meanings (and actions) embodied in/by/through them as an element of these wider human practices, rituals, processes and relationships, are proposed as integral to creating and giving meaning to places beyond their politically framed (and hence ring fenced) recreational values.

*Recreation and place III: the New Zealand context*

An overview of outdoor recreation research from New Zealand has been recently undertaken in a comprehensive study – the *Outdoor Recreation Research Stocktake* (Booth and Lynch 2010) – which
prepared a synthesis of results and a bibliography of relevant published research up to 2010\textsuperscript{69}. Within this corpus of research there was an absence of studies which specifically addressed place in outdoor recreation, whether from a focal or methodological perspective, limiting the discussion of recreation and place from a New Zealand context. However, the absence of place-focused research in the New Zealand recreation research literature is not reflected in other related disciplines such as geography, landscape and health studies although the numbers of published pieces remain sparse and relatively recent. These were addressed in Section 2.2.5.

Moving on, it is now time to focus on the final theme of this section - river recreation and place – which addresses the literature relating to understanding people’s river recreation experiences and how these have been viewed from a place (and sense of place) perspective.

2.4.4 River recreation and place

A considerable number of recreational studies have been undertaken that have considered different aspects of the relationship between rivers and recreational experiences. They have addressed many types of river recreation experiences such as ‘floating’ (flat water canoe, kayak, raft and inner tube collectively) and whitewater rafting and kayaking. This research has also addressed a broad and diverse range of issues and inquiries that includes research to inform river recreation and natural resource management; studies of economic impacts and value data for river recreation; and studies of river recreation experience quality, behaviour, specialisation and satisfaction (for example, Arnould and Price 1993; Bricker and Kerstetter 2000; Cordell \textit{et al.} 1990; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Fluker and Turner 2000; Herrick and McDonald 1992; Hjerpe and Kim 2007; Knopf \textit{et al.} 1983; Morgan and Messenger 2009; Taylor and Douglas 1999; White \textit{et al.} 2008). With regard to river tourism specifically, although there is a considerable amount of generalised research it is largely economic-focussed and rarely addresses river tourism directly (Prideaux & Cooper 2009).

Two general comments on this body of research are that the dominant research analysis methodology is a quantitative one reflecting the strongly economic and psychometric perspectives taken in river recreation research, even in some cases where qualitative research has been the primary information gathering method. The second comment is that apart from a small number of exceptions (to be discussed later) place or sense of place in river recreation research is

\textsuperscript{69} See also Booth and MacKay (2007) \textit{Tourism and Recreation in New Zealand’s Natural Environment: A Bibliography and Research Synthesis}. 

100
operationalised in a dominantly psychometric fashion – the quantitative measurement of place dependence, place attachment, place bonding and place identity (examples are Bricker and Kerstetter 2000; Kyle et al. 2004; Backlund 2005; Hammitt et al. 2006; White et al. 2008; Morgan and Messenger 2009).

Two notable exceptions to the dominantly quantitative research approaches are the studies undertaken by Arnould and Price (1993) and Patterson et al. (1998) who used qualitative mixed-methods and hermeneutic methods respectively. The detailed study undertaken by Arnould and Price (1993) focused on ‘extraordinary’ rafting trip experiences in the Colorado River basin, exploring in detail the multiple elements that both constituted and were simultaneously created during a commercial rafting trip experience. These elements included client pre-trip expectations and narratives, experience of nature, communitas i.e. ‘communion with friends, family and strangers’ (Arnould and Price 1993: p.34), perceptions of personal growth and self-renewal, and post-trip recollections. They identify ‘a complex relationship between client expectations and satisfaction’ with the ‘narrative of the experience’ being ‘central to overall evaluation’ (1993: p.42). However clients’ expectations were formed, the authors concluded (ibid.) that client ‘satisfaction may have little to do with whether the experience unfolds as expected’, going against the accepted disconfirmation paradigm, the authors highlighting that uncovering the unspoken expectations of clients should be the key focus for managerial decisions. Although fundamentally a marketing orientated study, it is seen as making an important contribution to the understanding of river recreation/tourism experiences for people by identifying and describing the contributions made by different aspects of the experience (such as the guides, the physical environment, the social interactions and individual experiential perceptions).

The study by Patterson et al. (1998: p.423) explored the accepted idea that the environment or setting (physical, social and managed) ‘sets boundaries that constrain the nature of the experience, but that within those boundaries recreationists are free to experience the world in unique and variable ways’. The authors, who used a hermeneutic methodology to examine recreationists’ open-ended interviews immediately after their river experience, studied a section of the Juniper Run in the Ocala National Forest, Florida which was regularly used for one-day canoe trips. The purpose of the research was to ascertain whether recreationists were receiving a ‘wilderness experience’ from their trip or not, to inform future management decisions. As their methodology developed, the authors encouraged participants to ‘tell the story of the experience rather than list the aspects
of the experience’ (1998: p.429) as this was found to describe the nature and meaning of the experience more successfully than just posing structured questions. Four common themes underlying the canoeing experiences were identified in the study: challenge, closeness to nature, decisions not faced in everyday environments, and stories of nature. Among the many conclusions reached, Patterson et al. (1998) noted that the developmental and transitional nature of the river trip experiences expressed by participants suggested that these experiences were more accurately understood with an emergent model of experience rather than a motivational model. As the authors noted (1998: p.449; my emphasis):

‘At the heart of the difference between the motivational model and the emergent experience model is a question of how people relate to their experiences...the emergent experience model views satisfaction as embodied in the success of the narrative...when expectations are not met, this situation is not viewed as problematic...’

By taking an alternative approach to interpreting the quality of recreational experiences through analysing actual descriptions (or stories) of experience rather than employing motivation and satisfaction ‘surrogates’ or metrics, the authors proposed that they had generated new insights into ‘the actual nature of the experience’ rather than just identifying and quantifying it (1998: p.449).

The inferred goal of ‘telling a good story’ both during and as a result of a river trip experience as a way for participants to express and recall their emergent recreation experience, is common to both Arnould and Price (1993) and Patterson et al.’s (1998) research. Through creating and engaging personal values and meanings for the individual recreationists themselves, such stories also created and deepened meanings and values associated with places (Bricker and Kerstetter 2002). Whether at particular points along a river where particularly memorable experiences within the overall experience occur (for instance, tipping out in a scary rapid, seeing a beautiful view round a bend or a funny moment shared with friends) or after the trip when the experience is narrated, recollected, reflected over (in part or whole) and internally edited, so meaning and value is attributed to such experiences in places. Over time, the personal and socially created meanings and values associated with these experiences/places change, for instance they can be forgotten, reframed by other experiences/events, crystallised as ‘history’ or romanticised in folk stories (Larsen 200770). Such

70 The review paper by Larsen (2007) of the Psychology of the Tourist Experience is considered particularly relevant to this discussion as he proposed the importance of memory in creating and recreating active experiences which he considered were ‘related to several social, cognitive and personality processes’ (2007:...
meanings then become embedded (or accrue) both in place (ontological, physical, social and political) and in memory/history (personal, collective and social) through different experiences, on different scales and at different times. In this way, I would argue that recreational experiences could therefore be said to contribute towards the creation of (recreation) places and – through a mutual or co-constructing relationship - be created by taking place or place-experiences in return.

Moving from understandings of river recreation experiences to those of river recreation and place, the psychometric and much narrower concept of sense of place referred to earlier appears to have it foundations in earlier work by Proshansky *et al.* (1983), Stokols and Schumaker (1981), Williams and Roggenbuck (1989) and Williams (2000b). The development of a place attachment scale by Williams (2000a) and others epitomised the quantitative approach taken to sense of place research used in river recreation (and other recreation contexts). For instance, the scale, which was used by Bricker and Kerstetter (2000: p.238) in a well-cited study of whitewater recreationists on the South Fork of the American River, California, proposed ‘15 items [statements] representative of the place identity and place dependence dimensions’ and was designed to facilitate statistical analysis of informants’ responses. Statements such as ‘This river means a lot me’ and ‘I identify strongly with this river’ (2000: p.242) are then rated by respondents on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. It is interesting that Williams, one of the authors of the original scale development study and a significant early driver of quantitative recreation research, has since moved away from this approach to a qualitative paradigm, commenting (Williams & Patterson 2008: p.111):

‘...the psychometric approach to place attachment appears particularly well suited to measuring the strength of personal emotional bonds (e.g., meaningfulness or sentiment) as opposed to the meanings themselves (e.g. the place as symbolic of one’s values or beliefs)...To study the more elusive and amorphously multifaceted notion of sense of place and the individual and socio-cultural meanings that go with place, we have turned to more qualitative, interpretive methods.’

In river recreation research, this change in methodological approach remains poorly represented with only a very small number of research investigations in evidence. The study undertaken by

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p.13). Larsen proposed a definition of the tourist experience as follows: ‘A tourist experience is a past personal travel-related event strong enough to have entered long-term memory’ (2007: p.15). I propose that a recreational experience could be conceptualized in a similar manner.
Bricker and Kerstetter (2002) on the South Fork of the American River, discussed previously, was an extensive, dominantly quantitative research project but which contained a separate qualitative component. Although not an interpretive study, the study goes some way to addressing the meanings whitewater recreationists give to nature-based places. Using a qualitative rather than quantitative approach to a sense of place for recreationists, Bricker and Kerstetter (2002) analysed written answers/descriptions to three key questions: identify a place special to you, describe it and what it means to you, through a four phase process of coding. Through this process they identified ‘five types of meanings or base dimensions’ (2002: p.404) as follows:

- Environmental-landscape
- Human-social
- Recreation
- Heritage-historic
- Commodity

A further level of analysis identified three combinations of base dimensions: recreation-environmental; human-recreation; and heritage-environmental which expressed the deeper and more complex levels of meanings that whitewater recreationists attached to their special places. Through employing a mixed-methods methodology for exploring sense of place, Bricker and Kerstetter’s (2002) research illustrated the complex and interrelated meanings that recreation experiences and places create. As they ask (2002: p.417; my emphasis):

‘The joy of running a river for the first time; simple but telling descriptions of the river’s beauty; and reminiscences about friends – all three descriptors are representative of the varied meanings whitewater recreationists attached to a special place – the South Fork of the American River. Would we have gained this insight using traditional measures (i.e. place dependence and place identity)...of place? No.’

It is interesting to consider the position of this research in terms of both its findings and underlying methodological paradigm, both of which demonstrate a positivistic stance but without venturing

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71 The study comprised 1226 on-site questionnaire surveys and 593 more detailed questionnaire surveys posted to participants’ homes. This portion of their research was based upon the 593 detailed questionnaire responses but did not involved face-to-face interviews; the quantitative portion is reported in Bricker and Kerstetter (2000).
into the realms of quantification. In some ways it blurs the methodological boundary between psychometric and interpretive approaches to studying sense of place, expressing itself in very psychometric/positivistic language while employing a grounded, semi-hermeneutic approach to analysing participants’ written responses. The findings of the research however do ‘move forward’ the place-specific meanings of recreation for that particular stretch of the American River.

Another study, which examined place-based meanings of the Black River Opportunity Area, Michigan, USA using a semi-interpretive, written survey methodology provides a useful example of a place approach albeit not strictly focused upon either river recreation or river landscape (Schroeder 1996). Based on 23 written responses that described participants’ special places, experience meanings, values and activities associated with this area, the study used the text descriptions to ‘understand what kinds of experiences lead people to have strong feelings for special places in the Black River area’ (1996: p.10). Schroeder (1996: p.11) identified a number of themes common to the participant responses including: the importance of beauty and serenity in the experience of natural places and the importance of the harmonious blending of natural and human influences. Although the study openly recognised these aspects of meaning and value were just elements in a greater whole in understanding the Black River area, they were considered to enrich such understandings from a specifically human-environment, grounded and interpretive perspective.

A comparable study undertaken using an interpretive research design studied the place meanings and landscape change perceptions of people for the Niobara River, Nebraska, USA (Davenport and Anderson 2005). The river, designated under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, is recognised ‘regionally and nationally as an exceptional canoeing, kayaking and inner-tubing destination’ (2005: p.626). The study focused upon interviews (25) with members of a local community who had an interest in management of the river. The analysis of the responses, after reading, coding and categorisation (based on a Grounded Theory method) identified four key river meaning dimensions:

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72 The Black River Opportunity Area incorporates a National Scenic River, a Scenic Byway, a National Scenic Trail and a world-class ski jump area and is a mix of river corridor, forest, waterfalls and historic harbour (Schroeder 1996: p.2).
73 Based on Schroeder’s (1996) work.
74 The United States Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968) is a national designation for the protection and enhancement of rivers with outstanding ‘aesthetic, scenic, historic, archaeologic, and scientific’ values (Davenport and Anderson 2005: p.626).
• River as sustenance
• River as tonic
• River as nature
• River as identity

Each dimension had either two or three subcategories; for example, Identity had three: individual, family and community and these were further divided into categories such as history and rural character. All of the response dimensions were further integrated into a web of river meanings and linked with respondents’ perceptions of river development on the Niobara River. The authors (2005: p.637-8) identified a number of key positions that were held by the local community through their interviews, such as the desire ‘for a strong community voice in river conservation and development’ and that for ‘the people who live here, it’s their home and their livelihood. For the people in the city it’s a place to play...it’s just different’. The authors concluded (2005: p.639) that using an interpretive, rather than a scale approach, could result in a dichotomy of attitudes (for example, pro-development versus anti-development), to understand landscape and development changes in a river corridor, and, as such ‘a more sophisticated and constructive perspective, based on a melange of place-based meanings’ was achieved.

Place and sense of place concepts in both outdoor recreation and specifically river recreation research can be summarised as being dominated by a positivist/psychometric paradigm that currently prefers to measure degrees of place attachment, identity and dependence (amongst others) rather than necessarily seeking to understand how and what the meanings fundamental to such place attachment actually are. The very few examples of river recreation research that have probed more deeply have employed a qualitative and increasingly interpretive paradigm to both exploring and conceptualising sense of place in river recreation experiences and environments. Increasingly qualitative approaches to place/sense of place in river recreation experiences and environments are seen as filling in the gaps left by psychometric approaches to understanding the creation of meaning and value through experience in place (Davenport and Anderson 2005; Williams and Patterson 2008). This current study of the Clutha River addresses some of these gaps by providing a detailed, conceptually developed and interpretive, empirical example of the construction and nature of place meanings and place relationships through recreation on/along the river. Although the findings of this study are specific to the Clutha River context (presented in
Chapters Four to Seven), the core thesis which posits place meanings as multiple, dynamic, complex (e.g. spatio-temporal) and fluid, is also argued as capable of extension to other river-recreation contexts.

**River recreation experience and place research in New Zealand**

River recreation research in New Zealand is thin on the ground (Booth and Farminer 2011). For example, as detailed in the recent report *Tourism and Recreation in New Zealand’s Natural Environment: A Bibliography and Research Synthesis* (Booth and MacKay 2007), out of a total of 602 publications on outdoor recreation between 1990-2006 only 34 specifically addressed river/lake recreation. The authors (2007: p.21-22) summarised the nature of river recreation research in New Zealand as:

‘...an eclectic literature; site-specific recreation studies sit alongside overviews of river and lake recreation/tourism. The type of study conducted on river and lake recreation/tourism ranges from economic assessments to theoretical studies. Greater emphasis is placed upon the visitor experience than upon visitor effects upon the freshwater environment.’

Of this body of river (and lake) recreation research none of the publications address the concept of place/sense of place or place attachment and its derivates. Why this is so cannot be explained for certain, however, the relatively recent interest in recreation research in New Zealand and the youthfulness of its recreation and tourism disciplines may account for some of this paucity. The strongly government-driven interest in place-based recreation research in the USA has not been followed in New Zealand. The concept of value is a focus of a small number of the publications either in the form of user (e.g. numbers and participation), recreation or economic values.

Even more recently, the *Outdoor Recreation Research Stocktake* (Booth and Lynch 2010) undertaken on behalf of Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) identified just 70 individual publications relating to outdoor recreation on rivers and lakes in New Zealand undertaken between 1995-2010. Of these, only approximately six were related to river recreation experiences (three of which addressed crowding issues from an expectation-satisfaction perspective) and within these only three specifically addressed aspects of actual river recreation experience (Morgan 1998; Kane and Tucker 2007; Galloway 2008). Prior to 1995 the majority of river recreation research was

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75 The literature actually addressed rivers and lakes so river recreation research is even less than quoted.
focused upon resource management studies, development scheme issues, angling surveys and recreation surveys (Allan and Booth 1992). Similar to the paucity of recreation and place research in New Zealand, although somewhat surprising considering the focal nature of rivers in the recreation, leisure and tourism industries, little focus in research has been directed towards the New Zealand river recreation experience concept (Booth and Farminer 2011). The recreational use and value (economic and non-economic) of rivers however has been investigated from various aspects such as kayaking, angling and water quality (for example, Egarr and Egarr 1981; Greenaway 2001 and Walrond 2001).  

Within the three river recreation experience related studies identified, Morgan (1998) investigated the expectations and experiences of tourists taking white-water rafting and sea kayaking trips using the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP) as a measure of their perceptions of risk, competence and challenge. Using questionnaires and quantitative analysis, the study found that the AEP could measure the level of challenge of each activity but was unreliable at predicting this based on participants’ expectations. Galloway’s (2008) *NZ Recreational River Use Study: Specialisation, Motivation and Site Preference*, whilst being one of the most comprehensive surveys of river users in New Zealand, focused upon the relationships and patterns of behaviour between participants’ levels of specialisation, their motivations and site preferences using a purely quantitative methodology. This approach, although making a significant contribution to the New Zealand river recreation literature does not provide any deeper or place-based insights into the experience of recreational river users, their experience-related meanings and places.

Kane and Tucker (2007) took an ethnographic approach to studying the adventure tourism experience of a whitewater kayaking trip around the South Island. The research focused on the experiences of kayakers in a commercial group kayaking tour and explored the tensions and perceptions of risk and safety, using the concept of ‘serious leisure’, between an advanced level whitewater kayaking trip and a package tourist experience (Stebbins 2007). Kane and Tucker (2007: p.69) found that:

‘For the duration of the tour they were...adventure kayakers. Whilst being dominant, kayaking was not their only ‘field’, however, as being an adventure tourist, or indeed a package tourist, were two more of the ways participants could act out or understand their

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76 See also *River and Lake Recreation: Issues, Research Priorities and Annotated Bibliography* by Allan and Booth (1992) for an earlier stocktake of river recreation research prior to 1992.
experience. They negotiated these competing ‘fields’ as well as the complexity of their desired identity, in order to construct their experiences.’

Kane and Tucker (2007: p.70) concluded that for the group ‘Their tour experiences were a negotiation where they played at the reality of adventure within the safety of the tour structure’. The study was both an alternative and in-depth view of a kayaking experience in New Zealand (one of the few ethnographic studies of a river recreation experience undertaken anywhere to date) with significance for the recreation place-experience conceptualisation proposed in this thesis. Support for this position is found in Kane and Tucker’s (2007: p.67) section on ‘Creating Experience Stories’ where the kayakers, through a ‘routine of scripting, telling and re-scripting their tour stories’ sought to raise their social and kayaking capital. In doing so I argue that through their story (re)creation and telling, they were also simultaneously creating stories of their experiences in places, specifically the West Coast of New Zealand, that contributed to the on-going creation of those places. Kane and Tucker (2007: p.59) noted the importance of the West Coast’s reputation as ‘the hottest extreme kayaking destination on the planet’ and the level of prestige (or capital) associated with kayaking this area for their participants (a driving factor of going there in the first instance).

Drawing together a number of the conceptual elements discussed previously in this chapter, using Kane and Tucker’s (2007) study allows a broader conceptualisation of river recreation experiences and place to be argued. Although not featured in their work, the construction of further stories (or personal and group discourses) by the group that I propose as adding to the West Coast’s kayaking reputation and recognition, is an important element of the idea of place-making that fits with the broader perspective of the social construction of places discussed earlier in this Chapter. Individual and group stories of recreation reflect one way of expressing such place-experiences which ‘make’ places and recreational experiences simultaneously and co-constructively. In my view, these recreation stories bring together:

- the materiality of places (i.e. the water, rocks and trees);
- the perception of places (freezing water, hard rocks, beauty, challenging, adventurous);
- the affective response (emotional reactions) generated through experiences in places (danger, freedom, exhilaration, sense of achievement, camaraderie); and
- the social construction of places (the intra-group re-telling of stories at the end of each day and especially the passing on of stories to people outside the group).
In this construct it can be proposed that through an emergent and dynamic process of experience in place(s), construction and editing of experience/place stories, sharing of stories with others and, perhaps most importantly the re-telling of these stories over time, so places become partly constructed and sustained. Subsequently these *place discourses of place meanings*, if they become acknowledged and framed within the wider institutional discourses of planning and resource management (such as the RMA 1991 in New Zealand), take on an independence of identity and further meanings that becomes subject to further control, refinement and change over time. In this way, the socially constructed, spatio-temporal river places that feature in broader narratives and discourses transcend their material/spatial bounds to the extent that ‘places’ long disappeared\(^77\) can still ‘exist’ and have influence within individual and collective memory.

### 2.5 Chapter Two Summary

This chapter reviewed the key conceptual literature themes of place, rivers and recreation and has covered a lot of ground. Through reviewing and critiquing the relevant literature the chapter has built a conceptual argument in which:

- **Place** - is seen as encompassing a multitude of different but overlapping conceptions of human being, located meaning, dwelling, process and intersection. Place is considered *fundamental* to the possibility of human experience; place-making is conceived as a dynamic, fluid and never-ending *relationship* between personal experience, material locations, social discourses and cultural framings. Places are both bounded and unbounded simultaneously through a combination of personal perception, institutional framing and regulation, and multiple social discourses. Places are contextualised dynamic spaces of relational, material, temporal and social events and relationships connected through networks of communication, ideas and imagination.

- **Rivers** - are seen as encompassing a rich array of cultural and historical meanings, disputed political conceptions, and regulatory framings in which recreation plays a small but significant role. Rivers are places of human experience and influence, frequently the nexus of anthropocentric and ecocentric interests, and are framed in a multitude of competing discourses of power, entitlement, use and value. Rivers are fluid entities of material,

\(^{77}\) For example, the Cromwell Gorge on the Clutha River which is discussed in detail within Chapters Four to Seven.
temporal, spatial and socio-political flows which coalesce and re-combine as each present demands.

- **Recreation** - is seen as encompassing an experiential aspect of the human-environment relationship, particularly where it is situated outdoors and which contributes to the diverse lived experiences of many people. Recreation experiences combine elements of emotion, memory, identity, sociality and physicality through individual and shared experiences of and in places which accrue variable meanings over time. Recreation experiences are framed within individuals’ own socio-cultural worlds which filter these meanings and as a consequence their meanings for (recreational) places. River recreation brings together opportunities for human experiences of and in places with specific outdoor environments which through a co-constituting relationship create and sustain place meanings. Therefore, outdoor recreation is conceived as a form of place-making within the wider every day, place-making worlds of people.

Chapter Two has also identified a number of ‘gaps’ in the conceptual literature; the most obvious being the paucity of research on the nature and significance of place in river recreation internationally, and more specifically river recreation experience and place in New Zealand. There has also been little specific research on understanding the different relationships between recreation experience and places, and river regulatory frameworks which have the power to shape and control such experiences, from either a meanings-based or place-based perspective. Finally from a methodological perspective there have been very few studies of outdoor recreation or specifically river recreation that have taken either an interpretive, qualitative or cultural geography approach to exploring the relationships between recreation experiences, place-making and institutional framings of rivers. This thesis seeks to address some of these gaps.

The next chapter outlines and discusses the research methodology of the thesis and its empirical focus, the Clutha River, New Zealand. It sets out the research philosophy underpinning the study and connects with some of the conceptual positions outlined in the current chapter to establish the epistemological and methodological position of the research. Chapters Four to Seven then present the contextual and analytical findings of the study from the Clutha River through a thematic and discursive analysis, which brings together the conceptual literature framework with the findings of the study before Chapter Eight offers up some final conclusions.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCHING PLACE & RECREATION MEANING ALONG THE CLUTHA RIVER

3.1 Introducing Chapter Three

Bringing together the research aims proposed in Chapter One and the conceptual framework discussed and outlined in Chapter Two into a workable research design that was able to address questions of meaning along the Clutha River was a challenging task. Once the question of why to do the research was settled, the questions of who, where and how to undertake the research required consideration. Chapter Three engages with these questions of research philosophy and practice, and its purpose is to outline and discuss the many and varied issues and decisions that arose during the design stage of the research. By openly demonstrating the different theoretical layers and the decision-making processes that I have used to construct this research, my study seeks to achieve what Davies (2008: p.243) describes as ‘empirically grounded and analytically transparent’ research – in which the reader is able to judge for themselves its robustness, veracity and contribution to knowledge.

The importance of discussing the role and nature of the research design and methodology in this study goes beyond Davies’s (2008) comment, in that it is needed in order to establish the scholarly and logical framework of the entire study, clearly linking the empirical data with the research questions and finally its conclusions (Creswell 2007). Its purpose is also to elucidate and make available the adapted thematic network analysis methodology developed in this study as a contribution to the broader methodological literature.

3.1.1 Chapter structure

Chapter Three is divided into two sections:

- **Research philosophy** – which discusses the primary paradigmatic positions adopted for the research and their epistemological implications for this study;
• **Research methodology** – which discusses the ethical and practice-related issues of researching participants and the Clutha River; the fieldwork methodology; and the analytical methodology which has both shaped and generated the body of the thesis.

3.1.2 *Looking beyond Chapter Three*

As the main portion of the study that addresses issues of philosophy, paradigm and practice in researching place and recreation meanings along the Clutha River, Chapter Three holds a pivotal position in the gradual building of the broader thesis of recreation as making meanings and places. Its role requires it to connect the research questions and conceptual argument for people’s recreation experiences and place meanings for the river and how these make ‘river-places’ (Chapters One and Two), with the inductive analyses and findings of the thesis, grounded upon the field research data and my own interpretations (Chapters Four to Seven). This has been achieved through rigorous discussion, description and explanation of the research process involved in creating this study and the philosophical and ethical issues that surround the qualitative research of everyday people and their lived experiences.

The chapter is also significant for making a methodological contribution through its explanation and employment of an adapted thematic analysis methodology that has developed an existing network ‘tool’ for analysing the relationships between place, recreation, people and meanings (*cf.* Attride-Stirling 2001; Braun and Clarke 2006). The use of thematic networks has received little attention in either place or other related research and therefore offers the potential for fresh and deeper insights into the construction, description and understanding of place meanings and relationships. This is discussed fully in Section 3.3 below. The chapter now turns to the challenging task of acknowledging and discussing the philosophical and paradigmatic foundations of this thesis.

3.2 *Research Philosophy*

The following section engages with the higher level concepts of ontology and epistemology that form the philosophical underpinnings of this qualitative study and which consequently inform the methodological direction of the research.
3.2.1 An Interpretive worldview

The title of this thesis - *People, Rivers and Recreation: Fluid relationships of place and experience on the Clutha River, Otago, New Zealand* – is a title that conveys two key concepts:

- that the focus of this research is a three-way relationship (between people, rivers and recreation) that is neither fixed, certain or from a single perspective (hence the ‘fluid’ metaphor); and
- the underlying philosophy or worldview is situated firmly in the interpretive/constructivist paradigm through the use of the term ‘relationship’ that implies a relational and subjective position.

Guba’s (1990: p.17) widely quoted definition of paradigm as ‘a basic set of beliefs that guide action’ sits alongside Denzin’s more recent comment (2010: p.421) that ‘Paradigms are human constructions. They define the shifting worldview, of research-as-bricoleur.’ The interpretive/constructivist paradigm seeks to understand the world as constituted through human experience and meaning and consequently frames such experience and meaning through an ever-changing, socially constructed lens (Mertens 2005; Mackenzie and Knipe 2006; Creswell 2007). This explanation has been extended further to posit that a socially constructed world is founded upon ‘social facts’ (such as marriage or politics) and that:

‘...social facts constitute the only ‘foundations of reality’ upon which constructivists can build knowledge about global politics and social life in general. Such a ‘postfoundationalist’ position is made possible by the fact that social agents, as they continually reify social facts and take them for granted as part of the order of things, provide constructivists with an already essentialized world that allows them to remain agnostic about reality.’ (Pouliot 2004: p.320)

Pouliot (2004: p.321) further elaborates that:

‘...social facts are generated through a wide array of social mechanisms...such as speech acts and language games, representational force, constitutive practices, norm compliance, persuasion, rhetorical and communicative action, social learning, cultural change, socialization, internalization, cognitive evolution, intertextuality, regimes of truth, etc. In

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78 See Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) for an accessible outline of the development of Social Constructionism (Constructivism) from Berger and Luckmann to Bruno Latour and beyond.
other words, the very useful plurality of concepts developed by constructivists to account for
the social construction of reality revolves around social facts. Since they constitute its
ontological core, social facts are the essence of constructivism.’

Acknowledging the interpretive/constructivist paradigm in this research has therefore shaped it in a
number of significant ways:

- It seeks to understand the world through an *interpretation* of people’s experiences and their
  multiple meanings which are shaped through social, cultural and historical practices, whilst
  at the same time recognising that any interpretation is concurrently shaped by the
  interpreter’s own experiences and meanings;
- It creates a broadly relativist ontology, believing in the principle of multiple realities and
  perspectives;
- It creates a subjectivist epistemology, that the researcher and subject ‘co-create’ knowledge
  together, for instance through the act of research itself, as opposed to ‘discovering’ some
  objective reality/knowledge;
- Its axiological commitments are understanding, communication and anti or
  postfoundational79; and
- It leads to a naturalistic approach to methodological procedures based on empirical inquiry,
  emergent design and inductive data analysis (Denzin and Lincoln 2003; Creswell 2007;
  Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009).

However within this seemingly smooth paradigmatic approach, a number of issues require
discussion that reveal some of the more ambiguous and frankly ‘messy’ aspects of conceiving
qualitative research. Central to this discussion are my own philosophical beliefs as a researcher.
These are discussed in the following section.

79 ‘Antifoundational is the term used to denote a refusal to adopt any permanent, unvarying (or
“foundational”) standards by which truth can be universally known.’ (Guba and Lincoln 2005: p.204). In
essence, this means that applying independent evaluative frameworks (such as triangulation and peer audits)
to assess the validity and credibility of an interpretive research study are not guarantors of any such
properties and that, ultimately, it is the reader’s interpretation of the research text that is the ultimate
evaluative judgement. ‘Postfoundational’ derives from Pouliot’s (2004) critique of Constructivism which posits
that whereas the traditionally ascribed constructivist position of ‘nonfoundationalism’ falls midway between
the foundational and antifoundational positions, postfoundational implies it is beyond the debate altogether.
3.2.2 Philosophical issues I: a ‘real’ reality or is it all just relative?

The relationship between philosophy and methodology in research is not always made explicit but the choice of philosophical direction, whether conspicuously stated or not, and its implications for any research design are critical to the success and legitimacy of any study (Williams and Patterson 2007; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). By positioning this research study within an interpretive-constructivist paradigm, so a number of key philosophical beliefs or positions have been mandatorily embodied through the adoption of certain associated normative commitments (see the bullet point list above; Goodson and Phillimore 2004). Paramount among these is the belief in a relativist ontology which:

‘...does not rely on there being a single, stable reality ‘out there’ waiting to be discovered but considers reality to be socially constructed. This means that how the world is perceived and a person’s thoughts about it are always influenced by social factors such as culture, history and language.’ (Willig 2008 cited in Swift and Tischler 2010: p.561)

Put simply, in a relativist ontology there is no ‘real’ world ‘out there’ independent of human beings that can be objectively conceived, studied and theorised because ‘the world in which human beings act is constituted by their self-interpretations of the world (Hemingway 1995: p.37). Even the idea of ‘social facts’ as performing a postfoundational or essential role in constructivism, as cited by Pouliot previously, does not imply an objective, external world awaiting further discovery. Much has been written about this continuing debate between the binary of relativism/realism, particularly within the wider paradigm dialogues between science and social research discourses and the move into the ‘mixed-multiple-methods advocacy’ movement of the present (Denzin 2010). Concurrent with this movement has been the recognition (and passionate debate) of the ‘paradigm proliferation’ (Lather 2006; Denzin 2010), in which Donmoyer (2001 cited in Lather 2006: p.36) noted: ‘Many worry that such a proliferation of research approaches vying for legitimacy will lead to communicative breakdowns around epistemic incommensurabilities.’

Denzin (2010: p.424) suggests however that:

\[\text{80} \text{ Alternatively rationalism or objectivism. See the classic work by Bernstein (1983) Beyond Objectivism and Relativism for a detailed philosophical view of this debate. Alternatively the more recent works by Creswell (2007) and Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) addresses current issues relative to the relativism-realism debate.}\]
'A second group of scholars celebrate and reread paradigm proliferation, and the profusion of interpretive communities, even the proliferation of uncertainty...They do not necessarily endorse the incompatibility–incommensurability theses that are so important for the mixed methods community. They understand that each community has differing interpretive criteria.'

The relevance of these continuing paradigmatic dialogues to this research is my personal unease with the acceptance of a wholly relativist position in which everything we know is ‘constructed’. Recognising that this does not preclude the physical or materiality of ‘things’ (rocks, water, chairs for example) but that knowledge of such things ‘is mediated historically, culturally and linguistically...what we perceive and experience is never a direct reflection of environmental conditions’ (Willig 2001: p.7), a question remains in my mind as to whether we can be sure that this is the way our human world operates and if there is room in research for a more pluralistic worldview approach which can compensate for such uncertainty. Without wanting to digress further into the myriad paradigmatic arguments that such a question raises, I simply note Patterson and Williams’ (2005: p.377) comments on their recommendation of taking a critical pluralistic position in (place) research:

‘But we see critical pluralism as only minimally prescriptive. It does not require researchers to abandon or change their normal (preferred) paradigm (a revolution in the Kuhnian sense of the term). It does require, however, an attitude of openness to, and appreciation for, other paradigms...[that] requires a researcher to recognize that the world is undisciplined and multifaceted; that all abstractions and models of it are, to some extent, limited and imperfect representations; and that, at some level of abstraction, it is always the case that relevance is in the eye of the beholder. This does not require the suspension of critical thinking...’

Therefore openly recognising and acknowledging the consequences of embracing such a relativist position on the direction, design and outcomes of this study is critical. Likewise understanding and acknowledging the potentially different outcomes of considering alternate paradigms (such as positivism or critical realism) that would influence the epistemological and methodological path of this research of the Clutha River and its people is also important, if problematical. The next section diverts briefly to outline two such alternative paradigms (or theories) both of which make a contribution to the analytical discussions in Chapters Four to Seven and both of which potentially problematise the possible interpretations of reality and meaning for this study.
3.2.3  Philosophical issues II: A reflective ‘nod’ to Critical Realism and Actor-Network Theory (ANT)

In my desire to explore an ontological pluralism or ‘middle ground’ research philosophy it became necessary to question, at times uncomfortably, what it was I believed about reality and where my academic and theoretical persuasions lay. Having been drawn to interpretivism and constructivism early on, both through their dominance in social science and geography-related research and from a strong desire to move beyond the strongly positivist-material-empirical background of my previous work, they seemed a good fit to my proposed thesis research. However, during that exploration I encountered two additional and well-respected paradigms (or in ANT’s case theory) that at times, seem to ‘fit’ just as comfortably as a way to frame and explore peoples’ recreation meanings for the Clutha River. However, as is already apparent I chose to remain within the interpretive/constructivist paradigm, but at times, as will be seen in the analysis and discussion chapters of this study (Chapter Four to Seven), elements of these two positions are referred to and incorporated as part of the broader analytical interpretation of this thesis of recreation making meaning and rivers-as-places. Therefore a selective and broad-brush overview of the key philosophical elements of each paradigm now follows.

Critical Realism evolved from the scientific realist philosophy of Roy Bhaskar in the late 1970s-80s with the focus on social science and a desire to integrate both positivist and interpretivist positions (Danermark et al. 2002; Davies 2008). Its fundamental elements posit:

- A focus on ontology (as opposed to epistemology) with a particular interest in the generative mechanisms underlying reality and not just events, resulting in an hierarchical ‘structured, differentiated, stratified and changing’ world (Danermark et al. 2002: p.5; see Day (2007) for a non-hierarchical interpretation of this position);

- Reality comprises three domains: the empirical (observable phenomena), the actual (phenomena beyond observation) and the real (the underlying causal mechanisms of events and surface phenomena (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009);

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81 At times this felt like I was ‘trying on’ different ontological positions or ‘outfits’ to see which fitted me the best which in turn led to several guilt-laden periods where the phrase ‘retrofitting my ontology’ became a familiar remark in our office. The guilt lessened when I discovered this was also called ‘learning’!

82 I was and remain an archaeologist at heart so the material world has and will always be very ‘real’ to me.
• Social reality is pre-existent and stratified as reflected in the concepts of structure and agency (or society and individuals) along with ideas of historicity and contingency, necessary for their explanation (Davies 2008);

• It believes ‘that there exists both an external world independently of human consciousness and at the same time a dimension which includes our socially determined knowledge about reality’ (Danermark et al. 2002: p.6-7).

Focusing on the last point above vis-à-vis the relations between critical realism and the social world, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009: p.41) succinctly summarise its position thus:

‘Social constructions, while they are acknowledged to exist by critical realists, are framed in an objectivist manner, and are granted a rather limited role. Constructions are taken to be constructions of something, for example a discourse, a social practice, or physical reality, a reality that exists independent of what the constructions look like. The fact that it is socially defined and produced does not make a societal phenomenon any less real, critical realists argue...Put differently, constructions are objective phenomena.’

In essence, critical realism both embraces elements of an empirical or positivist reality and a socially constructed one, addressing both as objective phenomena capable of study. Social structures are interdependent with human agents neither one of which is entirely responsible for the other and ‘placed in an iterative and naturally reflexive feedback relationship’ (Davies 2008: p.19), existing independently as real and transcendental simultaneously.

Without delving further into the philosophical and epistemological realms of critical realism, it is necessary to address one of its main critiques – that of the existence of an objective reality capable of disclosing its ‘constituent properties’ and the causal mechanisms underlying its existence to the researcher (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). As Alvesson and Sköldberg indicate, to suggest that such a premise is possible would be contrary to many of the accepted norms in social science research such as positionality, multiple perspectives, bias and the personal cultural and political framings which cannot be excluded (or bracketed) from research. In effect each researcher would bring her own paradigmatic framings with her and therefore produce a multiple array of ‘constituent properties’, causal factors and mechanisms for the object or phenomenon in question, contrary to the claim of an objective reality existing externally to our knowledge of the object or phenomenon.
Although this only scratches at the surface of critical realism, the critique suggests that the hoped-for integration or reconciliation of the natural and social sciences through a critical realist philosophy is yet to be delivered.

Moving swiftly on to Actor-Network-Theory (ANT), this theory (or ‘sub-paradigm’) evolved from the broader social constructionist paradigm in the 1980s in the research primarily produced by Bruno Latour (Latour 2005; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). Latour (1996; 2005) developed concepts focused on structure and agency to include and acknowledge the role of non-human actors in the processes of construction (or ‘networks’ or ‘associations’ (Latour 2005)) - for example, technological equipment, machinery, transport and even objects such as traffic lights - and drew heavily on concepts from other disciplines such as semiotics (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). The idea of these actor-networks was not, as Latour (1996: p.1; author’s emphasis style) explained, to resemble the technological networks commonly conceptualised for things such as the internet and engineering grids, but:

‘A technical network in the engineer’s sense is only one of the possible final and stabilized states of an actor-network. An actor-network may lack all the characteristics of a technical network - it may be local, it may have no compulsory paths, no strategically positioned nodes…’

Latour’s networks then are more akin to ‘filaments’ spreading out through the world and connecting and constantly changing; as Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009: p.32) comment ‘ANT aims at following the traces of associations between actants; associations that are always in the process of dissolving and re-emerging.’

But the networks are not entirely social as Latour (1996) advocated a ‘micro-sociological, bottom-up perspective’ (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: p.32), rejecting a macro-sociology that coalesced structures and actors together. As Latour (1996: p.2; author’s emphasis style) stated clearly:

‘The actor-network theory…has very little to do with the study of social networks. These studies no matter how interesting concerns themselves with the social relations of individual human actors - their frequency, distribution, homogeneity, proximity. It was devised as a reaction to the often too global concepts like those of institutions, organizations, states and nations, adding to them more realistic and smaller set of associations. Although [ANT] shares this distrust for such vague all encompassing sociological terms, it aims at describing also the
very nature of societies. But to do so it does not limit itself to human individual actors but extends the word actor - or actant - to non-human, non-individual entities. Whereas social network adds information on the relations of humans in a social and natural world which is left untouched by the analysis, [ANT] aims at accounting for the very essence of societies and natures. It does not wish to add social networks to social theory but to rebuild social theory out of networks. It is as much an ontology or a metaphysics, as a sociology.‘

Latour (2005: p.5; author’s emphasis) also emphasises the need to substitute currently normative meanings of sociology for what he views as ‘the tracing of associations’ whereby ‘social does not designate a thing among other things...but a type of connection between things that are not themselves social’. In stating this, he basically rejected the concept of the social as a ‘specific domain of reality’ that has its own qualities and instead offered an alternative world view in which the social becomes 'a very peculiar movement of re-association and reassembling' (2005: p.7). Subsequently Latour’s research shifted to a more realist position largely in response to the development of ANT in addressing such issues as the existence of non-human actants that cannot be denied, but which cannot be explained through a purely constructionist ontology (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009).

The relevance of both of these paradigms is that in their conceptualisations they offer some possible alternative knowledges and explanatory frameworks for understanding recreation and place meanings on the Clutha River, elements of which are in accord with different aspects of my own personal worldview. As noted, both of these philosophical frameworks make a contribution, if subtly, later in the study analyses and discussions through reflecting on the possible alternative interpretations they offer.

Returning back to the main discussion of the research philosophy underlying this thesis, the implications for embracing an interpretive/constructivist position in the epistemological understanding of this research are now considered.

3.2.4 Research philosophy: Interpreting what exactly?

In the continuing effort to achieve a middle-ground position for this thesis, the degree of relativism acknowledged in this research requires clarification. If a line or scale was placed between a realist position and relativist position then this research study would be located approximately two-thirds
of the way along that scale towards the relativism end. The rationale behind this is connected with the epistemological (and methodological) position taken in this research that embraces a moderate, ‘transactional/subjectivist view’ of ‘local and specific co-constructed realities’ (Guba and Lincoln 2005: p.195) which are anchored by a belief in situated freedom. The idea of situated freedom arises from the hermeneutic principle that the environment constrains personal experience and actions to certain degrees but that human freedom and will, in turn allow choices and acts which determine people’s own perceptions of the world (Patterson and Williams 2002). As such:

‘Situated freedom is closely related to the concept of co-constitution. It refers to the belief that human experience is not completely determined by the environment, nor is it characterized by complete personal freedom.’ (Patterson and Williams 2002: p.16)

Thus situated freedom addresses some of the concerns I raised previously in regard to social constructivism’s emphasis on construction that seems to diminish the material world’s (or non-human in Latour’s words) role in creating our realities. Linking this transactional/situated concept of the world/reality with our human position within it, it is considered that:

‘Human beings are self-interpreting beings whose interpretations of the world shape the world in which human beings act...meaning arises out of human efforts to understand themselves and their world...’ (Hemingway 1995: p.37)

Drawing these concepts together, Hemingway (1995: p.37; author’s emphasis) can be referred to again to summarise the main ontological and epistemological position of this study:

‘...there is no brute reality...no irreducible world of which knowledge can be had because the world in which human beings act is constituted by their self-interpretations of the world...the world is historically conditioned so that any specific findings or interpretations must be temporally qualified. It is in a world so constituted and so conditioned that human beings

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83 Discussed in detail in Section 3.3.1. It is worth noting that Patterson and Williams (2002: p.11) refer to Hermeneutics as ‘a family of interpretive approaches to science rather than a single, wholly unified scientific philosophy’. In effect it is a broad paradigm in its own right that has its own ontological and epistemological positions similar to social constructivism. Conversely Guba and Lincoln (2005) identify Hermeneutics as constructivist methodology as does Creswell (2007). I take the middle ground (once again) in suggesting Hermeneutics can inform both epistemological and methodological choices through its strongly developed philosophical framework. This is also considered one of the benefits of adopting an over-arching critical pluralism position to research – it is possible to have your cake and eat it!
seek to find meaning, whether in the routines of their daily lives or in the more arcane pursuits of social inquiry, and in seeking meaning, change the world in which it occurs.’

Further connection between the thesis’ interpretive-constructivist ontological position and its epistemological one is achieved through embracing the concepts of co-construction and intersubjectivity. The co-construction of knowledge has already been touched upon from its ontological perspective but it also flows through into the recognition of how this research study acknowledges what knowledge is and how it is created. At a higher epistemological level, the co-construction of knowledge by humans and their environments has been described as follows:

‘We are born into a world that existed before us, and implicitly pick up or assume the meanings the world has taken on...Our meanings are not constructed as individual thinkers without relation to other people; we are always in relation to others. Our understanding and interpretation of the world is co-constituted and synergistic.’ (Conroy 2003: p.39)

Based on this belief, knowledge is created by transactional relationships between individuals, wider society and the ‘world’ (including the material world) which is mediated through language. These relationships are also enabled by the concept of intersubjectivity – knowledge both grounded and created in social practices that in turn constitute those social practices (Hemingway 1995). In other words ‘human beings are seen no longer as discrete individuals, but as members of a web of shared understandings existing in a shared language that creates the practices in which human beings engage’ (Hemingway 1995: p.39). Hemingway (1995: p.40) also suggests that it is through a shared language that constitutive practices become ‘constitutive of social reality’ and ‘language’, ‘ideas’ and ‘concepts’ [which] cannot be separated from social relations’ become ‘constitutive of these relations’

84 The emphasis on language as the medium of knowledge creation has a long and distinguished development starting in Ancient Greek philosophy with Plato and continuing into the 20th century with the hermeneutic/phenomenological philosophies of Heidegger, Husserl and Gadamer for instance (Schmidt 2006). For example, in Gadamer’s view (1975): ‘Experience does not happen outside and before language, but within language’ and ‘...following Heidegger, maintains that the correct word “brings the thing to presentation” (Truth and Method: 413) and that there is

84 For an alternative, object-based view of this ontological/epistemological position see Olsen (2010). In his ‘Ontology of Objects’, Olsen re-introduces and makes a stand for the influence and effects of material culture beyond that currently attributed to ‘things’ by many philosophies (even ANT), forwarding a position that objects or things possess in their own right a dynamic presence and integrity that has greater weight than is being acknowledge in currently favoured anthropocentric creation concepts.
no gap between the word and its meaning’ (Gadamer 1975; cited in Schmidt 2006: p.119). Therefore even though there are many different human languages across the world, Gadamer (1975) suggests ‘...that there is no perfect language [that will fully disclose the world] and that each language-view is just a limited view of the world’ (cited in Schmidt 2006: p. 122).

To summarise the epistemological position embedded in this study, it views knowledge creation as co-constructed between people and their environment85 through a transactional relationship mediated by language and expressed as thoughts, concepts and actions (verbally, textually and bodily) which are themselves constitutive of knowledge. Such knowledge creation is always on- going, contextual, temporally qualified and therefore subject to constant re-interpretation/re-creation as time proceeds. Interwoven within this worldly stream of socially constructed knowledges and practices is the individual’s personal world of experience through which they also actively construct and derive meaning. It is such an exploration of how peoples’ meanings are constructed through recreation experiences, how they can be interpreted and what relationships they engender with others and their environment/places, that are the fundamental questions of this thesis and which interconnect the epistemological position of this study with the methodological approach and design adopted. The importance of making this connection cannot be overstressed, as Patterson and Williams (2002: p.14) comment ‘...assumptions about reality and the nature of human experience play a fundamental (though often unexamined) role in shaping the conduct of scientific research’.

To draw this section to a close but at the same time leave open the links established between the philosophical and epistemological position of this study in order to extend those linkages to its methodological framework, it is worth reiterating a few basic points. Through embracing an interpretive-constructivist paradigm and its normative philosophical and epistemological commitments, this study of the relationship between people, their recreation experiences and the Clutha River fits comfortably within the generally recognised characteristics of qualitative and interpretive research (Creswell 2007). For example:

- It employs the researcher as key instrument;

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85 On reflection, is the ‘environment’ the silent partner in this transactional relationship as objects are incapable of expressing themselves directly? The environment affects but only through our perspective/language.
• It explores participants’ meanings of phenomena (recreation experiences and meanings on the Clutha River);
• It locates the research in the participants’ own lived contexts;
• It uses multiple sources of data to explore the central inquiry; and
• It describes and interprets a complex and insightful example of an aspect of the people-recreation-Clutha River relationship rather than reducing it to simple and universal ‘facts’.

With this established, the discussion of the research design now moves on to contextualise and explain the points illustrated above and how the research was constructed.

3.3 Research Methodology

The following section outlines and addresses some of the critical decision-making paths, methodological concepts, researcher issues and ethical and practice-related issues of researching participants and the Clutha River that contributed to the creation of this thesis. It is divided into three parts:

• An explanation of the methodological decision-making paths and ethical and practice-related issues which link the research epistemology to its hermeneutic methodology and methods;
• A description and explanation of the fieldwork methodology;
• A description and explanation of the analysis methodology.

3.3.1 Methodology into method: Choosing the Hermeneutic path (or circle)

The path from an epistemology founded upon an interpretive/constructivist ontology to a research methodology capable of delivering an interpretive, situated, fine-grained and empirically-based research analysis and discussion has not been easy. This challenge has been largely due to the plethora of methodological approaches that lie within the interpretive ‘palette’ on offer to researchers rather than a dearth of choices. Creswell (2007: p.6-9) illustrates this point effectively in his discussion on qualitative ‘approaches’ in which he identified at least ten different classification systems and over 30 discrete methodological approaches. In such a sea of qualitative methodologies – how does one choose the ‘right’ one (or ones)? Without detailing the many
months of exploration, blind alleys and ‘ah-ha’ moments, the decision to follow an essentially hermeneutic methodological path was reached; Figure 3.1 provides an illustration of this decision-making path.

In Figure 3.1 the critical ‘thinking’ phases between reaching an understanding and acceptance of each philosophical and methodological ‘part’ are depicted to demonstrate the linkages, reiterative (and reflexive) nature and development of the research ‘whole’. This idea of ‘parts’ and ‘wholes’ is also fundamental to hermeneutic thinking and the section that follows provides an overview of the main principles (and positions) within hermeneutics and how these ideas have shaped and driven the research design.
Figure 3.1: Research Design: Decision-making path for *People, rivers and recreation: fluid relationships*
Hermeneutics can be roughly generalised as the ‘theory and practice of the interpretation of texts’, originally biblical texts but currently conceived in a much broader way as ‘texts’ of all kinds whether written, spoken or manifested in human action (Olson 1986: p. 159; Crotty 1998). Indeed interpreting the meaning of human actions has become one of the main foci of modern hermeneutics as reflected in the philosophical writings of Gadamer, Ricoeur and particularly Heidegger (Patterson and Williams 2002; Schmidt 2006; Alvesson and Sköldberg 200986). Olsen (1986: p.160), discussing an early writer on hermeneutics and science, Wilhelm Dilthey, wrote that ‘understanding man and society was more like interpreting texts than like gaining empirical knowledge of nature’, an argument also expressed by hermeneutic authors Patterson and Williams (2002: p.11). Hemingway (1995: p.44) expands this idea by linking it back to a social constructivist paradigm in his statement that:

‘...there is an ontological element in hermeneutics. It is important to recognize that this is ...a dynamic, conception of ontology. What is, changes, and one agent of this change is human interpretation of the social world and its practices.’

Whilst Hemingway uses the term ‘interpretation’ with a slightly different inference than Olsen, the concept of interpreting human experience is central to both arguments. Common to many research paradigms or traditions that develop from one field (i.e. divinity) into others (i.e. social science), hermeneutics encompasses more than one position87, the two poles being represented by objectivist and alethic hermeneutics (Cassell and Symon 2004; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). Alethic88 hermeneutics (comparable with productive hermeneutics or philosophical hermeneutics) was developed primarily from Heidegger and Gadamer’s thinking (Schmidt 2006; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). The fundamental concept advanced by alethic hermeneutics (and often placed in opposition to objectivist hermeneutics) is explained by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009: p.93):

86 Schmidt’s (2006) Understanding Hermeneutics provides one of the better literary overviews and critical discussions of hermeneutics and its main protagonists Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer as well as critiques of hermeneutics by Hirsch, Habermas, Ricoeur and Derrida. See also Nicholson (1984) Seeing and Reading and Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) Reflexive Methodologies (Chapter 4) for detailed but accessible works.

87 These include: hermeneutic divination; reproductive hermeneutics; critical hermeneutics and productive hermeneutics – see Patterson and Williams (2002) for a brief description of each.

88 Alethic from the Greek aletheia ‘uncoveredness’ (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: p. 96).
‘...with its focus on truth as an act of disclosure, in which the polarity between subject and object - ...[and] between understanding and explanation – is dissolved in the radical light of a more original unity...’

This idea of unity (although not necessarily in a totalising way) is also expressed by Olsen (1986: p. 167) when he states that:

‘...just as facts are relative to theories, interpretations are relative to text structures. A more defensible hermeneutics, such as that of Heidegger or Nicholson, acknowledges that there is structure there in the world and in literature while at the same time insisting that the apprehension of that structure depends entirely upon the knowledge and projections of the reader.’

In this way, a position of total relativism is avoided (a world in which there is no structure, no facts at all and therefore no theories) but the (inter)subjective basis of all knowledge/interpretation is accepted. Such subjectivity at the very same time includes an integral body of knowledge that is already known by a person before they are aware of it – ‘preunderstanding’ in Alvesson and Sköldberg’s terms or Heidegger’s ‘forestructure of understanding’ and Gadamer’s ‘prejudices’ (Patterson and Williams 2002; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009) - which is generated and fashioned by a persons’ society, culture and past experiences. From an epistemological perspective, an alethic hermeneutic interpretation of human experience (‘texts’) does not attempt to remove or ‘bracket’ out the researcher’s preunderstanding when interpreting a text. According to Patterson and Williams (2002: p.23):

‘Gadamer...argues that prejudice is not a barrier to be overcome by science, but it is instead the positive possibility of interpretation...Thus, the forestructure of understanding (our prejudices) is the scaffolding upon which knowledge is built.’

89 In Gadamer’s view ‘prejudice’ is a neutral word rather than the negative connotations it holds today, which simply implies prejudgement, ‘...neither positive nor negative until the final judgement is rendered’ (Schmidt 2006: p. 100). Therefore some prejudices can be very positive in terms of the preconceptions, attitudes and benefits they bring, for example, a liberal mind, democratic attitude, etc.

90 Unlike some forms of hermeneutics, Alethic hermeneutics openly acknowledges the bias or fore-knowledge that any researcher brings with them. For example, reproductive or re-experiencing hermeneutics, believes that a reader is able to set aside her own prejudices in order to empathise with another person and their experiences, and so interpret those experiences without bias. Alethic hermeneutics disputes that such a setting aside of personal bias is actually possible (Patterson and Williams 2002).
Therefore the socially contingent nature of our knowledge and the inherent bias contained in that same knowledge and its ongoing creation are both an essential recognition of the hermeneutic approach. Moving from the conceptual realm of hermeneutics to a more applied one, hermeneutics as a research methodology provides a certain degree of structure, not based on rigid, objectivist procedures, but on a dialogical, reiterative process (Van Manen 1990; Patterson and Williams 2002; Cassell and Symon 2004). This idea of dialogue:

‘...is a living conversation characterized by openness to the phenomenon the researcher tries to understand...devoted to developing an understanding of an issue rather than testing pre-existing propositions’ (Patterson and Williams 2002: p.24).

Paterson and Higgs (2005: p.343; author’s emphasis) interpret such dialogue as a ‘...fusion of horizons whereby different interpretations of the phenomenon under investigation are brought together through dialogue to produce shared understanding.’ It is through this transactional and reiterative process of inquiry, observation, interpretation and then re-interpretation that hermeneutics goes to work on understanding specific human phenomena and their meanings – it is this desire for understanding (verstehen\textsuperscript{92}) and meaning that drives hermeneutic inquiry (Crotty 1998). This process, often referred to by the metaphor of the ‘hermeneutic circle\textsuperscript{92} and more recently the hermeneutic ‘spiral’ forms the methodological backbone of hermeneutic methodology\textsuperscript{93} (Conroy 2003; Crist and Tanner 2003; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). Re-acknowledging the fact that there are a multitude of perspectives within hermeneutic thinking, illustrating the hermeneutic circle/spiral can be problematic. However, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) produced an integrative version of the circle which coalesced the two main positions (objectivist and alethic) into a ‘basic’ hermeneutic circle (Figure 3.2).

\textsuperscript{91} Cassell and Symon (2004: p.196) view the meaning of verstehen (understanding) as ‘a ‘reading’, an interpretation of the self-interpretation of others within a context. There is additionally the requirement for dialogue (sometimes active, sometimes silent) between researcher, reader and the subject of research. This is the process known as verstehen.’

\textsuperscript{92} First introduced by Heidegger in Being and Time (1927).

\textsuperscript{93} Note though that there are no particular methods ascribed to an hermeneutic methodology,
Figure 3.2: The basic hermeneutic circle (from Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: p. 104; Figure 4.3)

The inner circle reflects a fusion of the objectivist (whole and part) and alethic (understanding and preunderstanding) thinking which underlies the iterative, open and ongoing methodological processes of interpretation represented in the outer circle. To refer to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009: p.105) once more, the circle:

‘...obviously implies an openness to multiple interpretations...A ‘polyphonous’ account of different interpretations, or at least of possibilities for interpretations, is, moreover, a form of honesty towards the reader; the researcher/interpreter does not adopt any false pose of ultimate authority vis-à-vis the circle of readers, but instead invites them into a dialogue about a number of alternatives, of which he or she prefers one (or several equivalent ones) on stated grounds.’

In this way hermeneutics responds to issues such as power in research through engaging the hermeneutic circle as a device for openly acknowledging the researcher’s prejudices (and influence) in the interpretation/creation of the research whilst transparently showing the process and development of understanding through continued interpretation and re-interpretation of the ‘text’. Through this process hermeneutic interpretation is never definitive or complete and is always underway and open to re-interpretation (Seamon 2000). Referring back for a moment to the
Methodology ‘pot’ in Figure 3.1, a smaller ‘pot’ entitled Phenomenology is shown as making a contribution to hermeneutics which requires a ‘nod’ to explain its methodological relationship.

3.3.2 A Hermeneutical ‘nod’ to Phenomenology

Acknowledging the phenomenological aspects of this study as part of its broader hermeneutic methodology is a necessary step in the research of recreational experiences and place meanings along the Clutha River. Phenomenology has been developed and described in a number of ways, as David Seamon (2000: p.158; my emphasis) eloquently discusses:

‘Phenomenology is a critical, descriptive science that is related, in method and philosophical outlook, to other interpretive traditions that include existentialism and hermeneutics...[it] includes different conceptual approaches that range from the transcendental or “pure” phenomenology of philosopher Edward Husserl to the hermeneutic phenomenology of philosopher Paul Ricoeur to the existential phenomenology of philosophers Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty...a way of knowing that seeks to describe the underlying, essential qualities of human experience and the world in which that experience happens...’.

Although there is not a single agreed definition of phenomenology, broad consensus suggests that, as Seamon (2000)\(^\text{94}\) says, it is the study of phenomena (experiences, objects and events) as experienced by people in their everyday relationships with the world, through describing and seeking the meaning of such phenomena and as such, falls within the interpretive paradigm (Wattchow 2004; Patterson and Williams 2005; Creswell 2007). Over time the study of such phenomena will reveal the essential qualities or ‘essences’ of these phenomena, as Husserl called them, and in that way bring greater understanding to the multiple and diverse meanings of the human lifeworld (Seamon 2000; Wattchow 2004). The idea of people as intimately part of the world is derived from Heidegger’s seminal work Being and Time (1962) where he argued that ‘...people do not exist apart from the world but, rather, are intimately caught up in and immersed’, in this way Heidegger’s phenomenology rejects the Cartesian subject/object dualism of positivism and places

\(\text{94}\) As David Seamon explains in his own words he ‘represent[s] what has come to be called existential phenomenology—i.e., a way of phenomenology developed by such thinkers as Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty that moves away from phenomenological founder Edmund Husserl’s focus on pure intellectual consciousness and moves toward a reflexive understanding of everyday human life and its lived meanings.’ (Seamon 2007: p.3).
humans firmly within the world, or ‘Dasein’ (being-in-the-world) (Seamon 2000). As Seamon (2000: p.160) says: ‘It is impossible to ask whether person makes world or world makes person because both exist always together and can only be correctly interpreted in terms of the holistic relationship, being-in-world...’.

The bond between hermeneutics and phenomenology is supported by the idea of human experiences or phenomena as creating the lived texts and narratives (of hermeneutics) that simultaneously require interpretation in order to understand and derive meaning from them. These everyday and often taken-for-granted experiences range across the whole human spectrum and for many researchers hermeneutics and phenomenology have been long-time companions in research (Van Manen 1990; Seamon 2000; Patterson and Williams 2005; Creswell 2007). Phenomenology (and hermeneutics) has been developed, discussed and employed across many fields of inquiry: in philosophy (Casey 1987; Malpas: 1999), geography (Relph 1977; Tuan 1977; Jackson 1981; Casey 2001), tourism and recreation (Fishwick and Vining 1992; Pernecky and Jamal 2010), psychology (Moustakas 1994; Giorgi and Giorgi 2008), education (Van Manen 2001; Wattchow 2006), environment (Mugerauer and Seamon 1985; Seamon 2000) and health care (Conroy 2003; Crist and Tanner 2003; Paterson and Higgs 2005).

Within the context of this study of recreation experience and place meanings on the Clutha River, there is a corpus of research utilising hermeneutic phenomenology in place research (for example Buttimer and Seamon 1980; Chaffin 1989; Seamon and Mugerauer 1985; Relph 1993; Seamon 2007). However, there appears to be considerably less use of hermeneutic phenomenology in recreation and related research and specifically river recreation research\(^5\) (for exceptions in recreation see Fishwick and Vining 1992; in tourism see Pernecky and Jamal 2010). The most notable exception is Patterson et al.’s (1998: p.423) hermeneutic study of canoeists on the Juniper Run in the Ocala National Forest, Florida which explored the idea that the environment or setting (physical, social and managed) ‘sets boundaries that constrain the nature of the [recreation] experience, but that within those boundaries recreationists are free to experience the world in unique and variable ways’. Other relevant studies have a strongly interpretive – phenomena methodological focus but lack the explicit hermeneutic approach. These include Arnould and Price’s (1993) study of ‘extraordinary’ rafting trip experiences in the Colorado River basin, Schroeder’s

\(^5\) The broader literature for river recreation and recreation-place research is discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.4.
(1996) study of place-based meanings of the Black River opportunity Area, Michigan, and Davenport and Anderson’s (2005) research on place meanings and landscape change perceptions of the Niobara River, Nebraska.

These studies which specifically chose interpretive methodologies for researching recreation experiences and rivers as places, were undertaken to deepen knowledge of such phenomena beyond that which can be provided by either quantitative or psychometric methodological approaches (Goodson and Phillimore 2004; Williams and Patterson 2008). In embracing hermeneutic (phenomenological) methodology in this study of how (and if) people’s river recreation experiences create meaning and contribute to making rivers-as-places on the Clutha River, so too it seeks to gain greater insight and depth in understanding one particular aspect of people’s lived experiences/lifeworld and the relationships within. Such depth and insight however does not arrive issue-free, so to speak, hence the final discussion within this section examines some of the methodological research issues relevant to this particular study.

3.3.3 The ‘Reflexive Researcher’: Methodology into practice - values and ethics

A fundamental tenet of interpretive and hermeneutic inquiry is the recognition and open acknowledgement of the value-position of the researcher in the specific inquiry\(^96\) (Goodson and Phillimore 2004). The open recognition that ‘researchers as well as the researched construct their own multiple versions of reality’ (ibid.: p.40) which posits the ‘impossibility of remaining ‘outside of’ one’s subject matter while conducting research’ (Willig 2001: p. 10) only serves to strengthen the need for directly addressing the role of the researcher (the ‘me’) in this research design. The problematising of the researcher’s role in creating his or her knowledge from researching ‘others’ has been part of the postmodern agenda for considerable time now. As Goodson and Phillimore (2004: p.36) comment:

‘...the need to undertake, present and disseminate research in a reflexive way has been accepted. The rationale behind this is that we need to explore exactly how knowledge was produced in order to ascertain the validity of the claims being made.’

\(^96\) In other words, research cannot escape Creswell’s ‘axiological assumption’ (Creswell 2007: p.18) or hermeneutics’ ‘pre-understanding’ (Schmidt 2006: p.100). See Section 3.3.2.
This connection between reflexivity and validity (and representation) has been addressed by Guba and Lincoln (2005: p.209) who discuss current issues of ‘voice, reflexivity and postmodern textural representation’ in social science research, concluding that:

‘Texts have to do a lot more work these days than they used to. Even as they are charged by poststructuralists and postmodernists to reflect upon their representational practices, representational practices themselves become more problematic.’

Therefore, it could be supposed that the introduction of complete reflexivity into a study would address some of these issues but as Gergen and Gergen (1991 cited in Davies 2008: p.7) note when such a ‘radical constitutive reflexivity’ is embraced:

‘...in spite of its unavoidable and essentially desirable presence in social research, [it] becomes destructive of the process of doing such research; as researchers we are led ‘to reflect upon our own subjectivities, and then to reflect upon the reflection in an infinitude of self-reflexive iterations.’

With this in mind such ‘personal reflexivity’\(^97\) (Willig 2001: p.10.) can be approached and presented in a multitude of ways and depths\(^98\) some of which have been embodied within my specific research design; as Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009: p.11; my emphasis) note:

‘...method cannot be disengaged from...pre-understanding, since assumptions and notions in some sense determine interpretations and representations of the object of study. Hermeneutics is thus an important form of reflection.’

For this study I want to reflect on how I interpret my own value-position. I am not choosing however to make this reflection a self-analytical ‘journey’ through my research process but rather, in keeping with my own character of ‘middle-groundness’, it is an exposition of the key points I believe are relevant for the reader in framing their own perspective of this study.

_My role in the research_ - The interpretive, social constructivist, intersubjective/co-constructing and hermeneutic research positions anchoring this study have already been outlined above. Figure 3.1

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\(^97\) As opposed to ‘epistemological reflexivity...[that] encourages us to reflect upon the assumptions (about the world, about knowledge) that we have made in the course of the research’ (Willig 2001: p.10).

\(^98\) See Pillow (2003), Goodson and Phillimore (2004), Guba and Lincoln (2005), Davis (2008) and Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) for thorough and wide-ranging discussions on approaches to reflexivity in qualitative inquiry.
illustrates the linking together of these different ideas but despite its informal style of representation it cannot help but suggest a distance between these concepts and myself as the researcher. Perhaps a more appropriate layout would have been to have ‘me’ at the centre of the concepts but this suggests an authority or omnipotence to which I have no claim. Therefore my position in Figure 3.1 – to the side, but still firmly within the circulation of knowledge – remains. As such it reflects my role as instigator, designer, gatherer, participant, interpreter, author and promoter of the research. On further reflection it does sound rather omnipotent but in reality simply recognizes that I had an idea which I developed, conceptualised and refined (with input from my supervisors naturally) into a research project about the meaning of people’s river recreation experiences and if they ‘make’ rivers and places in some way.

Values - Within this role I embody a set of values – social, historical, contextual and personal – that have been brought to bear on the research (process, context and interpretation) and most of which I am not actively conscious of. In this way the hermeneutical preunderstanding comes into play through the phenomenological action of researching meaning and experience and such values begin to make their presence known. This has been particularly noticeable in the analysis and discursive stages of the research wherein I have tried to reflect on my own prejudices (to use Gadamer’s term) and limited understandings to understand and interpret those of my participants. In this way the idealised co-construction of knowledge has become a tangible, almost visceral, reality in text.

Representation – Side-stepping the broader issues associated with the word representation99, as researcher I actively chose to adopt an interpretive and language-based methodology as an attempt to openly and transparently demonstrate how I re-created and represented some elements of the worlds of my research participants (their river and recreational experiences). Through the process of fieldwork, construction of interviews, transcriptions and analysis100 I continually move(d) between myself and my participants’ worlds (literally and cognitively) which resulted in a written text that became my representation of this co-constructed world and its occupants. In this way ‘writing is not merely the transcribing of some reality. Rather, writing...is also a process of discovery: discovery of the subject...and discovery of the self’ (Guba and Lincoln 2005: p.210). Through the writing of this ‘world’ so have I created a temporary representation for both myself and my participants - which is

100 Which are all discussed in Section 3.3.4 and 3.3.5.
at best incomplete and at worst inauthentic/misrepresentative - but which has nonetheless *aspired* to give representation to the participants (and myself) with honesty and due diligence.

*Indigenous perspectives* – Situating the empirical research in New Zealand has brought with it a number of research issues that primarily revolve around fully acknowledging and integrating, as far as practically possible within my own constraints as the researcher, the official bi-cultural nature of the country (Māori and Pākehā New Zealanders) and its often turbulent socio-historical context. Central to this integration is a respect for Māori and Pakēha culture (and other cultures within New Zealand) which I have aspired to embrace through the active inclusion of both cultural perspectives within this study. In addition, this approach was fully endorsed by the University of Otago’s Māori consultation process which reviewed and offered encouragement for the research project. I fully recognise that my somewhat tenuous position as a non-New Zealand researcher automatically places limitations on my ability to understand and therefore interpret these different perspectives but I hope that through my own efforts to learn, understand, be open to and above all be willing to engage in discourse with these different cultures and their representatives, that this has gone someway to reducing those limitations.

*Ethical considerations* – The ethical considerations for this study were guided by two key factors: firstly the desire to abide by generally accepted ethical standards in qualitative research and secondly the ethical requirements stipulated by the University of Otago, in the conduct of research on human participants. The first factor was addressed through the wider process of learning during the PhD research and in-depth consideration of the range of ethical issues that required consideration in research which were then fully incorporated into the study. Particularly useful in this endeavour was the research paper by Paterson and Higgs (2005) which included a basic list of ethical issues in research which researchers should take account of and which included such things as:

- Research contribution, worthiness and integrity;
- Competence of the researcher to undertake the study;
- Participant information, consent and what risks they may be subject to; and

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101 See Bishop (2005) and Tuhiwai Smith (2005) for comment on this issue of indigenous and New Zealand specific research issues.
102 See Flick (2009) for a comprehensive overview of ethics in qualitative research.
• Issues of privacy and confidentiality.

The second factor was addressed through the University of Otago’s research ethics procedures which required an application to be made to the University for ethical approval to conduct the research and which was granted in April 2011. The ethics approval for this study is included as Appendix A of this thesis.

In summary, the research methodology of this study has aspired to deliver the ethical, transparent, reflexive and grounded research demanded by its (pluralistic) interpretive and social constructivist research philosophy. It also aspires to ‘open up new avenues, paths and lines of interpretation to produce ‘better’ research ethically, politically, empirically and theoretically’ (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: p.313). These philosophical and methodological ideals have been embedded in a research design that seeks to understand the meaning of people’s river recreation experiences and if they ‘make’ rivers and places in ways that are meaningful to them. However it is now necessary to describe and discuss the research design for the data gathering and formal analysis phases of the study – in my opinion the most vital stages in the knowledge creation process – in order make the study fully transparent and so capable of other interpretations from the reader.

3.3.4 Fieldwork methodology: Into the blue...or brown Clutha River

The fieldwork methodology for this study of recreation experiences and meanings for places involved several stages of development, planning and implementation in order to achieve a considered, rigorous and integrated fieldwork study that aligned with the philosophical, theoretical and conceptual goals of this research. This section of Chapter Three describes and discusses the fieldwork element of the methodology as follows:

• A description of the fieldwork undertaken in 2011;

• The location of the fieldwork: the Clutha River, Otago, New Zealand;

• The methods of the fieldwork: participant interviews, participant observations and secondary historical data.

103 Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009: p. 312-313) refer to this in the context of what they term ‘R-reflexivity’: a reflexivity which ‘refers to reconstruction, re-presentation...R-reflexivity is about developing and adding something...’ as opposed to ‘D-reflexivity’ which ‘stands for deconstruction, defensive, destabilizing’.
It is important to emphasise from the beginning of this discussion that both the fieldwork and analysis stages of the research were not carried out in isolation as discrete parts of the whole but developed in parallel from the very beginning of the project. Indeed the act of research itself is a holistic form of analysis that is only made transparent through a description of its processes and issues (Silverman 2010). Therefore before moving into the fieldwork discussion it is important to illustrate how the fieldwork and analysis elements fit into the overall research design. Figure 3.3 continues the cycle of the research design mapped in Figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.3:** Research Design: Fieldwork and Analysis Decision-making path for *People, rivers and recreation: fluid relationships*
Throughout this section, the reader is referred to Map 1 – the Field Research Area - which provides a detailed topographic map of the Clutha River study corridor; it identifies all of the locations discussed in this section. It has been designed to lay flat when extended so the reader can easily refer to it when reading the text. The reader is also referred to Appendix D which provides a partial photographic overview of the Clutha River, including some of the recreational activities observed during the fieldtrips, in order to illustrate the changes in topography, scenery, and character that the river undergoes as it flows from its outlet at Wanaka to its mouth at Inchclutha.

Fieldwork Description

The fieldwork or empirical information gathering phase of the study took place between April and December 2011 and comprised participant interviews, observational and photographic work along the river collected in a field note diary, and the collection of a diverse range of secondary historical media (see Appendix C for a ‘map’ of the fieldwork and participants).

A three day reconnaissance trip was carried out in January 2011 following the full length of the Clutha River where accessible by vehicle to assess the practicalities of using the Clutha as a fieldwork ‘location’, to make some early observations on the general character and recreational uses of the river and to informally talk to people during the journey in order to gain their responses to the concept of the research and source some ideas for its design. The Clutha River was found to be accessible for a considerable portion of its length, particularly and not unnaturally where it coincided with settlement areas such as Cromwell, Clyde, Alexandra and Balclutha. It was also noted that there was often recreational activity on the river and lakes of some kind, whether in the form of fishing, power boating, water skiing, rowing, kayaking, walkers along the bank, camping, picnickers or just ‘messing about’ at the edge of the water.

In addition, from chatting to people during the trip and particularly those working at the information centre in Cromwell, there seemed to be a general interest in both what people ‘did’ on the river, both currently in terms of recreation but also in terms of past, non-recreational activities such as mining and transport and the changes that had taken place including the construction of the dams at Clyde and Roxburgh. An important contact (a prominent and long-term member of the Central Otago community) was made during the trip, in Cromwell, who became the main participant contact for the study (although he himself did not participate in the interviews), and who enabled me to draw up and contact a potential list of interviewees that started the ball rolling for the main phase
of the fieldwork in April 2011. This list of contacts was founded upon his personal, long-term involvement in recreation and tourism in the Central Otago region, and having been a resident in the Cromwell area for many years. An outline of the research participants, locations of interviews and timescales is included as Appendix C of this thesis.

The interviews took place in different locations scattered up and down the Clutha River but had a distinct clustering in the Cromwell area which in part reflects the more densely populated nature and spread of the town compared to other settlements along the river and in part reflects the ‘networking’ approach of my fieldwork design (discussed in more depth later in this section). I preferred to group small numbers of interviews together into separate trips where possible and integrated this with the river/participant observation activity and historical source gathering, so that I maximised both the amount of information and time in the field within the resources available. A total of thirteen discrete fieldtrips were carried out averaging between 3-4 days each, totalling over 350 hours ‘in the field’, several thousand kilometres of driving and several hundred photos. With the exception of several difficult to access sections of the Clutha River below Alexandra and along the Rongahere Gorge and Lower Clutha, I observed almost the whole length of the river and the more accessible sections on numerous occasions.

Each trip would typically consist of 1-3 interviews most of which occupied half a day each by the time introductions, the interview and farewells were made. The remainder of the time was spent learning and observing different sections of the Clutha River (divided into Upper, Middle and Lower Clutha for reference) where access and safety permitted. This allowed me to become familiar with and understand the different characters and more subtle changes of the river whilst observing and recording how people interacted with the river (or not), particularly their recreational and leisure activities. I also took the opportunity to kayak on each of the two lakes at Roxburgh and Cromwell to experience for myself what being on the Clutha’s water was like; I would have liked to have kayaked a section of the main river to experience the real flow and power of the Clutha but my novice kayaking skills and propensity for capsizing suggested caution was the better option!
By the completion of the fieldwork in December 2011 I had interviewed a total of 20 participants and had coalesced an eclectic research ‘archive’ of written, illustrative, photographic and video material. Transcription of the interviews took place largely after the interviews were completed although notes taken during the interviews were constantly referred to during the whole fieldwork stage as part of the hermeneutic or iterative principle embedded within the broader research design. The final interview transcription was completed at the end of January 2012 whereupon the formal ‘data’ analysis phase commenced (see Section 3.3.5).

The ‘where’ of the research – The Clutha River

Chapter One Section 1.4 has provided the contextual setting for the study in regard to the Clutha River, its geographical and political position in New Zealand and a brief overview of its many discourses. It remains therefore to discuss the choice of the Clutha more in terms of its role as a partner (or ‘actant’ in Latour’s (2005) ANT terms) in this research and the contribution I think it has made to this thesis. Referring to Section 1.4 for a moment, the Clutha River is referred to as ‘The big river’ in one of the discourse themes – a discourse that reflects many aspects of its character, not just morphological - and it is only reflecting upon this now that I see this discourse as having influenced my choice of fieldwork location. Living in Dunedin the Clutha River was a natural (and obvious) choice as its relative proximity, accessibility and connections (social, political and historical) with the city were long established. The Clutha became the final choice (if there ever really was one) as in many ways it symbolized certain aspects of New Zealand and the Otago Region that I identified with early on (a beautiful aesthetic, a rugged yet accessible landscape, an interesting yet complex history and one of the best ‘drives’ available on the island). Interestingly all of these aspects were mirrored by the participants without (I hope) any direct prompting from me during our conversations. In addition, it was a river that had been (and continues to be) a focus for many types of recreational activities both water and land-based with sufficient settlement and recreational

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104 Early on in the research design, I had intended to undertake a comparison of views between recreational participants (13 interviews) and institutional (management) participants (7 interviews) and therefore undertook two groups of interviews which reflected this division. However, as the analysis phase progressed it soon became clear that the rich data contained in the recreational participant interviews was more than sufficient to complete the thesis. Therefore I took the difficult decision to not include the institutional participant interview data in this thesis, with the aim of completing this aspect of the research at a later date and through alternative means than the PhD.

105 For example, the four hour drive from Dunedin to Wanaka along the Clutha Valley; please see the photos in Appendix D and Map 1 for an illustration of this.
activity ‘places’ to provide participants, experiences, meanings and places to explore. The final ‘decider’ was the uncertain future of the Clutha in terms of whether Contact Energy (or whomsoever) will construct a third hydroelectric generating station (and dam) on the river and its location, a decision that was only finally decided, on 1st May 2012, in favour of not proceeding with a further dam option (ODT 2012a). In political terms the Clutha had the potential to be a ‘hot potato’ – always a positive thing for a qualitative researcher!

The role of the Clutha River as a ‘partner’ in this research was primarily two-fold. It situated the research beyond being more than just a ‘place’ to undertake the fieldwork, as the river and its environs (which included people) became a subject of the research itself, alongside the participants; it was participants’ relationships with the Clutha – recreational and beyond – that I asked about and which had provided participants with a huge array of diverse and sometimes contradictory experience/meanings. Through exploring these participant-Clutha River relationships (which gained increasing emphasis as my interviews and observations progressed during the year), so the river moved beyond a mere setting for the research and became the very heart of the research itself with its own influence and affects. This recognition of the importance of the ‘place’ of research in research methodology has been increasing (Anderson et al. 2010) and it has been argued that ‘by situating place, time and author centrally in the process, the research ‘consumer’ is given the capacity to acknowledge the existence of the politics of location within its production’ (ibid.: p.600; my emphasis). In this way, Anderson et al. (2010: p.599; my emphasis) argue that the inclusion of ‘place’, vis-à-vis the Clutha River, creates a new kind of research dialogue – a polylogue – that recognises and ‘alludes to a non-modern perspective that grants agency to non-human actors in constructive and discourse acts’. As a result the Clutha became a nexus through its agency that grounded both the place of research and the research of place simultaneously in this study.

The second role the Clutha River played was in generating and framing certain issues that affected the shape and course of the study. This is particularly evident in the topic of the past and potential future damming of the river that is very much alive as a subject of conversation and debate in Otago and continues to contribute to the national discourse on dams in New Zealand106. Although it could be argued that it was my gradual learning as researcher that effected this change, I believe that the Clutha River also held some responsibility for this decision, through its own agency of providing a

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106 Refer to Chapter One, Section 1.4 and Chapter Two, Section 2.3.3 for a contextual discussion of this statement.
political perspective to this research, one that I as researcher cannot take full credit for. In this way, it also refers back to the often subtle, invisible and unacknowledged ‘power’ that the place of research has on the researcher and researched, as Anderson et al. (2010: p.600; my emphasis) state:

‘By making the agency of the researcher and the place of research explicit in the methodological process it is possible to highlight that investigators simultaneously lay down meaning in places as they attempt to uncover it. This knowledge-in-place approach is not only place-bound, but also place-making.’

The Clutha River thus became my research partner in place and in practice.

*The ‘how’ of the research - interviews*

In line with the hermeneutic methodology embedded in this study, the primary empirical information gathered for this research was through semi-structured interviews with participants selected through a networking (or more commonly snowballing107) strategy that was initiated in Cromwell and networked both up and down the Clutha River corridor. Although a rather positivist term, the *sampling strategy* adopted for this study was also constructed in accordance with hermeneutic (and phenomenological) principles so did not seek to gather information aimed at generalisability of the river recreation experience or at representing a large portion of the population (which are positivistic traits; King 2004; Creswell 2007). Instead its goal was to gain a fine-grained understanding of the river recreation experiences and meanings of a number of people, located in different places along with Clutha River, which could provide greater insight into both the experiences themselves and how they generated meanings and relationships (both for the participants, the Clutha River and the participants’ many river places) as a consequence. By not situating the study in a specific location this may appear contrary to the place-based conceptual lens which the research is framed within. However, by considering the Clutha River as a ‘place’ in its own right and that locations such as Alexandra and Clyde are both places individually and part of the Clutha River ‘place’ imaginary simultaneously, so this study is in effect taking a ‘place-based’ approach (Anderson *et al.* 2010). The Clutha River is also a place in motion, a place of flows, both literally and figuratively, that connects other places and other kind of flows across the Otago landscape.

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107 See Atkinson and Flint (2001) for a strong explanation and argument for the use of snowball/network sampling in qualitative research.
The choice of interviews as a method is common to both hermeneutic and phenomenological inquiry and frequently forms the core empirical data that a study is based upon (Creswell 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). The hermeneutic interview has been described by Kvale (1996: p.46) as:

‘...a conversation about the human life world, with the oral discourse transformed into texts to be interpreted. Hermeneutics is then double relevant to interview research, first by elucidating the dialogue producing the interview texts to be interpreted, and then by clarifying the subsequent process of interpreting the interview texts produced, which may again be conceived as a dialogue or a conversation with the text.’

Patterson and Williams (2002: p.42) in their work on hermeneutic principles in qualitative research, suggest the following points be taken into consideration when undertaking hermeneutic interviews:

- ‘Hermeneutics reflects a constructivist ontology in which knowledge of phenomena and reality is viewed as a textually produced construction of the interviewer and interviewee;
- How the interviewer conducts the interview strongly influences the participant’s account;
- ...the interviewer is the audience to whom respondents present themselves in a particular light;
- ...the researcher must adopt the role of “self as instrument”, participating in an emergent discourse.’

Their main point of note is that ‘...hermeneutic research is an emergent process’ so however interviews are carried out, ‘It is acceptable...and expected that insights from earlier interviews will be used to guide and improve subsequent interviews...’ (2002: p.43). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: p.112; author’s emphasis) describes this as ‘Getting Wiser:...as the interviewees bring forth new and unexpected aspects of the phenomenon studied’.

In keeping with these principles, the interviews – or ‘conversations’ as I prefer to call to them - conducted in this study were semi-structured, that is guided by a set of primary questions which then led spontaneously in new directions as the conversation developed, much like natural conversations that happen in everyday life. In this way each conversation addressed certain key themes which I had already constructed from the earlier phases of the research but allowed each participant to then develop and discuss their own interpretations of the questions and produce a
unique and personal narrative of their experiences and meanings. As such the conversations embrace a strongly phenomenological position in that they:

‘...recognise the text produced in the interview situation is shaped by that context, but would not accept the radical relativist position that it bears no necessary relationship to the interviewee’s wider experience.’ (King 2004: p.13)

The interview guide developed and used for the interviews is included in Appendix B of this thesis. I intentionally linked the interview questions to the thesis research questions discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.3 in order to demonstrate the conceptual steps between the research design and its implementation in practice. The key interview question themes addressed were:

- Past experiences of recreation on/by/near the Clutha River;
- Meanings and value of those recreational experiences;
- Other meanings of the Clutha River; other places and activities;
- Relevance of the idea of a ‘relationship’ with the river;
- How management of the river has been/is viewed.

The questions focused strongly on the past experiences of participants as opposed to their very recent or current experiences although the latter were not discouraged if the participant chose to include them. The rationale behind this was to gain a much richer, time-depth perspective of their experiences and meanings which could be examined for whatever interrelationships were expressed or capable of interpretation. In this way the more obvious physical and emotional aspects of these relationships (as I have framed them) were made available for interpretation but also the less obvious temporal or time-based elements of the relationships (such as the formation of vivid memories and the development of river-participant relationships over time). As some of the participants had life-long relationships with the Clutha River, I felt that this was an important aspect of the relationships which needed greater emphasis than most comparable studies placed on it.

This approach has been employed successfully in other comparable research such as the study of kayaking wilderness experiences in Florida (Patterson et al. 1998) and the changing landscape perceptions of residents on the Niobara River, Nebraska (Davenport and Anderson 2005). The conclusions from both studies suggest that this approach to interviewing allows the interviewee
freedom to express/construct their experiences and meanings in their own style (often producing a narrative as stories or rich metaphors) whilst maintaining some structural consistency across interviews capable of analysis and consideration. To ensure the accurate reporting of the interviews each was tape-recorded and later transcribed verbatim; notes were also taken during the interview for quick reference. I concur with Patterson and Williams’ (2002: p.45) conclusion that:

‘...the end result will be an interview text that is co-produced by a respondent describing his or her experience and an interviewer asking questions that are inherently leading. This means that each interview will be unique. However, because the interview guide ensures that equivalent/comparable information is explored...this variation across interviews is acceptable.’

As noted earlier, the number of interviews undertaken for this study amounted to 13 which were transcribed in full by the author. The size of the sample reflects both a natural saturation point that was reached by the end of the fieldwork period and, pragmatically, the resources available; this number of interviews falls comfortably within the range suggested for hermeneutic-phenomenological research (e.g. 15 +/- 10; Creswell 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009).

*Participant observation (or the Observer-as-Participant)*

Although the focus of the participant interviews primarily concerned their past recreational experiences with the Clutha River, it was important to also understand the ‘present’ of the river and how people related to the river through their diverse recreational activities. A form of participant observation was used that involved (me) walking, cycling, kayaking and just sitting and watching the daily activities that went on along different reaches of the river. Occasionally I would chat to people out walking their dogs (a common occurrence on the Upper Clutha tracks at Wanaka) or the odd cyclist who had stopped to take in the view or needed a rest, as I would ask them in conversation if they did this often or were familiar with the river and how, etc. When the opportunity arose I would note these anecdotal conversations and encounters in my field notebook along with thoughts, feelings and general observations that I had noticed during the day.

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108 See Jorgensen (1989) for a complete account of (ethnographic) participant observation. For a more recent perspective see Tedlock (2005).
This type of participant observation borders between what Waddington (2004: p.154) defines as the observer-as-participant and the complete observer - the former ‘maintains only superficial contacts with the people being studied (for example, by asking them occasional questions)’ and the latter ‘stands back and ‘eavesdrops’ on the proceedings’ (see also Creswell 2007: p.130). As the purpose of these observations was in essence to provide a richer, contemporary context in which to interpret the river and the participants’ responses and not to record in minute detail the daily life of the river itself, then this approach to participant observation was deemed acceptable in the context of this study. For ethical purposes, where casual conversations became longer or slightly deeper, I always identified myself and my interests as a researcher to the other conversationalist so that they were aware of my intentions and that I may anecdotally reference their comments. In none of the conversations which proceeded along these lines did ‘participants’ object to these terms. Over the course of the fieldwork phase, I estimate that I undertook thirty of these conversations (some were very brief and not always written down), and used them as anecdotal support for observations made in the analysis of the main interview data. In this way, I also used them to reflect on both my experience as the researcher in my writing, and to illustrate further some of the points of the analyses.

Secondary historical data collection

To complement the river observational/contextual information that was gathered during the fieldwork phase of the study, secondary historical sources relating to the Clutha River and Otago region were also collected to provide further contextual data. These are synthesised in Section 1.4 of Chapter One. The purpose of this was to allow the participants’ conversations and my observations and interpretations of them to be grounded and contextualised both from historical and current perspectives. Crucially, as a researcher not local to the Otago Region or New Zealand, the information gathered also enabled me to gain a broader and more critical understanding of the history and issues surrounding the Clutha River – vital to undertaking the study - that both informed the research inquiry and framed some of the interview conversations with participants.

The use of such secondary sources has its own issues as any historical information is subject to both the researcher’s own selectivity, interpretation and ultimately re-presentation as well as reflecting those of the individual authors (Webb et al. 1984). However as the purpose of this exercise was establishing a general baseline of information relating to the Clutha River, it’s general history,
people and recreational history, it was considered essential in order to situate the research and its participants (Creswell 2007). Therefore the secondary sources were not subject to formal analysis but rather judiciously synthesised by myself. The range of documentary sources that were consulted and partly collected included:

- Historical accounts, heritage guides, general books and similar literature relating to different sections of the river and its environs during different periods of its history;
- Archival photo collections, museum memorabilia and displays, and video material;
- Early and pre-dam edition survey and geological maps for the Otago Region and similar cartographic materials;
- Māori tikanga (customs and values) material.

On a reflective and methodological note, the use of archive video footage to view sections of the Clutha River before they were filled by the Clyde Dam development was particularly useful and became a meaningful way for me to ‘experience’ the river before its fundamental change. Watching kayaking footage of the Cromwell Gorge and Cromwell Gap rapids from the late 1970s and early 1980s was both an insightful and inspiring experience that enabled me to understand and contextualise more clearly when certain participants described and talked about this part of the river. Having watched the videos early on in my study, I have to acknowledge that it also shaped some of my sympathies for the loss of the river in those sections and indeed, shaped my language as I have found myself thinking/writing in terms of ‘loss’ and ‘drowned’ as well as ‘change’ or ‘gain’ (see Chapter Seven for a detailed analysis of this subject which became a substantial theme in the analysis perhaps unsurprisingly). It is important to acknowledge that these video sources contained their own highly subjective discourses, and even their posting on the internet was more than an act of remembrance, often featuring on anti-Clutha dam sites.

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109 This may appear a ‘non-empirical’ approach to assessing the information but as researcher I bring with me more than 17 years of professional archival research synthesising experience. On this basis the approach satisfies the criteria for ‘competency’ in qualitative research (Paterson and Higgs 2005).

110 For example, see: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXU52VAOko8&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXU52VAOko8&feature=related)

111 I am tempted to use the New Zealand cultural term “awesome” here!
3.3.5  Analysis methodology: Thematic Analysis - making meaning and place on the Clutha River

This section explains and discusses the analysis methodology of the study and how this thesis was constructed. Referring back to Figure 3.3 for a moment, it is important to take stock of the conceptual framework floating alongside the main stream of the research design. Although it may be a rather ‘chicken-and-egg’ (i.e. circular) argument as to where the conceptual framework actually fits, by representing it visually here it acts as a reminder of the ever-present and always-becoming, pre-understanding of the researcher (myself) in this research. Nowhere is this more explicitly (at least it should be) acknowledged than in the method of analysis of the empirical information generated in this research (Conroy 2003). Both my own personal pre-understanding and that generated by nearly three years of doctoral research conceptualised, framed and created a body of knowledge that was then subjected to a creative, yet systematic process of formal\textsuperscript{112} analysis. It is through this systematic analysis that the thesis has played out, and as the heading suggests, it was as much about making meaning and place as it was interpreting them.

The following section outlines and explains the thematic analysis methodology chosen to undertake the interpretation of the empirical information generated from the fieldwork phase and how it was adapted to reflect the specific context of analysing participants’ recreational experiences and place meanings for the Clutha River. The section will first outline how thematic analysis fits within the interpretive-hermeneutic methodology of this study, secondly the best-practice guidance for undertaking thematic analysis, thirdly how it was adapted for this study, and then finally it examines the role and process of using thematic networks as the central ‘mechanism’ of interpretation in this study.

Hermeneutics and Thematic Analysis: A fine romance

The hermeneutic approach to the analysis of research and specifically interview ‘data’, does not have a prescribed method as such and consequently has been interpreted in a number of ways that find common ground in the iterative and inductive metaphor of the hermeneutic circle/spiral (Patterson and Williams 2002; Paterson and Higgs 2005). This has been described as follows:

\textsuperscript{112} I have already commented that analysis is an action that begins from the very start of the research process and in many ways only ends when placed on the page; as researcher, the analysis will still continue long after the written thesis is shelved.
‘The goal in hermeneutic research is to fuse the horizons of past, present, and future understanding using the hermeneutic circle, relating “the thing itself to the dialogue between the text and the reader”.’ (Aylesworth 1991 cited in Paterson and Higgs 2005: p.346)

Through this approach, the “thing” or phenomenon - in this case the meanings of river recreation experiences and how they contribute to making places - is drawn out of the interviewees’ texts and, along with the researcher’s own horizon of understanding (or pre-understanding) is broken down into its parts, interpreted, described and related back to the greater phenomenon (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). The practicalities of achieving such analysis are perhaps slightly harder to grasp in the absence of a defined method of analysis (neither Heidegger or Gadamer prescribed a particular analytical approach; Pernecky and Jamal 2010) although some guidance has been published (see Van Manen (1990) and Patterson and Williams (2002) for guidance on hermeneutic phenomenological analysis methods). Writing in the context of pedagogical practice, Van Manen (1990: p.78; my emphasis) suggests there is a link between a phenomenon and its meaning ‘which can never be grasped in a single definition’ and as a consequence:

‘Human science meaning can only be communicated textually – by way of organised narrative or prose...In order to come to grips with the structure of meaning of the text it is helpful to think of the phenomenon described in the text as approachable in terms of meaning units, structures of meaning, or themes. Reflecting on lived experience then becomes reflectively analyzing the structure or thematic aspects of that experience.’ (Van Manen 1990: p.78)

So by transforming lived experiences (e.g. river recreation) and their meanings into text (e.g. through transcribed interviews) and using a thematic approach to hermeneutically analyse the text (e.g. iteratively), so the multiple (perhaps infinite?) meanings of those experiences become more accessible for interpretation by (and through) the researcher. To quote Van Manen (1990: p.79) further:

‘Making something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure – grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of “seeing” meaning.’

This idea of seeing through thematic analysis was pre-empted by Boyatzis (1998: p.1) who stated:
‘Thematic analysis is a way of seeing...Observation precedes understanding. Recognizing an important moment (seeing) precedes encoding it (seeing it as something), which in turn precedes interpretation.’

In this way thematic analysis shares principles with the alethic hermeneutics adopted in this study whilst simultaneously providing a system or method with which to explore and interpret human meaning – ‘themes can be understood as the structures of meaning’ (Van Manen 1990: p.79; my emphasis). Such an organizing system, as Patterson and Williams comment (2002: p.46) ‘...promotes a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon by showing the inter-relationships among themes and by retaining a rich characterization of individual theme’. So having established the complementarity between hermeneutics and thematic analysis, the next section outlines what it involves and how the study was undertaken.

**Thematic Analysis**<sup>113</sup> (TA): A best-practice view

The use of TA in qualitative research has been well documented (e.g. Boyatzis 1998; Van Manen 1990) but its method and application have often not been made explicit by researchers in their studies, which prompted two authors to publish ‘how to’ guides that form the main references for this section. The papers by Attride-Stirling (2001) and Braun and Clarke (2006) stem from the disciplines of sociology and psychology respectively, but both guides were considered suitable for use in more general qualitative research<sup>114</sup>, such as the present study, as they were not specifically positioned in a particular methodological approach. As Attride-Stirling (2001: p.386) states:

> ‘The technique [TA] provides practical and effective procedures for conducting an analysis; it enables a methodical systematization of textual data, facilitates the disclosure of each step in the analytic process, aids the organization of an analysis and its presentation, and allows a sensitive, insightful and rich exploration of a text’s overt structures and underlying patterns.’

A key difference to note between the two TA papers was that Attride-Stirling’s method was focused through the use of a Thematic Network illustrative tool to undertake the different stages of analysis whereas Braun and Clarke’s guide simply addressed the sequential stages of TA directly. In essence, Attride-Stirling’s work sub-divided the main theming stage (Stage 3 in Table 3.1) into three separate

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<sup>113</sup> Thematic Analysis is referred to as ‘TA’ henceforth.

<sup>114</sup> Indeed Attride-Stirling’s (2001) paper is aimed at a general qualitative ‘audience’.
theming stages which created networks of themes organised on three (non-hierarchical) levels. Having spent much time with both papers and having adopted the thematic networks approach as an analysis and visual tool in this study (discussed separately in the next section), I reached the conclusion that their approaches were essentially the same albeit naturally expressed in slightly differently terms. Therefore the following description of the TA stages (Table 3.1) is my interpretation of an amalgamation of each paper for which the authors are equally cited (Attride-Stirling 2001; Braun and Clarke 2006). Definitions of the various terms used in the stages are given below.

*Definitions:*

- **Data:** any type of textural data (e.g. interviews/transcripts; field notes; media sources; academic papers).

- **Data set:** the information used for a particular analysis (e.g. one or more interview transcripts); an individual piece of data is referred to as a data item.

- **Extract:** an individual section of original data (i.e. not coded) such as an interview quote.

- **Code/coding:** the identification of a segment of data (a word, phrase or longer) of interest which is summarised (and referenced in some manner).

- **Coding framework:** a framework or list of codes predetermined by the researcher which are used to identify relevant data segments. This can be driven by theoretical issues, topical issues or recurrent issues already identified in the text from previous readings.

- **Theme:** the grouping of codes into related clusters that reflect a common theme amongst the coded segments.

- **Thematic Network:** organisation, analytical and presentational tool for grouping themes into non-hierarchical representations.
Table 3.1: The stages of a Thematic Analysis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Repeated reading of texts/data</td>
<td>Gaining familiarity with data; (transcription); noting initial ideas; option of devising coding framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Initial coding of texts</td>
<td>Careful, systematic dissection of text into interesting features or according to coding framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Theming codes</td>
<td>Grouping the codes into nascent themes and then higher level themes resulting in different levels of organisation (the basic, organising, global theme organisation stage of a thematic network).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Review and refine codes &amp; themes</td>
<td>Iterative process of reviewing all themes and their codes to make sure each fit within and across the data set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Illustrate themes</td>
<td>Illustratively map or create network diagrams to show themes and their relationships within and across the data set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Define &amp; refine themes</td>
<td>Iterative process of reviewing all themes and their codes to make sure each fit within and across the data set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Summarise and describe themes/networks</td>
<td>Producing summary descriptions and initial explorations of themes/networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Written analysis</td>
<td>Written interpretation of analytic themes/networks producing an analytic narrative and argument that integrates the theoretical/conceptual/research questions of the study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Attride-Stirling 2001; Braun and Clarke 2006)

*Key principles of TA*

Of the many principles and advantages of TA espoused by Attride-Stirling and Braun and Clarke, the following key principles were considered most relevant in this study (my emphases throughout):

- TA is an iterative and recursive process – the reading, coding, theming and analysis of data is not a linear process but requires the researcher to move ‘back and forth’ between the different stages repeatedly. As such TA ‘shares key features of any hermeneutic analysis’ (Attride-Stirling 2001: p.388).
• TA takes time and should not be rushed – the process of developing and refining each stage takes time as interpretation begins from the very start and not just when the theming process (or networks) are completed.

• Themes do not emerge from the data - TA is positioned so that the complete role of the researcher in the analysis process is laid open and does not deny ‘the active role the researcher always plays in identifying patterns/themes, selecting which are of interest, and reporting them...’ (Braun and Clarke 2006: p.80).

• The research questions ultimately frame the analysis – even in a data-driven approach, TA recognises (or should recognise) that ultimately the data and the analysis are framed by the research questions driving the study.

• Avoids a purely reductionist approach – through the flexible process of coding and theming data TA allows different scales of analysis to be undertaken that, even at a descriptive data set scale, provides a rich description of the topic in question.

Key issues in TA

In common with the principles outlined above, Attride-Stirling (2001) and Braun and Clarke (2006) state that TA has several fundamental issues that require consideration before and during analysis which affects the outcome of the analysis. These are highlighted below:

• Data-driven or theory-drive approach: the decision to use either a data-driven (or inductive/open\textsuperscript{115}) coding or deductive (predetermined coding framework) approach\textsuperscript{116} influences the analysis of data and its interpretation through allowing either the data to structure the analysis so the themes closely link to the data directly or allowing the theory to structure the analysis so in effect predetermining the themes that are identified.

• Semantic or latent approach: the choice of a semantic (surface content of the data/texts) or latent (underlying construction in the data/texts) level analysis needs to be considered as each level brings with it its own epistemological and analysis implications.

\textsuperscript{115} Open coding is a term derived from Grounded Theory which refers to a non-predetermined approach to coding data (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

\textsuperscript{116} Or both - Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) used a ‘hybrid’ approach with both inductively and deductively coded and themed data in their study of performance feedback.
• **Rich description or detailed account**: All TA involves analysis across the data set but depending on the theoretical framing or research goals the researcher can choose to create a rich description of the whole data set or focus on one particular aspect or theme to create a more detailed or fine grained understanding of the aspect or theme.

*Adapting TA for this study: Thematic Networks (TN\textsuperscript{117}) in practice*

Before giving an example of how Thematic Networks was used in this study, it is considered important to demonstrate briefly how the whole process of analysis was approached for this research and consequently how and where TA and TN fit together (Table 3.2). Overall, the analysis was conceptualised in three main phases which are shown below alongside the best-practice guidance for TA to demonstrate how they aligned with the guidance.

**Table 3.2: Study analysis phases aligned with TA guidance stages.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA Stage</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>‘People, rivers and recreation’ Study Phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Repeated reading of texts/data</td>
<td>1. Analysis preparation and organisation (transcription, coding and TN formation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Initial coding of texts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Theming codes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Review and refine codes &amp; themes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Illustrate themes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Define &amp; refine themes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Summarise and describe themes/networks</td>
<td>2. Written description and analysis of TNs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Written analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Written analysis of TNs within research literature to reach ‘complete’ analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Phase One*

The phase 1 analysis is best demonstrated through a real example of coding undertaken in this research. The following extract from Transcript No. 4 identifies myself the researcher (‘AF’) and the

\footnote{117 Thematic Networks are referred to as ‘TN’ henceforth.}
interviewee (‘P’ for participant) and the reference number given to the text extract (4.8, 4.9) was for identification and later collation into the theme groups. An extract could be coded a number of times if the content was interpreted as reflecting several simultaneous meanings so the suffix a, b, c, etc was added to the main reference number for identification and tracking.

Extract from Transcript No. 4:  

AF: So what was the Upper Clutha like?  

P: Well, the Upper Clutha was, it wasn’t, there wasn’t very much recreation happening on the river. In fact I was trying to remember if I actually saw any jet boats or anything on the river. I do know that [pauses] um, somebody from the project office, they had a jet boat and they actually went up the river and back down the river and so I observed the river from a boat, but that was really the only time that I was actually on the river itself. I honestly don’t have a lot of memories of people doing any boating or kinds of activity on the Clutha - the time was - the orchardists and all that, when that thing [the dam] was going on. From my perspective, coming back to Cromwell now, there’s so much usage on this lake, every driveway has a boat, I mean I even have, we even have a boat. [pause] So that really changed the face of Cromwell and recreation because that really wasn’t the case before, you know.

Once each transcript was coded, a list was made of all the codes (over seven hundred in total) and the process of refining and theming began. Two compete cycles of refining of the coding lists were undertaken to produce the Basic Themes required as the number of initial themes was simply too large and rich for the TNs to handle and there was considerable overlap between basic themes (which was not considered as desirable within the best-practice guidance of TA stages 2-4). The coded extracts were then collated under each of their basic themes in another cycle of interpretation. Eventually a refined list of 72 basic themes was arrived at and these were then...

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118 All interviewees are identified in this study by their Transcript number (1-13) and were not individually re-named (which is another common approach in qualitative studies) for confidentiality purposes (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). Reference to the gender of the participants has been allowed however (see Appendix C).

119 This explanation of the Phase One analysis process refers to the initial theming round for ease of explanation, as subsequent phases of analysis (constructing the TNs and writing them) resulted in further interpretation and alteration of the theme groups through which some themes were amalgamated; for example, there was originally five global themes but one global theme was subsumed into the four remaining themes upon further critique and analysis.
considered, interpreted, grouped, re-grouped and further refined to produce a list of 20 organising themes that characterised the summaries held within the basic themes they signified. Finally these organising themes were similarly considered, grouped, re-grouped and refined to produce four global themes which characterised the issues within the organising themes.

So to continue the example, codes 4.8a, b and 4.9 were all grouped (along with other codes) within the basic theme:

> Changing accessibility of the CR/lakes impacts recreational use and meanings

which was subsequently included along with other basic themes in the organising theme:

> Changing place-meanings from CR changes

and which was then grouped together with other organising themes to be characterised by the global theme:

> Changing meanings

Having jumped ahead slightly in the explanation of the analysis phases and their terminology, it is necessary to briefly divert to an outline of the Thematic Networks approach to explain more clearly how these link into the broader TA process and phases two and three of the analysis.

**Phase Two**

Thematic networks (‘TN’) feature in the methodology of this study as the analytic and representational ‘tool’ that was adopted from Attride-Stirling’s (2001: p.388) specific TA method on the basis that what it ‘offers is the web-like network as an organizing principle and a
representational means, and it makes explicit the procedures that may be employed in going from text to interpretation’. In addition TNs:

‘...are presented graphically as web-like nets to remove any notion of hierarchy, giving fluidity to the themes and emphasizing the interconnectivity throughout the network.’ (ibid.: p.389; my emphasis)

It is this quality of interconnectivity that has particular importance (and attractiveness) for analysing and interpreting participants’ different understandings and expressions of their river recreation experiences and place meanings. It allows such expressions to be brought together with interpretation in a systematic manner without losing the diversity, richness and relationship qualities contained within them. TNs are part of the analytical process not the whole process itself and systematically organise the data through the medium of the researcher using TA, producing a visual ‘map’ (in Braun and Clarke’s (2006) terms) of the themes and their interrelationships which are then used to anchor the written element of the analysis. Although Attride-Stirling stresses the ‘tool’ nature of TN it clearly also has an interpretive role in the analysis as the very process of organising the different theme levels requires an interpretive input constantly in the decision-making stages that, in my opinion, should not be underplayed. TNs have three categories of theme organisation equivalent to Stage 3 of the larger TA structure (adapted from Attride-Stirling 2001; see also Tables 3.1 and 3.2 and the visual example above):

- **Basic themes**: lowest-order themes that summarise the basic significance or meaning of a group of codes;

- **Organising themes**: middle-order themes that collect basic themes into groups of similar issues;

- **Global themes**: super-ordinate themes that signify and interpret their related organising themes forming the core of a network.

The three categories of theme have already been referred to in the example of coding and theming that was provided above. To continue the illustration in the specific context of this study (highlighted in red), the coded, themed and categorised example above was finally brought together visually with its counterparts in a network of related themes as follows.
‘Changing Meanings’ therefore is both the title of the whole TN and the global theme that acts as the nexus for the other themes associated with it (as opposed to within it which implies a hierarchical relationship). In this way, as Attride-Stirling (2001: p.393) notes, the theme acts as ‘...the core, principal metaphor that encapsulates the main point in the text’. Although the best-practice guidance recommends that these themes are ‘...concise, punchy, and immediately give the reader a sense of what the theme is about’ (Braun and Clark 2006, p. 93) it was found that in the context of researching a multi-subject study (e.g. recreation, rivers, places and people) the global themes were more suited to representing the character of the naturally diverse themes interpreted and coalesced into a thematic network than truly encapsulating a principal and punchy metaphor. A reason for this may be the origination of the best-practice guidelines from the fields of sociology and psychology where smaller, more focused studies are perhaps the norm. The themes as a characterisation of their content (whether of other sub-themes or groups of codes) seemed to work
best in this context as they could be applied throughout the network structure consistently and creatively.

Following a description of the TN itself, each branch of the TN was then separated out and described and discussed in detail as a whole concept, using extracts of transcripts as examples from each basic theme to illustrate and support the claims made within the interpretation and analysis of each branch. At the end of each network analysis, a written summary was used to bring together the interpretations of the different branches so a cohesive and integrated concept could be presented for discussion in the final phase of the analysis.

**Phase Three**

In the last phase of the analysis the written interpretation and analysis of the diverse themes from each TN were discussed and analysed in their broader conceptual framework founded upon the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. New sources of literature were also used to explain aspects of the interpretation that naturally fell beyond the original sources as new insights and understandings were created from the core TN analyses. In this way, the true contribution of using a TN approach can be seen as the interconnectivity and clarity of analysis – transparently linking empirical, literature-based and interpretive analyses - capable of being created from a large, diverse and yet detailed corpus of information. The added practicality, in my opinion, of the visual and illustrative nature of the TNs makes the comprehension and interpretation (and enjoyment!) of each theme analysis considerably easier and more accessible for the reader.

**Key adaptations of TA/TN for this study**

As a way of ‘seeing’ a phenomenon differently, the adapted TA/TN had a number of advantages which proved themselves in a concrete way whilst undertaking the different phases of analysis in the study. These included:

- Using thematic networks can facilitate both data-set and detailed theme analysis – by including quotes from participants to illustrate the basic themes in each branch (and concurrently network) so a detailed interpretation and analysis of each group of themes was
made possible alongside a more descriptive and summary analysis of the whole network. In this way the empirical ‘conversations’ upon which my interpretations were founded were directly (and visually) linked to the basic themes to which they contributed, increasing the transparency of my interpretations and further opening up the analysis for the reader’s interpretation.

- Using thematic networks can facilitate both semantic and latent elements in analysis. To some degree there will always be a mixing of these elements in any analysis but in this study it was found that by deliberately focusing on the broader, latent level in each network as well as the semantic level, it could be discussed by creating an organising theme that analysed the construction of how participants’ expressed their meanings of recreating on the Clutha River and not just what those meanings were (which were discussed in separate organising themes). Through this method, each network was able to be discussed both in terms of its (linguistic) construction and its meaning content.

- The use of global themes that characterise the themes anchored by it, rather than necessarily functioning as a metaphor, works particularly well with large volumes of data (in this study, large numbers of codes) and takes the pressure off the researcher to produce a metaphor that summarises numerous and diverse (and sometimes contradictory) groups of themes.

Overall and in harmony with my personal ontological and epistemological position that perceives peoples’ lived worlds as complex, fluid, dynamic and always-becoming, TA/TN is a method of interpretation (and organised analysis) that can show (literally) these aspects of researched information in an intelligible, relational, and visually creative manner. It literally demonstrates how research is an act of creation/ construction through laying out the data, analysis and interpretation in a transparent and accessible way that is open to external critique and interpretation (and more the stronger for that). In addition to these benefits, with the exception of one identified study

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120 I’d like to give a ‘nod’ to my supervisor Professor Etienne Nel for ‘casually’ suggesting this in one of our many productive meetings – as with the other ‘nods’ in this thesis, it turned out to be rather significant.

121 Braun and Clarke (2006: p.94) make a clear distinction between semantic and latent approaches on epistemological grounds (and rightly so) but acknowledge that even semantic level analyses require the analysis to ‘go beyond the surface of the data’.
(Davenport and Anderson 2005\textsuperscript{122}) no other studies of river recreation and place meanings appear to have utilised a clearly TA/TN method of analysis. This leads to the hope that the interpretation and insights created in this thesis have provided new and different ways of seeing people’s fluid relationships through their recreation with the Clutha River and in making their river places.

3.4 Chapter Three Summary

In drawing this chapter to a close it remains only to recap the most significant statements of the research design for \textit{People, recreation and rivers: fluid relationships} and reaffirm its links with the chapters to follow. The philosophical and methodological positions of this thesis have been embedded in the following paradigms and methods structure:

- An interpretive and social constructivist ontology (with nods to critical pluralism, ANT and critical realism);
- A reflexive, ‘middle-ground’ relativist epistemology of knowledge as linguistically co-constructed, transactional and intersubjective, with situated freedom shaping human experience and meaning;
- A hermeneutic methodology which interprets human meaning and experience through ‘texts’ of speech and action in a reiterative process that continuously acknowledges the multiple perspectives of subjectivity and the ever-present ‘pre-understanding of the researcher/knower in the interpretive act;
- An interpretive field methodology comprising participant interviews of their Clutha River recreation experiences and place meanings, observation of the river and recreationists, and the collation of contextual secondary sources of Clutha’s many ‘discourses’.
- An analysis methodology using thematic/networks analysis which has been modified to create a transparent, descriptive and detailed interpretive analysis of both the empirical information as a whole and its many significant and interrelated themes at both a semantic and latent level of analysis.

\textsuperscript{122} Davenport and Anderson’s (2005) work on the Niobrara National Scenic River in Nebraska used a thematic approach based on Corbin and Strauss’s Grounded Theory method, creating a ‘web of river meanings’ not dissimilar to a thematic network.
As the introduction to this chapter stated, Chapter Three holds a pivotal role in the thesis through connecting the research questions and literature-based conceptual framework (Chapters One and Two) with the empirical information generated through the field research, their interpretation and analysis (Chapters Four to Seven). In describing and explaining the paradigmatic and methodological approaches underlying this thesis and how they fit together, both conceptually and in practice, so Chapter Three has sought to anchor the study in a solid methodological ground and lay the foundations for the remaining analysis chapters. Looking ahead to these, the following chapters - Four to Seven address the detailed analysis of each thematic network (four in total), describing, interpreting and analysing the information generated through the interviews, and supported by the observational and secondary data sources. Each of these chapters then further analyses and discusses the interpretive analysis of the thematic networks in the much wider context of the relevant conceptual literature to produce the thesis findings. A concluding chapter (Eight) draws together the thesis findings, reflects back on the study and then looks ahead at the implications of the research and its future directions.
CHAPTER FOUR: THEMATIC NETWORK - KNOWING THE CLUTHA

4.1 Introducing Chapter Four

That there are and have been many Clutha Rivers and many discourses for the Clutha River has been demonstrated by the historical-contextual overview undertaken in Chapter One which discussed the various places, events, time contexts and dominant discourses of the river (Section 1.4). This overview identified five historical and situated contexts which provided a ground against which the field research analysis and findings have been described, explored and discussed (see Chapters Four to Seven). Chapter Two provided the conceptual framework and literature of the thesis, and Chapter Three described and discussed the methodological and analytical approaches embraced in this study. Chapter Three also provided the detailed explanation of the thematic networks analysis approach used to interpret the research data and construct the chapters which follow. The present chapter and the three succeeding chapters focus upon the detailed thematic analysis of the field research interview data which constitutes the core of the thesis findings. Chapter Four specifically focuses upon the thematic network Knowing the Clutha which describes and discusses the data themes that were interpreted as relating to how people came to understand the idea of the Clutha River and some of the ways they constructed their place meanings. This combination of description, exploration and interpretation anchored by the visual tool of the thematic network diagrams moves the thesis forward from its diverse theoretical underpinnings of place-making, recreation and socio-cultural re-presentations of rivers, to fresh insights and understandings of what it means to have recreated and made meaningful places on the Clutha River.

4.1.1 Chapter structure

Chapter Four is comprised of two sections: section one outlines the overall structure of the thematic analysis and briefly introduces the four thematic networks that have been identified, and their global themes which form the framework of the findings and which will be discussed in this and subsequent chapters. Section two describes and analyses the first of these themes, namely the thematic network Knowing the Clutha in detail, exploring how the many sub-themes identified relate to each other, to the interview data and to the global theme of the network. Section Two also highlights the findings that engage specifically with the research questions about people, recreation
and river place-relationships on the Clutha River. Finally, section two develops this analysis of the data by reflecting upon and interweaving the findings of the thematic network *Knowing the Clutha* beyond its specific context of the Clutha River to engage with relevant elements of the conceptual literature discussed in Chapter Two. The chapter finishes with a brief summary of the findings of *Knowing the Clutha*, its contribution to the literature and research questions, and how it links to the next theme and chapter, namely *Clutha River Meanings*.

### 4.2 Section One: Introducing the Thematic Networks of the Clutha River Study

Once the practical analysis of interview transcribing, coding, collation, synthesis and theming (and their repeated revisions) was completed, four themes were developed which were interpreted as representing the global themes of the interview data. Figure 4.1 illustrates these global themes, each of which acts as an anchor at the core of a separate thematic network comprised of numerous organising and basic themes (see Chapter Three, Section 3.3.5 for a full methodological description). The four global themes/networks comprise: *Knowing the Clutha*; *Clutha River Meanings*; *Recreation Meanings*; and *Changing Meanings*. These four global themes characterise and coalesce the diverse, yet repeated themes (or patterns of themes) expressed by participants in their interviews (the idiographic level) and across the corpus of interview data (the nomothetic level).

![Figure 4.1: Clutha River Thematic Networks - Global Themes](image-url)
The best-practice guidance for interpreting thematic networks recommends that the themes which are identified must be ‘...concise, punchy, and immediately give the reader a sense of what the theme is about’ (Braun and Clark 2006: p.93). They also suggest that global themes should represent ‘...the core, principal metaphor that encapsulates the main point in the text’ (Attride-Stirling 2001: p.393). However in the context of this study and the large quantity of coded, empirical data it produced, it was found that the global themes better represented the character of the diverse themes which were interpreted as forming the thematic networks, rather than encapsulating a principal, ‘punchy’ metaphor. I found that one, concise metaphor did not do justice to the often complex, multiple, diverging and yet thematically linked data themes. Instead short, descriptive titles were found to encapsulate the multiple themes within each network (and their sub-theme groups) that allowed their nature and broad content to be conveyed. In this way, each network and their related groups of themes were identified and characterised with titles that both described and showed the linkages between the basic, organising and ultimately, global themes. Section 3.3.5 in Chapter Three described and explained how the different levels of themes for the networks were developed through the thematic analysis of the study. These are presented below.

4.2.1 The global themes

The global theme Knowing the Clutha characterises the interview data themes that represent and relate to how participants have come (literally) to know the Clutha River, how they visualise or conjure the Clutha in their minds, how their different levels of familiarity with the Clutha have shaped their perceptions and certain values for it, and how and why the river has influenced their sense of connection and disconnection with both it and its places. By using the phrase ‘Knowing the Clutha’, I aim to convey the richness, diversity and complexity of how and why participants conceptualise the Clutha River beyond just their recreational experiences. This global theme binds together four sub-themes or organising themes which signify the fundamental elements of the Knowing the Clutha network: Seeing the Clutha; Valuing the CR; The connecting Clutha; and CR as natural threat.

The global theme Clutha River Meanings characterises the interview data themes that represent and relate to the multitude of frequently intersecting meanings that participants expressed for the Clutha River and its places beyond just their specific recreational experiences. The theme also encompasses how participants have come to create their meanings often through storied
perspectives that anchor specific experiences to/in places. Four organising themes reflect the wealth of meanings within the *Clutha River Meanings* theme: Meaningful memories; A personal relationship; People-environment relationship; and CR as diverse resource.

The third global theme *Recreation Meanings* characterises a complex and dense network of themes which encompass participants’ varied understandings of what their recreation experiences mean to them, and how and why different recreational experiences and meanings intersect with perceived non-recreational meanings, such as broader cultural and family traditions. *Recreation Meanings* brings together four recreation-focused organising themes: Recreation experiences making meanings; Family meanings of CR recreation; Recreation continuing long-term cultural practices; and Changing recreation meanings.

The final global theme *Changing Meanings* characterises the interview data themes which represent and relate to the fluid and often contradictory nature of participants’ meanings for their recreation and place experiences, which are frequently influenced by external changes in the river’s environment, it’s management and participants’ own ambivalent perceptions of their experience-meanings. The global theme *Changing Meanings* integrates three organising themes: Changing place meanings from CR changes; Damming the Clutha’s meanings; and Managing the Clutha River.

### 4.3 Section Two: The Clutha River Thematic Networks – Knowing the Clutha

As outlined in Section 4.1, section two now looks at the first thematic network *Knowing the Clutha*, first to briefly describe its content and then to explore in detail how the various sub-themes relate to each other, the interview data and the global theme, using extracts from the research interviews to illustrate and support the interpretations presented.

#### 4.3.1 Thematic Network: Knowing the Clutha

How participants have come to know the Clutha River and just what that ‘knowing’ actually entails within this study context is the focus of the thematic network centred on the theme *Knowing the Clutha*. As Figure 4.2 illustrates, the network comprises four organising themes and fifteen basic themes which brings together my interpretation of the elements of the participants’ interviews that encapsulate the theme of *knowing*. As will become clear, *knowing* is interpreted as having a very complex conceptual structure which participants expressed on a number of different levels (for
example, in spatial and locational references, as a measure of value, and in a sense of place or attachment or threat), sometimes simultaneously, and in very individual, and sometimes contradicting ways. Due to this inherent diversity of expression, apparently contradictory themes, such as both a sense of disconnection and connection with the Clutha River sit alongside each other within the global theme of *knowing*.

![Diagram of Thematic Network]

**Figure 4.2: Knowing the Clutha Thematic Network**

The four organising themes are now explored and discussed in turn to reach an understanding of what ‘knowing’ means in each thematic context through what the participants had to say regarding their relationships with the river.

**Seeing the Clutha**

The organising theme *Seeing the Clutha* (Figure 4.3) is supported by five basic themes that interpret the interweaving nature of participant’s perceptions, conceptualisations and expressions of the Clutha River. This concept, closely related to the idea of the ‘geographic imaginary’ was noted in Chapter Two, Section 2.2.4, as ‘...the mechanism by which people come to know the world and situate themselves in space and time...’ (Schwartz and Ryan 2003: p.6) and it is in the diverse
processes and practices embodied in the collective themes and extracts presented below, that this mechanism is demonstrated. The analysis following Figure 4.3, explains and discusses these themes and extracts in detail.

"The names of the rapids – they have personality – I see the river as a living form. For example... the Albert Town to Luggate section is a good grade 2 section; it has the Devil’s Elbow and The Nook – all these rapids have character..." [T2.2/3]

"Yeah, well that’s where Birch Island is, and down there in the Rongahere it is furthest inland of the um, well what would you call it...but it’s lowland bush – there’s beech trees down there that you don’t find, y’know, up Central Otago or even just a few kilometres up here really, it’s still the lowland..." [T11.31]

"When I first shifted through to Wanaka in 1985...I spent quite a bit of time on the river fishing...in those days there wasn’t a bank walking track down the edge of the river, Wildlife Service actually started that track... is personally built by hand... with my superiors at the time..." [T5.5a/6]

"Well, I work for a small vineyard down on Wanaka Road which is up on the terraces above Queensberry and so for the past few summers I have been able to look down from there and see the Clutha and it just never ceases to amaze me that view...I’ll come out and I’ll look up and it takes my breath away every time" [T4.31]

"...a lot of people refer to The Clutha or Clutha as the Lower Clutha...it still really confuses me because when they say The Clutha...I think of the Upper Clutha and I think of the whole river going into and out of the whole system..." [T4.28]

"Otago Regional Council are doing all sorts of things to try and keep the water clean and...because all of the Runanga were represented, one of them said well look, you’ve got it all cut up into bits and see like to us as a people, the river is one big thing..." [T12.19]

"...but look, I see the Clutha in sections and whether the sections are a result of the work that I’ve undertaken or the work that I still presently do...But all these different stages have got different qualities." [T5.44/45]

"That’s basically it, y’know. It’s divided into three sections: upper, lower and middle." [T6.37]

Figure 4.3: **Knowing the Clutha: Seeing the Clutha**

Figure 4.3 illustrates how I have interpreted participants’ ideas of knowing through the many ways participants conceived or ‘saw’ the Clutha when they imagined, thought and then talked about the river to me. Examining the range of themes in the Figure, it is apparent that there is no one way of seeing the Clutha – participants spoke of how they saw the river as a whole entity or thing, in parts or sections of its length or even just as one particular reach that was their Clutha. Even the dramatic
physical changes to the river brought about by the damming of the Clutha at Clyde and Roxburgh were accounted for by some participants wherein they continued to see the Clutha River despite the inundation behind the dams [T4.29 and T5.67]. A common form of expression of how participants saw the river was through describing its route (usually from upper to lower reaches or sections) by the places that were known to them or through particular recreation and other experiences, memories and associations (the latter including references to bridges and rugby). Another example of this was the following extract which provided a colourful if blunt description of how the participant thought of the Clutha River [T6.37]:

“Probably pretty much the same way the local [Clyde] rugby team thinks about it...They’re going away to play Upper Clutha or they’re going down to play flaming Clutha District, which we should be doing this weekend, the Balclutha guys are coming up to Central to play – they’re playing in Clyde which is Dunstan to them, oh well they had to travel all the way up the Clutha and it’s a pain in the bum because you got to get the whole length of the river.”

Whether conceived as a whole or in parts, or both as this next comment illustrates, “I see it in its entirety; I believe I know it quite well; I’ve spent a lot of time in aircraft moving down the river and I see it in stages” [T5.50], the variations and dichotomies of how participants see the Clutha are potentially infinite. However they coalesce into a discernible pattern that appears to reflect a connection with some of their broader life experiences that are associated with the Clutha and their knowledge/meanings for it. This association between participants’ seeing the river in parts or as a whole (or both simultaneously) and interlinking their river experiences and meanings – real and imagined - appears to be a frequent form of expression or connection. Referring to the river in this way, using both spatial and meaning terms to see/express the river, overlaps with the conceptual ideas relating to a sense of place and meaningful locations123. In particular, the concept of sense of places as defined by Relph (2008) which recognised the differences, interrelationships and interconnectedness of different places seems relevant to this interpretation. The participant extracts cited above articulate a diversity of expressions of sense of places for the Clutha River which are simultaneously integrated with expressions of places as locations of meaning (Cresswell 2004). Further, through identifying and expressing how they both came to know and knew/conceived the Clutha River so participants demonstrated the fundamental relationship between cognition, place and meaning that Malpas (1998: p.33) asserted as being ‘...integral to the very structure and

123 Discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.2.4.
possibility of experience’. In this way, understanding the Clutha through the theme *Seeing the Clutha* positions it as foundational element in *Knowing the Clutha*.

An aspect of the non-recreational experiences that were mentioned by a number of participants when explaining how they saw/knew the river, was coming to know the Clutha River through work commitments - either initially, intermittently or life-long during their lives – whether through construction, farming, surveying, fishing, commercial river ventures, politics or art. Often these work commitments overlapped with the participants’ recreational activities, whether active or passive, and in the case of the participants with commercial ventures, their work-recreation lives had coalesced. It is possible this particular observation may reflect the network sampling strategy that was used as part of the research methodology rather than being a true reflection of a broader-scale phenomenon\(^{124}\). However, it is interesting to note, anecdotally, that since completing the fieldwork stage of the research, I have spoken to a number of different people who have nearly all mentioned a connection to the Clutha through their work, whether past or current, so the observation above is likely to be relevant. The key ingredient that the participants’ work experience seemed to contribute to how they conceptualised the river, was through a familiarity with certain sections of the river (or in one case all of it) and physical experiences with/in places on the river that became memorable. As an example of how participants come to know the Clutha, work experiences sit alongside other varied life experiences such as living near the river, leisure, family holidays, commuting and cultural experiences which were all mentioned by participants. This mixing of work, recreation, leisure and general living reflects a broader proposition that recreation cannot be completely compartmentalised from leisure, tourism, work and culture when being studied and conceptualised. This idea has been similarly been explored and developed in recent recreation and leisure research (for example Godbey et al. 2005; Freysinger 1999; Rojek 2005; Williams 2003); this is discussed further in Chapter Six, which is about *Recreation Meanings*.

An alternative way of seeing and expressing the Clutha was in more aesthetic or landscape terms with the majority of participants using geographical references to describe how they saw and conceptualised the river. Some referred to the Clutha as having specific character and qualities for particular places and river features and went on to describe these in detail, often illuminating them with vivid stories/experiences from their recreation and other life experiences [see Figure 4.3 T2.2/3

\(^{124}\) Discussed in Chapter Three, Section 3.3.4.
and T11.31]. For example, a particularly engaging description was given by participants who recalled kayaking the Cromwell Gap rapid, now engulfed by Lake Dunstan [T7.40]:

“AF: …it has quite a personality of its own – the Clutha?
P1: Character I would more put it into. Yeah, had a unique character with the Gorge, didn’t it [looks to P2], with those deep whirling things and -
P2: And it was confined.
P1: It was very confined; deep whirly water and then the Gap rapid was a very short, sharp section, y’know like, so you could go and – it had that-
P2: It was intimidating but it was swift; it dealt to you quite quickly.
P1: It was a kind of a quite compact area of rapid which enabled you to be able to access it...that was part of its character was that it was accessible…”

Such aesthetic, spatial and place-based approaches to knowing/seeing and hence describing the Clutha River were common to all the participants and strongly reflects the more spatial concept of place as locations of meaning as developed in the human geographies of Tuan, Relph and Seamon amongst others125 (Cresswell 2004; Relph 2008; Seamon 2000). Relph (1976 cited in Seamon and Sowers 2008: p.44) noted that ‘...since our understanding of space is related to the places we inhabit, which in turn derive meaning from their spatial context so references to places are inexorably bound to their spatial and place qualities’. It is such simultaneous spatial qualities of experience and place as expressed in the extract above which illustrate Relph’s (1976) supposition, and lends support to Agnew’s (2005: p.92) statement that:

‘We always look at ‘the world’ from somewhere, from a place. So, knowledge is always geographically contextual and reflexive. Space, then, is always and everywhere implicated in what people (and other entities) do and how they think.’

This also supports the idea of an intrinsic and co-constituting relationship between experience in place and place/experience-meaning creation as conceived by Casey (2001) and Malpas (1999).

To summarise Seeing the Clutha, as Figure 4.3 and the above analysis demonstrate, knowing the Clutha River through the notion of how participants see and imagine the river at a cognitive level was partly mediated through how they have come to experience the river, not just through the foci

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125 See Chapter Two, Section 2.2.3.
of their recreational experiences but through their overlapping work and life experiences as well. Similarly, how participants expressed their seeing or knowing the Clutha (seeing it as a whole, in sections, with gaps, and with character) was interwoven with a distinct spatial quality that integrated and often carried the different elements of the seeing concept, analogous to how a river frequently carries different streams of water within it as a whole. Linking Seeing the Clutha with the next theme of value is the idea of participants’ familiarity with the Clutha and the ways this has influenced how they know and see the Clutha.

**Valuing the CR**

The theme Valuing the CR (Figure 4.4) refers to a specific element of Knowing the Clutha that addresses the ways participants were interpreted to frequently use the Clutha River in their conversations as either a measure of value between the different sections of itself or for other rivers. Entangled within this valuing element was a distinct association with how well participants knew a/their/other sections of the river which appeared to form part of their valuing system or knowledge. The theme often arose in the context of my questions concerning the future dam proposals on the Clutha River at which point some participants would begin to refer to their different degrees of familiarity with the Clutha and how they felt about the possibility of a dam impacting the areas they were familiar with or not.

Familiarity with the Clutha and its places, which can also be interpreted equally as attachment to place or even sense of place (Anderson 2010; White et al. 2008), was expressed in a number of ways as illustrated in Figure 4.4. Several participants, when reflecting on how well they thought they knew the whole river, were almost surprised as they began to realise that in fact they had little knowledge or familiarity with quite large sections of the river or that their experiences with the river were actually spread thinly across time (for example extract T1.13).
Degree of familiarity influences meanings

Valuing the CR

Protecting known/own sections

Used to value other rivers

Symbolic & prestigious

“I just don’t know it that well to be honest; it’s in my backyard but I don’t really know it that well...” [T9.9]

“AF: ...does it have any particular values...to you?
P1: The outlet section of Wanaka, I mean it’s the last remaining outlet of a major basin system in New Zealand – yes it has a preservation order on it, that’s fine...I think the word I would use is probably prestige. Just the sight of it.” [T5.33]

“I...the whole river basically except for the last part from about Tuapeka ferry down, is just quite an experience...there’s preferred areas – from the bottom of Roxburgh down...through the Millennium Track is probably the best part of the river you can do...I mean I take everybody that visits me down there.” [T6.3/5]

“...the mouth of the river and the heads of the river...And those great mountains...the Clutha River has a very special mouth, it’s got two mouths...the Clutha River is the gateway to the ancient ancestral trails.” [T13.46]

“...‘cause this is something that has really stayed with me for a long time. It’s the fact that I looked at aerial photos of the river a lot and topo[graphical] maps of the river a lot, and walked up and down the river, and I think they call it Horseshoe Bend, but there’s a bend in the river where it actually does a huge bend and I became so attached to that, particularly attached to that bit of the river just because I looked at it so much on the map...there was just something about the way that was...and in fact I had a jeweller make my not-husband-yet a

“Knowing the Clutha

In contrast, one participant gave an especially rich explanation as to why she valued a particular reach of the Upper Clutha that she had come to know in the early 1980s (T4.14):

“...‘cause this is something that has really stayed with me for a long time. It’s the fact that I looked at aerial photos of the river a lot and topo[graphical] maps of the river a lot, and walked up and down the river, and I think they call it Horseshoe Bend, but there’s a bend in the river where it actually does a huge bend and I became so attached to that, particularly attached to that bit of the river just because I looked at it so much on the map...there was just something about the way that was...and in fact I had a jeweller make my not-husband-yet a

Figure 4.4: Knowing the Clutha: Valuing the CR
ring with that curve on it. Of the Horseshoe bend. So the river actually, literally translated into a piece of art that you can wear.”

This diverse mixture of geographic knowledge and personal experience gained over time was interpreted as providing some of the grounding knowledge within which participants made their value decisions about the river. It is interesting that some of the values were partly grounded on knowledge created by past recreation experiences on the Clutha (the focus of the interview questions) and other rivers, such as kayaking, fishing and walking (for example extract T7.25/.26 in Figure 4.4) but interwoven with non-recreational knowledge-experiences such as farming; this was demonstrated through the descriptive language the different participants used. As one participant explained [T3.27]:

“Yeah, I think that [the Tuapeka dam proposal] would probably be more, a more negative one that one because there’s a lot of very nice farmland in there which they’d put under water. Yeah whereas if it were just Beaumont Gorge [previously referred to as ‘just gorse’] then I don’t think that’s quite such an issue…”

The actual values that were expressed by the participants in regard to the future dam proposals for the Clutha were perhaps, unsurprisingly, spread across a whole spectrum of responses and are discussed as a separate context in Chapter Seven, Section 7.2.

Part of the participants’ value systems also included mention of comparisons between parts of the Clutha River and other rivers, as well as making broader value statements about the prestige and symbolic values they felt the Clutha held for them both personally and on a more societal and cultural level. Extract T5.33 in Figure 4.4 illustrates both the personal (perhaps emotional) values and statutorily acknowledged values of the Clutha outlet section at Lake Wanaka. Extract T13.46 highlights the cultural values held by Māori participants for the Clutha that signposts the more inclusive and temporal perspectives embodied in certain Māori knowledge and value systems. For example, the references in the extract to ‘special mouth’ and the ‘ancestral trails’ link both the Māori cosmological stories of the river and the stories of using the Clutha as one of their key inland trails in both past and present times, to their current valuing of the river.126 Understanding these diverse cultural and personal values for rivers has been addressed to varying degrees both internationally and specifically in New Zealand (see Chapter Two, Section 2.3.2; Tipa 2009; Young

126 See Chapter One, Section 1.4 for an outline of the Māori discourse of the Clutha River.
and Foster 1986). In particular, Tipa (2009: p.102) noted that ‘Values (both tangible and intangible) associated with specific freshwater resources include: the role...in creation stories;...in historical accounts;...as a source of tribal identity;...and the continued capacity for future generations to access, use and treasure the resource’.

In another example from a participant who had quite literally lived all his life by the Clutha, he compared the differing values he associated with both the Clutha and Lindis Rivers [T9.13]:

“Well it's, it's sort of um, having spent all my life with the Clutha and the Lindis River as part of my recreational background and, totally different situations – the Clutha is a vast body of water which there never seems to be any limitation to how much water and what you can do with it. Whereas the Lindis is quite different. The Lindis is [flooding] in the winter time...and in the summer time water from the Lindis has been our lifeline...The Lindis – most years we are limited on what we can do because of, that’s the limitation of the Lindis River – whereas the Clutha has never been, it’s been a boundary fence all my life but it’s never got that low that we’ve have to put a fence along there to stop the animals crossing to the other side. It’s never been so low that you can’t put boats in. It’s satisfied people’s needs at all times and even though it’s now a controlled river with the Hawea Dam, there’s still enough, a big enough river.”

The idea of the Clutha as a big river is one that has also permeated through participants’ conversations in many forms, often in a more negative context, and as a consequence is discussed separately later in this chapter as the theme CR as natural threat. Within the present context of Valuing the CR, the Clutha as a big river was expressed repeatedly through the themes of prestige and symbolism as demonstrated in Figure 4.4. Such symbolism has already been noted as contributing to an important part of many New Zealander’s sense of identity through their connection with rivers (Chapter Two, Section 2.3.2; Young and Foster 1986) but clearly it also forms part of the personal value systems of participants, particularly through their (long-term) association with specific river places (as expressed in Extract T9.13 above). The concept of value and value systems is highly complex and has been discussed in detail within the context of environmental, recreation and personal identity values (see Bell et al. 2001; Cantrill and Senecah 2001; Chelladurai

127 A tributary of the Upper Clutha River; please refer to Map 1 – Field Research Area.
In this context, the relationship between describing different levels or scales of familiarity with the Clutha and ascribing different values through that familiarity suggest that it too contributes towards understanding how knowledge is created through experience in places, through the meanings created by the material river, and how the Clutha itself is constructed by participants. Gustafson (2001) identified a comparable ‘value’ theme in his study of Swedish place meanings, which he interpreted as an active process of valuing certain places with/against others that people undertook as part of their wider place meaning construction. These observations are pertinent to the debate, (discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.4.3) regarding the contested sense of place construct and particularly how place attachment is operationalised in recreation literature (Farnum et al. 2005; Stedman 2003a). For example, recognising that in some contexts place meanings or sense of place are bound up in intricate and dynamic place-valuing relationships, unable to be understood (or captured) in discrete measures of attachment (such as Stedman (2003a) proposes), is suggested as essential to understanding the ontological perspectives of how people and places construct each other (Relph 2008).

A different and more contradictory example of how values, meanings and sense of place combine but in unstable relationships is presented as follows [T6.36]. Previously the participant had stated in response to my question of (how) he valued the Clutha River:

“It’s every value; it’s our life, our income stream, it’s a lifestyle, it’s where we live our life...it’s um, just basically bound to it you know and that’s probably the best part of [it] I suppose.”

Slightly later in the conversation when probed further about these same values and particularly meanings for the river itself, his toned changed and went on to say:

“It’s pretty simple, to me it’s just a big river, it’s another one of millions of rivers in the world, it’s just a big river...But no, I just think of it, it’s just another big river – it’s quite a spectacular big river – but it doesn’t hold a special place for me I don’t think, no.” (my emphasis)

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128 Chelladurai (2006: p.84) defined value in its simplest terms through three possible contexts: ‘In general, value refers to the equivalence or worth of a thing or an act in terms of money or goods..., something that is desirable..., or a belief about what ought to be...’. He also provides a succinct explanation between values, beliefs, attitudes and norms as follows ‘The concept of value is broader in scope and subsumes the other three. Values are one set of beliefs (i.e. normative beliefs) that influence a person’s attitude towards an entity. Norms, which are the accepted standards of behaviour in a given situation, may reflect values that the group shares’ (2006: p.87).
The apparent contradiction between acknowledging the immense value of the Clutha for supporting his current life, acknowledging the ‘spectacular’ quality of the ‘big river’ and yet effectively dismissing both of these values by not considering the river to have any special meaning to him is difficult to explain simply. It may reflect a level of disassociation/disconnection on the participant’s side between the service value that he saw the Clutha providing for him (i.e. in facilitating his river lifestyle and business) which he could acknowledge openly, and perhaps the more intrinsic and emotional values for the river, such as a sense of place and attachment, that he found more difficult to acknowledge. Whatever the reason, this example shows the potential issues between automatically assuming a positive, stable relationship between the degree of familiarity, meaning production and simultaneous valuing of a place, as it suggests it is equally possible to be deeply familiar with a place or places, hold particular values and meanings for that place and yet express little connection or a conflicting sense of attachment. This unstable aspect of people-place relationships reflects the more critical and mobile concepts of place as advocated by Massey (2005), Agnew (2005) and Anderson (2010)\(^{129}\) in that it represents an aspect of the multiplicity and fluidity of not just places themselves, but the co-constituted, dynamic, fluctuating and intersecting relationship of people and place (Agnew 2005). I suggest that it is perhaps in Agnew’s (2005: p.90; my emphasis) ‘changing constellations of human commitments, capacities and strategies’ that these unstable qualities of people-place relationships find a ‘home’.

In conclusion, Valuing the CR in the broader context of Knowing the Clutha is seen as contributing to understanding how participants know the Clutha in several ways. It interconnects with the referential elements discussed in Seeing the Clutha through the largely geographic, temporal and experience-based nature of familiarity with the river (fully acknowledging the strongly collective cultural knowledge framework of Māori participants). This familiarity is used to partly ground participants’ personal and cultural value systems for the Clutha and its places through a complex, dynamic and sometimes unstable relationship of experience, personal and collective meaning, and time (cf. Gustafson 2001). The ideas of familiarity and (dis)connection, noted in the last example [T6.36], carries the analysis of the thematic network Knowing the Clutha forward into the next two themes which focus upon the ideas of The connecting Clutha and the CR as natural threat.

\(^{129}\) See Chapter Two, Section 2.2.3, Place as intersections and relational.
The connecting Clutha

Figure 4.5 illustrates a small but significant group of participant comments that I have interpreted as relating to ideas of connection. These specifically refer to more physical concepts of connection with the Clutha (as opposed to strictly spiritual-type connections) and are characteristically articulated from a strongly historical/temporal perspective.

"P: Um, the river’s sort of a link really, don’t want to get philosophical here.
AF: No please do [both laughing].
P: It’s sort of an artery of the whole exercise because everywhere you go y’know from Cromwell to Wanaka, looking at that bit through there. I don’t necessarily know the lower river all that well but I certainly knew the river prior to the dam going in; it was a lot more wild through the Cromwell area…” [T5.17/.18]

"P: The Clutha River could be summed up as being from the ocean to the Alps.
AF: Or even dare I say... ki uta ki ti [mountains to the sea]?
P: It connects east with west and the word ‘Wanaka’ actually means a junction place…” [T13.48]

"I remember getting up [in the meeting] and saying, when you look at small communities, a lot of the small communities are all focused around water. Because that was the lifeline, in the early days of establishment they used rafts to bring logs, y’know down the river, boating for access, for whatever it might be; water, food, I mean it’s all there.” [T5.39]

"So that was why the Māori people in the South Island anyway always walked on the hills, yes and they kept high and you only went down low when you were going to get into the river. The ocean was the highway, to put it into Pakeha terms, ocean was the highway and then each river was the intersection or the street that would take you up...to the lakes.” [T12.5]

"...so we’re talking about tikanga. So tikanga is lore and it relates to the indigeneity of the first people of the Clutha valley and valleys that contribute to the flow of the Clutha River. So the Clutha River is the gateway into the interior to us, that’s a very important point, and our women were the keepers of the inland trails...” [T13.4]

Figure 4.5: Knowing the Clutha: The connecting Clutha

The sub-themes in Figure 4.5 are closely related in terms of the Clutha being understood by participants as a physical connector of, and across, both the physical and the temporal landscapes of Otago. This is especially shown by the participants who spoke of the current meanings of the Clutha as holding their ancestral trails and old inland routes from the sea to the inland plains and Southern Alps (for example, Extracts T12.5 and T13.4 in Figure 4.5). In their modern traditions these routes are still maintained, but now through recounting traditional stories and occasional family trips to
refresh these cultural meanings rather than being actively used as traditional trails. This blending of the past Clutha into the present Clutha and vice-versa as knowledge and meaning is a theme that features strongly in Māori perspectives of the meanings of the Clutha River and which recurs again in this analysis (for example, see Chapter Six). Interestingly, Stephenson (2008: p.136) noted a similar focus on the ‘embedded [past] values of the landscape’ from Māori participants in her study of the Akaroa landscape in contrast to the ‘surface values’ or directly perceived elements that most non-Māori participants expressed.

Extract T5.17/.18 in Figure 4.5. provides an interesting and thoughtful perspective on how a participant perceived the river as an artery and link (both between current places along the river and past places he had experienced) which integrated his expressions of familiarity with both the present and pre-Clyde Dam Clutha River. In my interpretation, through his use of the metaphor of the artery he was able to acknowledge his different levels and ways of knowing the river simultaneously. The participant acknowledged the referential, geographic/spatial connections between places created by the river, he acknowledge being familiar with only some sections of the river, and expressed an intimate knowing of a past/vanished section of the Clutha. This suggests that for the participant the Clutha connects not only material places and landscapes in the present but also connects these places through his own place-experiences in the past as well. Thus, the river becomes a temporal as well as physical artery for both material places and his own place-experiences. This idea or metaphor of the temporal artery can subsequently be re-framed as the Clutha carrying within it not just its ever-present and future self but its past selves concurrently in the form of peoples’ (and society’s) discourses of ever-changing meanings, values and experiences. Some of these past selves of the river have already been identified as broader scale (or societal) discourses of the river in Chapter One, Section 1.4.1, but many more selves would appear to exist at the individual, participant scale through their personal experiences, memories and knowledges of the Clutha.

130 Where the ‘self’ is constructed by many personal and societal discourses of meaning and signification that change, are re-interpreted or discarded (and sometimes remain present) as time passes.

131 Gustafson (2001) also noted the significance of the temporality of place meanings in his ‘underlying dimension’ theme of continuity. In particular, Gustafson (2001: p.13) noted that ‘This is explicit in the ‘life path’...where places become connected to the life path of the individual through origin, length of residence, important events or life stages, or frequent visits. Continuity is thus an important aspect of ‘self’-related meanings of place’. See also Manzo’s (2005) study of place meanings which similarly identified time and continuity as significant elements in making place meanings.
The idea of these different Clutha Rivers existing simultaneously in participants’ knowing and expressions of the river can be posited in part as a reflection of Massey’s (1995: p.188) reconceptualisation of place as ‘...constantly shifting articulations of social relations through time...’ which come together as ‘a conjunction of many histories and many spaces’ (ibid.: p.191). Through this concept, places such as the Clutha, whether conceived as a whole, in sections or comprising individual places (but all with meaning), maintain *multiple* historical, geographical and social identities or selves (‘articulations’), both through the perceptions and stories of participants and via broader socio-historical discourses. Concurrently, these diverse identities leave both social and material *traces* – partly embodied in the participant him or herself as meaning (as in Extract T5.17/.18) and partly in the material landscape of the Clutha which have been heavily influenced by human practices such as dredging, mining and agriculture

(Anderson 2010). These *place traces*, as Anderson (2010: p.50) referred to them, or meanings do not leave tidy linear histories in places but ‘linger, re-erupt, or disappear, as human cultural activity affects them’. The personal (and social) meanings of the Clutha River constructed by participants throughout this study can be interpreted as types of place traces, represented through past, present and future meanings for the river.

This concurrent spatial and temporally-focused way of understanding the river as connecting its geographic places echoes aspects of the Māori participants’ perspectives but possibly from a more individual standpoint rather than a collectively cultural one. However Extract T5.39 in Figure 4.5 offers another view – that of integrating Pākehā historical knowledge into the theme of connection through reference to historical events or knowledge as a kind of continuity. By bringing together his opinion on the importance in the present of the waters of the Clutha to communities with how (and why) those communities along the Clutha River settled there in the past (the *lifeline* reference), so the participant wove or connected his own personal and cultural historical knowledges together. This *simultaneity* of knowing or creating meanings for the river generated both by personal experiences in the ongoing-present and from knowledge of the past, runs through all the extracts in Figure 4.5. As a broader thread, temporality, also reappears within other thematic contexts (for example, in Chapter Five, Section 5.2, *Meaningful memories*).

Such concepts of temporality mirror aspects of Ingold’s (1993) and Cloke and Jones’ (2000) theorising on the temporality of the landscape (specifically the relational aspects of temporality),

132 See Chapter One, Section 1.4 for the effects of historical gold dredging, mining and agricultural practices on the Clutha River.
and also find similar parallels in Stephenson’s study of the cultural values of landscape (2008; discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.2.3). However, in all three studies the focus is placed strongly upon the temporality of the material world\footnote{Acknowledging that the focus of these studies was on understanding the generation of \textit{landscape} and not specifically place meanings or people.} rather than the temporality that appears to be inherent in people’s cognitions and expressions of meanings for places (/the material world). If the ontological positions proposed by Casey and Malpas on place are brought into play, \textit{vis-à-vis} the co-constitutional nature of the human-place relationship, then this suggests that the attribute of \textit{temporality} is fundamental to \textbf{both} the creation of places \textbf{and} humanly-held place-meanings (Casey 1997; Malpas 1999). Using this construct, \textit{The connecting Clutha} can be interpreted as representing not just a \textit{spatial} element in how participants know the Clutha, but a strongly \textit{temporal} one as well.

Returning to Massey’s (1995: p.188) proposition noted earlier that places are ‘articulations of social relations through time’, she linked this idea with a further notion of ‘space-time’ in which places are both spatial and temporal products of such ‘articulations’, always in the process of becoming and frequently only represented as ‘slices through time’ in the present. In a comparable way, the different extracts brought together within \textit{The connecting Clutha} represent different slices of the Clutha River as a place that is both spatial and temporal simultaneously, and conceived by participants in an equally spatio-temporal manner.

In summarising \textit{The connecting Clutha} theme, it has linked back to the theme of \textit{Valuing the CR} through its reference to cultural values held for the Clutha in the form of past places and trails held as current cultural meanings for some Iwi and the significance of the river as a lifeline both in the past and present. It has also connected into the \textit{Seeing the Clutha} theme by providing a strong temporal dimension to how participants know (and therefore create meanings for) the river, not just through their own personal lived experiences and subsequent degrees of familiarity, but also through the assimilation and expression of diverse cultural histories.

Looking ahead now to the final theme in the \textbf{Knowing the Clutha} thematic network - \textit{CR as a natural threat} – the idea of (dis)connection is continued, but is now addressed in the context of participants’ broader and more divergent meanings for the Clutha River. In particular, it examines how and why this specific group of meanings has influenced how people know the Clutha River through their mixed discourses of the \textit{big river} and of \textit{fear}. 

\footnote{Acknowledging that the focus of these studies was on understanding the generation of \textit{landscape} and not specifically place meanings or people.}
**CR as natural threat**

A dominant theme that was mentioned by nearly all of the participants, whether in just a passing comment or with a more detailed account, was the sense of power and threat that the Clutha River represents. This perception of power was used to describe participants’ relationships with the river and its places in a different manner to that discussed within the context of Valuing the CR, where participants were interpreted as employing ‘power’ to signify a very positive and connecting value for the Clutha. Within the context of CR as natural threat, that power was interpreted as something expressed as being much darker, more negative and, in a number of cases, constraining to both the river recreational experiences of the participants and to the development of more intimate relations/knowledge with the river. These are illustrated in Figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6 presents some of the ways in which a number of participants expressed their understanding of the Clutha as a ‘natural threat’ and how they conveyed their sense or level of attachment to the river within this context. One participant [T1.38] exemplified this interpretation when he recalled in detail, early on in our conversation, having undergone a frightening recreational experience in the Clutha River as a young man (nearly forty years ago) which deterred him from ever recreating in the river again. This dramatic incident and its effects resurfaced in many comments, sometimes emotional, throughout the remainder of our conversation (such as in T1.38 in Figure 4.6), and it is telling that the participant subsequently focused much of his and his family’s recreation within the relative safety of Lake Dunstan (as he perceived it) and away from the river. One of the ways in which this negative recreational experience resurfaced, in my opinion, was in the way he expressed a sense of disconnection between the Clutha River, its landscape and himself (Extracts T1.29/1.33). His emphasis on his attachment to the places and land(scapes) of the Otago region, as opposed to the Clutha River itself, which he seemed to view simply as a detached and disengaged entity, “not...particular to any particular place”, can be interpreted as a possible result of his early, off-putting river experience. Similarly, such a disconnection may also be reflected through his subsequent lack of recreation experience with the river over the course of his lifetime (despite living in close proximity). A more active engagement might have enabled him to develop a more
personal relationship with the Clutha (although it is acknowledged that this may neither have been desired by the participant or would necessarily have engendered a different attitude to the river).\footnote{It is noteworthy that the participant was integral to the redevelopment of Cromwell and the construction of the Clyde Dam in the 1970s-80s and the consequent destruction of a section of the Clutha River which adds to the complexity of this interpretation. This type of participant-river relationship ‘complexity’, in the context of the dams on the Clutha is discussed in more depth in Chapter Seven, Changing Meanings.}  

"It, it was such a powerful surge of water that um, just your natural instincts um told you that this was dangerous. I can recall um, on one occasion, going for a swim off the left bank above Cromwell here, and I was, y’know not a bad swimmer. I knew when I got into the river that um, it would take me down stream and I’d um, mentally allowed for that before I did it, but I was amazed at how quickly it took me down. It wooshed me way past my original exit point and that was quite a salutary lesson because I never swim in the river again, I experienced how powerful the river was." [T1.5]

"Look I probably haven’t got any attachment as such but I appreciate it and I enjoy being near it I suppose because it’s there. And it just, it’s just part of where we live I suppose. It’s nothing more than that – I haven’t got any sort of emotional attachment to the river." [T8.55]

"I’m pretty pragmatic about the way I think about it mate, to me it’s a nice river and it’s a big bugger y’know, and it is really nice to have it by yourself but I am an Aussie mate – it’s not unusual for me to be somewhere by myself. It doesn’t affect me like it does to some people I mean." [T6.45]

"P: We talked about y’know, how about canoeing on the Clutha River and the locals went ‘Ahh my god no…you’ll all be killed! It’s far too dangerous to kayak on.’ AF: So people didn’t really kayak in those days particularly? P: Not the locals didn’t at all. They were, the river had a reputation as being lethal." [T7.3]

"I’ve always thought of [the] Clutha as not being something particular to any particular place." [T1.29]

"...so I sort of, I kind of see the Clutha as being – yeah – it just flows through all the sort of different aspects of Otago and I’m hugely parochial about Otago..." [T1.33; my italics]

"So probably the river’s, probably it’s more of a fearful thing; I think we worry about where we live [in Balclutha], about is it going to flood or not and what effects that’ll have, and we probably keep away from it more because it’s a very fast-flowing, large river." [T8.17]

"I think one of the other things you asked me early on was did people have a fear of the river and people did have a fear of the river. Because um, you would read back, I’m sure you will have researched somewhere that there were quite a few drownings, and drowning in the river go[es] right back to the very early days. And of course, y’know um, we know people who have drowned in the river." [T1.38]

"Um, but the river is a very large river and it’s not that, um, accessible I suppose for recreation if you’re swimming and that sort of thing, it’s a pretty dangerous sort of river, you’re always fearful of that." [T8.4]

**Figure 4.6: Knowing the Clutha: CR as natural threat**

The effects of negative experiences on place meanings and place relationships have mainly been discussed in terms of the exclusionary and marginalising practices/experiences of people in places at different scales and through a range of lenses such as ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, age,
disability and culture\(^{135}\) (Cresswell 2004; Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Relph 1976; Tuan 1974). Returning to the development of humanistic geography for a moment, Tuan (1974) proposed the concepts of *topophilia* (people’s love of places/affective bond) and *topophobia* (people’s fear of places/sense of disconnection) as fundamental to understanding peoples’ relationships with place and which influence their place meanings. Notably, in his book *Landscapes of Fear* (1979) Tuan discussed the many types of places (or ‘settings’ as Holloway and Hubbard (2001) described them) in which people experienced a range of ‘negative’ emotions such as fear, anxiety, isolation and dread. Holloway and Hubbard (2001: p.107,) in the context of discussing Tuan’s concept of topophobia, summarised this as follows:

‘...fear, as with emotions of belonging, is a fundamental human experience; fear can be associated with particular places (both specific places and types of place) in the same way that other places are associated with pleasant experiences. Yet fear or anxiety are emotions which are generally associated with being away from home, in places where you do not feel you belong...places are ambiguous in the way in which they can simultaneously be experienced by different people as places of belongingness and of frightening exclusion.’

This place ambiguity was also noted by Manzo (2005; 2008) in her study of the place meanings of a group of New York residents where ‘most participants (93%) described feeling ambivalent about at least one of the places they identified as particularly meaningful in their life, suggesting that ambivalence might be more the rule than the exception’ (2005: p.74). Manzo (2005: p.70) also discussed the influence on place meanings that negative experiences in places created, concluding that ‘...places where negative experiences occur are as meaningful as places where needs are met and succor [sic] is found’. In the specific context of negative recreational experiences influencing place meanings (as opposed to recreational settings, place attachment and place values – see McIntyre et al. 2008), less has been said about their effects\(^{136}\). Manzo (2008) extended her 2005

\(^{135}\) Also discussed in Chapter Two, Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4.

\(^{136}\) There is a considerable body of research on managing outdoor recreation constraints and recreation conflicts which overlap in terms of the (perceived) impacts on recreation experiences and settings but until only recently, rarely had a direct focus on understanding the impacts on place meanings themselves (Williams 2008; see McIntyre et al. (2008) for an example of a Canadian place-based approach to managing recreation issues). See Pigram and Jenkins (2006) for an overview on the issues surrounding recreation conflicts and their management. Cheng et al. (2003: p.87) discuss the role of place concepts in natural resource politics including conflict issues; for example, they noted that ‘natural resource politics is as much a contest over place meanings as it is a competition among interest groups over scarce resources’.
place meanings study to consider her participants’ responses in the context of outdoor recreation places, but did not make any further comment on the influence of negative recreational experiences on place meanings.

Relating these perspectives to the context of the Clutha River and the extracts discussed above, it could be postulated that the participant had a fear of the river derived from his bad experience, which he identified as a place of threat, risk and fear that was akin to topophobia. His early sense of danger from the river (stated in Extract T1.5) appeared to be reinforced by his direct experience of nearly being swept away which coloured his perceptions of the Clutha thereafter. As a result of his (one) direct negative experience with the river, the participant constructed the Clutha as a place of danger which framed many of his other meanings for the river (for example, T1.38 – death of friends) and perhaps permeated into others areas of his life as demonstrated by the Extracts T1.29/1.33 and his lack of recreational engagement. Although his is an isolated example in the study, the strong expressions, memories and feelings that the participant expressed about the Clutha River as a place of danger and threat are important in countering the strongly positive meanings that other participants expressed in the study. Recognising the sense of disconnection and threat that the Clutha is capable of engendering as both (negative) place-experiences and place meaning simultaneously, is significant for understanding the complex and symbiotic relationship between personal experience and place meaning. As Tuan (1979) noted, places are capable of holding and generating ambiguous meanings, both through direct experience and imagined/preconceived meanings; for the participant in T1, his meanings for the Clutha River as a place appeared to be anchored on both.

Exploring further the idea of the Clutha as a natural threat, Figure 4.6 illustrates a number of ways that participants’ were interpreted to have constructed this theme through their personal discourses of the river. Participants spoke of their direct experiences of the Clutha as coming from a variety of sources, whether through recreation and/or simply living adjacent to the river for a long period of time. They were taught by others such as the ‘locals’ of T7.3, of the reputation of the river; they learnt through association with other people such as the loss of ‘friends’ [T1.38] and through stories of the risks of recreating in the Clutha. Finally, they used their broader experiential knowledge of other places, for example Australia [T6.45], to compare, assess and then value their degree of attachment or (dis)connection to the ‘big’ river. An example of knowing the river through
stories came from a participant who recalled a rather poignant story of the Lower Clutha [T12.38-12.40]:

“And also a cousin of my mother’s, he had the job of building those flood banks and he just had the digger because they didn’t have much stuff - this was the 1960s and 1970s – and there’s great big huge holes in the river. Now there’s a family, I think there’s still some of them around in Kaitangata there...now this boy used to go down to the river – they farmed round the river – and he used to go round the sheep and do whatever he had to do and then he’d take his dog down to the river and he’d go for a swim. Well he never came home this day and they went down and here’s the dog sitting by his pile of clothes and he had got caught in one of those big holes and he couldn’t get out.”

From these extracts, it can be suggested that these mixed personal discourses, comprised of personal and social experiences and acquired ‘second-hand’ or ‘others’ discourses, have created and sustained a broader discourse of the power, disconnection and fear of the river which has consequently been influential on the meanings held by the participants themselves. This sustaining or reiterative process of place meaning creation, adoption and continuation as I interpret it, has been partially discussed from the perspective of meaning continuity ‘...in which places may be regarded as processes; the reproduction of existing meanings as well as the creation of new ones, at times, appears as the outcome of individual and/or collective projects’ (Gustafson 2001: p.14). However, Gustafson (2001: p.113; my emphasis) interpreted continuity as ‘...an underlying dimension to the attribution of meaning to place...’, viewing it in relation mainly to the continuity of the participant’s ‘self’ meanings (for example, self-identity), whilst only marginally acknowledging the role of continuity in wider place-social relations.

This is somewhat different to my concept of the reiterative and discursive process of place meaning creation for the Clutha in that I see this process as constructing meaning (whether negative or positive meanings) rather than part of a process of attributing (a range of) meanings to places, as Gustafson (2001) interpreted it. In this way, such a reiterative process of meaning creation has the power to both generate new experiences and personal discourses and hence modify the broader discourses of the river (in combination with the temporal element discussed in The connecting Clutha). It also has the power to constrain future experiences and place meanings through a sense of fear, risk and exclusion which maintains the Clutha as a dangerous place regardless of the many
happy and safe events that have occurred on the river\textsuperscript{137} (cf. Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Manzo 2005). The \textit{CR as natural threat} therefore represents the power of personal and social discourses in creating place meanings as much as it does any ‘real’ and experienced power of the river itself.

Returning again to the idea of the ambiguity of places (and people) in generating place meanings, across this study, diverse meanings from both recreational and non-recreational place experiences have been expressed in multiple themes that emphasise a sense of relationship, attachment and intimacy with the river and its places (for example, as discussed in this chapter, \textit{Valuing the CR} and in Chapter Five, \textit{A personal relationship}). This ambiguous quality of the Clutha in generating diverse and often contradictory meanings from participants’ equally diverse experiences and discourses, emphasises the nuances involved and greater need for understanding at a fine-grained scale how participants form meanings for places through diverse experiences and knowledges that do not necessarily conform into a predictable pattern or model (Manzo 2005; Williams 2008). On a more philosophical level, the \textit{ambiguous} nature of places and place meanings fits comfortably into the progressive or intersecting conceptualisations of place supported in this thesis (see Chapter Two, Sections 2.2.3 and 2.4). Such fluidity and multiplicities in place meaning and meaning construction reflects the dynamic and ‘always in process’ aspects of place/meaning creation (Cresswell 2002).

In summarising the interpretation of \textit{CR as natural threat} within the context of \textit{Knowing the Clutha}, it is suggested that a range of participant experiences, whether direct or indirect have generated a distinct and fairly strong theme of power, threat, disconnection and degrees of (non)attachment. This discourse of threat and disconnection acts as a lens through which participants’ knowledge of or knowing the Clutha is influenced to varying degrees. It could be postulated further, that perhaps over time, this discourse of power and threat of the Clutha has gained a momentum of its own, extending beyond experience and personal-grounded discourses to a more socio-cultural based discourse as reflected, for example, in the discourse of \textit{The deadly river} outlined in Chapter One, Section 1.4. (Hi)stories such as the Lonely Graves in the Beaumont Gorge\textsuperscript{138} and the many publicised deaths in the river over the years appear to be interwoven with personal discourses such as those expressed by the participants in this study, which have gradually combined to nurture a socio-cultural perspective of the river as a \textit{natural threat}.

\textsuperscript{137} For example, as will be discussed in Chapter Six \texttt{Recreation Meanings}.

\textsuperscript{138} The late 19\textsuperscript{th} century story of ‘Somebody’s Darling’, a man drowned in the Clutha and generously buried by a local man, William Rigney, as discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.4.1.
4.4 Knowing the Clutha: Summary of Findings

This the final section of Chapter Four summarises the findings from each theme of the discussion of Knowing the Clutha, and synthesises the key conclusions and their contribution to the broader research contexts discussed in Chapter One. This section then looks ahead to the next chapter Clutha River Meanings and how Knowing the CR connects with its themes.

4.4.1 Themes

Seeing the Clutha

The Seeing the Clutha theme found that there was a co-constituting relationship between participants’ life experiences associated with the Clutha River and the place meanings they held for the river. These meanings were predominantly constructed and expressed in both spatial/place-based terms (so aesthetic and located) and in meaning/experience terms (from direct experiences involving the Clutha River). Life experiences comprised a diverse mixture of experiences generated through engagements with work, leisure/recreation and family contexts, and these framed how participants ‘saw’ or conceived the river and, as a consequence, how they were able to express their knowing river.

These findings engage with the broader literature addressing the concepts of sense of places and places as locations of meaning (Agnew 1987; Cresswell 2004; Relph 2008) through their support for the co-constituting and symbiotic relationship between place and meaning as created through the lived experience of participants (Tuan 1977; Gustafson 2001). Consequently, the findings also support the fundamental ontological relationship between cognition, place and meaning (as expressed through language; Mugerauer 1985) through identifying how participants came to know/be familiar with the river and therefore knew/conceived of the Clutha (Malpas 1998).

Valuing the CR

Valuing the CR found that the participants’ degree of familiarity with the Clutha River (geographically, experientially and temporally, for example, brief encounters, repeatedly, long-term) contributed to their place meaning production. One articulation of this place meaning production was through the valuing of places and the river itself, expressed in multiple and complex ways (e.g.
geographic, personal, symbolic, cultural) and providing further support for the complexity of place-meaning construction.

The findings engage with the broader literature addressing concepts of value (of place and self) in place meaning creation (Cantrill and Senecah 2001; Gustafson 2001) through the analysis of participants’ place valuing systems which has identified a greater degree of variation in their construction and expression than previously proposed. The findings also contribute to the sense of place literature, including that of addressing different concepts of place attachment (Stedman 2003a; Williams 2008), through the suggestion that the familiarity construct, as a complex geographic/experiential/temporal relationship between people and place, is a key element in forming a sense of place/places for participants.

**The connecting Clutha**

*The connecting Clutha* found that the Clutha River acted as a connector across/through both the spatial and temporal landscapes of participants’ expressions of place meanings and place-based experiences. Through these expressions, the river both tangibly embodied and symbolised past and present (and future) meanings of place and experience simultaneously, acting as a marker/metaphor in participants’ construction of meaning. However, the findings suggest that the Clutha is not a static or fixed ‘place’ as such in these expressions, but one of fluid meanings and temporalities subject to constant change through the changing personal and social discourses of the river and participants.

The findings engage with the broader literature addressing concepts of place as on-going intersections of meaning, social relations and temporalities (Massey 1995; 2005) through the proposition that the Clutha River acts as a referential signifier/metaphor for the multiple and interwoven histories/memories expressed in participants place-experience meanings. Acting in this way, the Clutha becomes one of many possible ‘articulations’ of the social relations and temporalities that places embody (see Massey 2005). The findings also inform Anderson’s (2010) concept of ‘place-traces’ through proposing that the personal/social meanings constructed by participants are themselves embodied place-traces which are reflected in the material/tangible place-traces of the Clutha River. Finally, the significant temporal referential element identified in the findings both supports and informs the broader conceptualisations of the temporality of landscape (Cloke and Jones 2000; Ingold 1993). However, *The connecting Clutha* has suggested that the
element of temporality is fundamental not just to the creation of material/social places/landscape but also to the construction of participants’ place meanings through their own temporality (lived experiences), assimilated cultural histories, and spatio-temporal cognitions of the river.

**CR as natural threat**

The **CR as natural threat** found that negative experiences of participants with the Clutha River influenced their meanings for the river but still created the river as a meaningful place. Such negative experiences have also engendered expressions/meanings of disconnection and fear of the river and its places which were used, in part, to construct the personal discourses or narratives of participants. Finally, the meanings underpinning participants’ discourses/narratives of threat and fear were not only based on direct experience of the Clutha but also through associational experience and broader socio-historical discourses, which created ambiguous place meanings for the river concurrently. These two key elements of direct experience with, and broader discourses of the Clutha River contributed to a reiterative meanings creation process which both sustains and changes participants’ place meanings for the river.

The findings engage with and provide further support for the broader literature addressing concepts of topophobia or fear of places (Tuan 1979) through the participants’ expressions of fear, threat and sense of disconnection for the Clutha, which contributed to their own experience/place meanings and the broader social discourses of the Clutha as a dangerous river. The findings also specifically inform the research on place meanings (Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005) by providing further empirical support for the diversity and complexity of place meaning creation, particularly in regard to places perceived as fearful or threatening by some participants, contrasting with those who see the Clutha with affection. It also contributes to this research by suggesting that, contrary to Manzo’s supposition that it is ‘experience-in-place’ that creates place meanings for people, places themselves are capable of creating meaning for participants through the influence of their attached socio-historical discourses and through associational knowledges (e.g. knowing of stories/people who have drowned in the river).

4.4.2 **Findings: Knowing the Clutha**

**Knowing the Clutha** brought together a range of heterogeneous, complex and insightful examples that interpreted, analysed and discussed how participants constructed their place-experience
meanings through their speech and cognitive expressions. These expressions of meaning linked spatial, temporal, place-based, experiential and value-based references for the Clutha River into a complex framework of knowing within which participants’ co-constructed their meanings with the river (cf. Cresswell 2004b; Malpas 1999; Relph 2008). The participants’ expressions of meaning for the river and its places were generated by an interwoven relationship of direct and indirect experiences, assimilated cultural knowledges, and exposure to social discourses of the river, which acted to (re)frame and (re)create the diverse meanings of the Clutha. Conversely the river itself acted as a marker or metaphor in participants’ meaning creation which both anchored and problematised their meanings, creating an often complex and ambiguous relationship between the participants, the river and their meanings.

The findings of Knowing the Clutha support existing literature addressing aspects of place as locations of meaning and shifting intersections of social relations, sense of place/s and the construction of place meaning through experience (both positive and negative). It makes a contribution to these literatures through interpreting how participants’ constructed, described and expressed their heterogeneous place and experience meanings for the river, presented through a complex referential framework of primarily spatial, temporal, place-based and experiential references. In doing so it provides an empirically-based example of the ultra-complex, co-constituting and relational conceptualisations of place, as posited by Casey (1997), Cresswell (2002), Malpas (1999), and Anderson (2010). As such it also suggests that place is not an ‘either/or’ concept but is constituted by a number of different conceptualisations which overlap and interweave with each other to produce the complex expressions and conceptions of place and place meanings expressed by participants in this study.

The findings also contribute to the literature through proposing that place(s), such as the Clutha River are of themselves co-constituting of participants’ place meanings contrary to Manzo’s (2005: p.75; my emphasis) suggestion that ‘it is the experience-in-place, rather than the places themselves that are meaningful’. Although I agree with Manzo’s (ibid.: p.75) preceding statement that ‘Clearly, feelings about places cannot be divorced from one’s experiences of them’, this study demonstrates that how places are experienced (mainly directly, in Manzo’s terms) is key to how knowledge and meaning is simultaneously created. Although direct experience dominates how meaning is constructed it is not the only way that meaning is created and the influence of indirect and social experience/ knowledges/discourses cannot be ignored. I would also argue that, in line with Malpas’
(1998: p.33) proposition that ‘place is integral to the very structure and possibility of experience’, experience-in-place and place itself cannot be so easily separated as Manzo (2005) proposes.

In conclusion, **Knowing the Clutha** informs the research questions of this study through exploring and identifying the multitude and interrelated ways that participants constructed, described and expressed their experience and place meanings for the river and how they conceived the river. In this way the theme particularly informs the second research question which asked how meanings are created and expressed by people through their Clutha River recreational and broader life experiences. It is these life experiences, beyond and intertwined with their recreational experiences that enabled participants to form and express their individual ‘knowing’ of the Clutha River and certain interconnected places. It also partly informs the first research question through interpreting how participants described and understood their broader place-experience meanings on the Clutha.

### 4.4.3 Looking ahead to Chapter Five: Clutha River Meanings

Chapter Four has introduced the four thematic networks of the study and, through its analysis of the first theme **Knowing the Clutha**, has set the foundations for interpreting and understanding how place and experience meanings have been constructed and expressed by the participants in relation to the Clutha River. In doing so it has laid the groundwork for the next chapter and thematic network: **Clutha River Meanings** which addresses the diverse and extensive range of non-recreational meanings for the river that participants’ expressed during their interviews. Understanding these meanings are considered significant for both contextualising the specifically recreational meanings articulated by participants and in understanding if, how and why those recreational meanings contributed to creating place meanings and the river itself, distinct from the broader meanings generated by the river. Chapter Five thus explores the types and significance of meanings that participants expressed for the Clutha River.
5.1 Introducing Chapter Five

Meaning creation, in the context of the Clutha River, has been shown in Chapter Four to be a complex, heterogeneous and often emotional relationship between place, experience and a variety of socio-cultural discourses. It is framed and expressed through a multitude of interrelated referential elements - spatial, temporal, place-based, experiential and value-based references – which variably combine to create a diversity of meaning expressions that describe participants’ knowing/conceptions of the river (Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1). Through this analysis, Chapter Four explored, discussed and proposed a basis for the expressive and constructive elements that create meanings for the Clutha River; these are now used to support and inform the remaining chapters of this thesis which address the range of participant meanings for the river.

Chapter Five Clutha River Meanings engages with some of the meanings that participants’ expressed for the Clutha that were generated through their largely non-recreational experiences and knowledge of the river. These meanings were interpreted as forming a distinct group of themes separate from the strongly recreationally-focused meaning themes discussed in Chapter Six, as they predominantly address meanings relating to work, family, cultural and environmental relationships, and economic resources. However, as will become quickly apparent, this separation is not as clear-cut as it appears as often these meanings overlapped with, or formed the context for, participants’ recreation meanings. As a consequence, recreation meanings feature throughout this network, but are not the focal point of the chapter. This is an observation supported in growing leisure research which suggests that recreation and life experiences cannot be approached and understood as unrelated sets of experiences or motivations (Freysinger 1999; Godbey et al. 2005).

As noted at the end of Chapter Four, the thematic network Clutha River Meanings is considered important for contextualising the specifically recreational meanings articulated by participants, and for demonstrating the interconnectivity between their everyday life experiences, recreation and place meaning creation. Similarly, the network is significant for creating a broader meanings ‘platform’ from which to understand if, how and why those recreational meanings contributed to creating place meanings, distinct from the broader life meanings generated by the river. Through
addressing these questions as a separate thematic network, before moving to focus upon the mainly recreational meanings (in Chapter Six Recreation Meanings), so a more nuanced, in-depth understanding and conceptualisation of the relationship between place, experience (recreational and non-recreational) and meaning in the context of the Clutha River is reached. In this way, it contributes to the currently limited knowledge of this relationship in recreation literature (Manzo 2008; Williams 2008). As noted above, the experiences and meanings discussed in Clutha River Meanings overlap and frequently merge with the recreational meanings expressed by participants; these are discussed in Chapter Six Recreation Meanings.

5.1.1 Chapter structure

Chapter Five comprises one main section that describes and analyses the thematic network Clutha River Meanings in detail, exploring how the themes within the network relate to each other, to the interview data and to the global theme of the network. The analysis also highlights the findings that engage specifically with the research questions regarding participants’ broader river experiences and their place-experience-river relationships with the Clutha. Finally the section develops the analysis of the data by reflecting upon and interweaving the findings of the thematic network Clutha River Meanings beyond its specific context of the Clutha River to engage with relevant elements of the conceptual literature discussed in Chapter Two. The chapter finishes with a summary of the findings of the network, their contribution to existing literature and research questions, and how they link to the next chapter, Recreation Meanings.

5.2 The Clutha River Thematic Networks: Clutha River Meanings

This section describes, analyses and discusses each of the organising themes within the global theme of Clutha River Meanings: Meaningful memories, A personal relationship, People-environment relationship and CR as a diverse resource (Figure 5.1). It briefly outlines the content of the global theme and then explores in detail how the various organising themes relate to each other, the interview data and the global theme, using extracts from the research interviews to illustrate and support the interpretations presented.
5.2.1 Thematic Network: Clutha River Meanings

As figure 5.1 illustrates, this network comprises four organising themes and fifteen basic themes which brings together my interpretation of the elements of the participants’ interviews that suggest themes relating to broader river meanings as distinct from those specifically associated with recreation meanings. However, as noted previously this distinction is not absolute so this network also contains, in places, references to recreation meanings that cannot be separated from their more general, river meanings. Each organising theme is now explored in turn to reach an understanding of what river meaning encompasses in each thematic context and how the participants expressed this.

**Figure 5.1: Clutha River Meanings Thematic Network**

**Meaningful memories**

Meaningful memories (Figure 5.2) brings together and explores some of the ways in which I have interpreted how participants’ further constructed, expressed and held their place-experience meanings for the Clutha River, building on the ideas of place and experience meaning construction presented in Chapter Four. This theme was developed through a gradual recognition of the
importance of how (and why) meanings were expressed for the Clutha River, and focuses upon the recalling of memories and stories of place-experiences and the qualities these embodied, rather than focusing solely on what those meanings appeared to represent (e.g. the range of meanings for place-experiences). As such, this approach differs to the other organising themes in this network that do address the range and content of the broader place meanings of the river, and which are explored later in this section as themes of relationship, people-environment and resource. In Meaningful memories, the merging of story and meaning, experience and memory, and memory and place, in constructing place and place-experience meanings are the focus of this analysis and discussion.

"Back in the 80s, we would actually go down to the river for picnicking and things...I decided that I was going to go down and tie myself to a tree by the river and do Back-strap weaving...a strap goes round your back and the warp is tied to the tree...it wasn’t very successful needless to say but I do remember that I actually went down, because the whole idea was to do it by the river ...” [T4.6]

"I got here just before the Clyde Dam was starting to be filled, ok, but the diversion channels and everything were in...My first experience really on the river is a couple of days after I got here, they took me down there drinking Speights and shooting goats from a moving boat mate. And that’s my first experience and I remember we went flying past all these old gold towns and I’m just sitting there going ‘are you gonna stop?’ because I’m a gold nut. I said are you gonna stop guys and the boys wouldn’t stop so I went in by myself, I walked in by myself a few weeks later and that’s how it started. That’s 21 years ago – 22 years ago.” [T6.8]

"...now that [Cromwell Gap] was actually, that was quite fearsome to actually boat up there. If anything [pauses] didn’t go slightly right you could have been history and it wasn’t just a leisurely cruise, you didn’t put the little children in the boat with you and things like that, it was actually a very mean stretch of river, and from one side...it could be up to a 4 to 10 foot variation from the force of the water onto the rocks underneath. It was absolutely spectacular. However, it’s now underwater, probably no-one will ever see it again I don’t think.” [T9.18]

"And of course from the recreation point of view, peoples say ah, but look at Cromwell, it’s a lovely lake and all the rest of it and yes it does look lovely and I’m very pleased that now nothing is going into the lake, that’s good. But you see I remember that valley when there was a beautiful fruit farms, orchards and things down there and we came past one day and [P] said well, look we’ll just stop here and he said now look up there he said, this’ll be the last time we see it because next time we come they’ll be making the dam.” [T12.32]
From a methodological perspective, the value of stories in expressing and understanding person-environment and recreation-experience-place meanings has been well established (Barkley et al. 2010; Glover 2003; Patterson et al. 1998; Stewart 2008). Stories of lived experience139 have been a common methodological approach in a broad range of predominantly phenomenological research (Ellis and Flaherty 1992; Van Manen 1990) but are increasingly employed in leisure, recreation and place research (Glover 2003; Stewart 2008). For example, Stewart (2008: p.88) noted that in a study of ‘special places’ in the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Illinois, ‘...place meanings emerged naturally as stories of lived experience...[and] that people express place meanings by organizing lived experiences into the whole of stories’. Barkley et al. (2010: p.22), summarising lived experience and place meanings concepts, suggesting that ‘lived experience...exists only in its representation and does not exist outside memory...Subsequently, stories of the lived experience are understood to include emotions and feelings that are essential to place meanings...’.

Figure 5.2 illustrates some of the differing ways that experiences and meanings combine to create vivid, storied memories that unite participants’ lived recreational and place experiences in often evocative and ‘meaning-full’ recollections. An insightful example from a participant who was a keen fisherman on the Clutha, recalled an early memory that strongly imprinted on me during our conversation as much as it had on him over twenty-five years ago [T5.15]:

“Another experience I had was when I first arrived into Wanaka in 1985 and used to fish the river quite a bit. Loved the evening in the Autumn, it was nice to go down just before dark after work, and I had a really great night on the river where I just caught so many fish. I took a couple home to eat and they were just really good quality Rainbows; the fish were on that evening and it was just a wonderful experience. I think I got home at midnight...it was dark, I was fishing in the dark! I didn’t really want to get up and go to work the next morning ‘cause I had to go and work and feed the fish again...running a hatchery. Really, really neat spot. And once again, I was out there by myself; I had the whole river with all those fish and it was just a wonderful feeling, just total seclusion but yet so close to home.”

This storied memory contained so much detail, emotion and meaning: from the pleasure of fishing near sunset, the excitement of landing many fish and the exhilaration of night fishing to the realisation of work next morning, and finally the association with a favourite river place and its

139 Defined by Van Manen (1990: p.35) after Dilthey, as ‘...our immediate, pre-reflective consciousness of life.... See also Chapter Three, Section 3.3.2 for my discussion of phenomenology and lived experience.
qualities of seclusion and accessibility. Not all the memories recalled by participants were as vivid as this example but most contained an element of emotion, an experience of some kind (whether recreation or an alternative experience) and the (re)construction of or a reference to the place it occurred in. This fusion of basic features reflects similar place-making memory combinations noted in the place meaning studies of Barkley et al. (2010), Manzo (2005) and Stewart (2008) and in the more general conceptualisations of place meaning-making of Tuan (1977), Relph (1976), Casey (1997) and Malpas (1999), previously discussed in Chapter Four. As Stewart (2008: p. 84) noted ‘...place meanings...exist in the minds of people...’ and as a corollary, so do memories of places.

Another example illustrated a slightly different form of storied memory in which the participants recall kayaking down the former Cromwell Gap rapid at the head of the Cromwell Gorge in the late 1970s [T7.6-8]:

“P1: Before the dam, yep, and then they would regularly paddle on the Cromwell Gap rapid itself.
AF: [whistles]Quite a big rapid! [laughs and P1 laughs]
P2: It was, it was dry mouth stuff for me anyway because I wasn’t a very competent kayaker, y’know, used to brace yourself to do it.
P1: You could have a swim.
P2: Sometimes you got down it and then as you got to the bottom and relaxed – psch – over you went! [laughs].”

It was interesting that during the telling of this story the participant (P2) shuddered with the recollection of the excitement-fear that this memory evoked even though it was over thirty years ago. He also (later) described the actual rapid itself in some detail which suggested that, for him, the (repeated) experience of kayaking down the Cromwell Gap rapid was so strong that it remained in his memories ready for recall as an emotionally-charged place-experience (or equally experience-in-place). Similar experience-in-place examples were discussed in detail in Manzo’s (2005) study of the multiple dimensions of place meanings that were focused on the residence and other ‘special’ places. In her study, Manzo (ibid.: p.74; my emphasis) concluded that it was the “experience-in-place” that creates meaning’ and that, in accord with Heidegger’s concept of being, ‘experience-in-place takes as the fundamental unit of analysis both the physical location and the nature of the

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140 Already discussed in the context of Chapter Four in Section 4.4.2.
experience, recognizing that each is \textit{inextricably bound} to the other'. Extract T7.6-8 and the majority of the other extracts in Figure 5.2 provide a compelling illustration of the power of this \textit{bond} between experience and place in making meaningful memories and place meanings simultaneously.

A point of note already raised in Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2, is that Manzo (2005) suggested that it was the ‘experience-in-place’ which was more meaningful than the places themselves; however, Extracts T4.33, T12.32 and T5.54 in Figure 5.2 equally give support to the idea that places themselves can hold meaning for participants without any necessarily strong or specific experience-based memories being expressed. These extracts demonstrate that participants are as equally capable of expressing/creating place meanings for places they remember but do not specifically associate with any strongly recalled experience-in-place (as illustrated in the other extracts in Figure 5.2). This observation raises two further points; that places can be meaningful without direct experience of them, and experience-in-place is subject to differing degrees of intensity or scale of experience which in turn affects the strength (and perhaps durability) of place-meanings.

The first point has been loosely noted by Stewart (2008: p.85) who proposed that place meanings ‘are derived from one’s lived experience – either by being in the place, reading about it, or in some way knowing something about a given locale’. In his conception, ‘lived experience’ is more inclusive than Manzo’s ‘experience-in-place’, but this lacks the fined-grained detail that the above extracts suggest. Gustafson (2001: p.10), in his study of place meanings, similarly noted that ‘very often, meanings of place depend neither on the self, nor on the relations with or perceptions of others’, categorising this theme as ‘environment’ meanings of place. He noted that through this particular people-place relationship, ‘meaning is often attributed to place not only as a physical environment, but also as a symbolic or historical environment’ (\textit{ibid.}: p.11). The extracts in Figure 5.2 give support to this proposition by their descriptions of memorable places through recalled memories and, conversely, highlight the inherent bond between (environment) place meanings and experience-in-place meanings. In doing, the examples discussed within \textit{Meaningful memories} contribute to expanding Manzo (2005), Stewart (2008) and Gustafson’s (2001) work on place meanings through exposing the nuances and deeper links between experience, place, meaning and memory as demonstrated for the Clutha River.

The second point, that experience-in-place is subject to differing degrees of intensity or scale of experience which in turn affects the nature/strength (and perhaps durability) of place-meanings, does not appear to have been directly addressed in the key place meaning research cited previously.
Manzo (2005) noted the different range of feelings for places (positive, negative and ambivalent) and the role of experience in developing meaning (steady accretion/one significant experience), but made no comment on the relationship between intensity of experience-in-place and the subsequent nature or degree of place meanings. Although this proposition may potentially be straying into the quantitative realm of place attachment frequently utilised in recreation research\(^{141}\) (for instance, Brown and Raymond 2007; Kyle et al. 2005; Warzecha and Lime 2001; Williams and Vaske 2003), it is a valuable observation on the experience-place-meaning relationship construct. As such, it emphasises the significance of the intensity of the experience-in-place in creating place meaning as opposed to the type of experience noted by other authors (cf. Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005). Conversely, it also emphasises the significance of experience intensity in making meaningful memories of both experiences and places. Brought together, these points demonstrate further the complexity aspects of the experience-place-meaning relationship (Stewart 2008).

Extending the notion of an experience-place-memory relationship one step further, the extracts in Figure 5.2 also support the idea (and theme) that through the power of this experience-place-memory relationship, lost or vanished material places such as the Cromwell Gorge rapids on the Clutha River can be recalled as if they were still places in the present. This means that such places are never really lost until they fade from memory completely and collectively. This theme interconnects with the Knowing the Clutha theme of The connecting Clutha (Chapter Four, Section 4.3,1) which suggested that participants could hold meanings for Clutha places and experiences from the past and present simultaneously. As an example the following extract, from the same conversation as T7.6-8, describes P1’s last experience of paddling down the Clutha River before the Clyde Dam was completed [T7.35]:

“P1: I paddled the Gorge when…the club was notified that the dam…had nearly come to completion at Cromwell, and if we wanted to get down the river to Cromwell this was our last opportunity that we could paddle down it and we could go down..
AF: ..the Gorge to Clyde?
P1: Paddle through – are they called the penstocks, the big tubes that the water’s going to go down – and at that time my son and I were paddling quite a lot together and he would have been about 12 years old…the next day we paddled down the river which the Gorge was still gorgeous and then we headed into…these tuby things – no I don’t think it was tuby it was

\(^{141}\) Discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.4.3.
square and it was concrete – and I remember looking at my son and thinking, ‘Ahh, well this is it [son]- this is the last time we’ll paddle that section of river’...and then we arrived at the other end and got out and I can remember there was still talk about could we protest...I suppose the meaning for me was, well it was just a phase, I guess – just like, this is a different phase in life now that’s going to be behind us, and really pleased my son and I have paddled it, but you won’t get to paddle that again...[and now] when I drive into Central Otago and see the lakes there’s just a sterility, a flatness, there’s an awful lot of concrete y’know.”

This storied memory is both poignant and detailed in its recollection of not just the physical experience of her last paddle down the Cromwell Gorge section of the Clutha River, but also of the participant’s feelings and interpretations at the time of the paddle with her son and what it had subsequently come to represent for her as the end of an era for her recreational experiences on that section of the Clutha. The example also reflects the meanings the participant held in the present for that section of the river (now Lake Dunstan) as sterile, flat and ‘concrete’. Examples drawn from the broader lived experiences of participants include frequent mentions of driving along the Cromwell Gorge prior to the construction of the Clyde Dam and Lake Dunstan, and particularly the (ill) effects of the sinuous Gorge road on passengers observing the view. One participant described his earliest recollection of the Clutha River as attending the opening of the Roxburgh Dam in 1956 as a boy, leaving him with a memory/meaning of being more impressed by the political clout of the politicians than any strong recollection of the physical river or dam itself [T1.12]. This latter example gives further support to the propositions made in Chapter Four (Section 4.4.2) that it is not automatically a physical quality of an experience-in-place that stimulates the creation of vivid place memories but also the emotional and socio-cultural/learning impacts of experiences that imprint on participants’ meanings (Williams and Carr 1993).

Analysing the participants’ storied memories such as Extract T7.35 above, there appears to be a natural (and perhaps obvious) overlap (or bond) between experienced-focused memories that were constructed and recalled through participants’ broader lived (and recreational) experiences and the meanings of certain vanished places on the Clutha River. This overlap is considered to reflect the co-constituting nature of place and experience as already discussed in Chapters Two and Four (Malpas 1999; Relph 2008), but also suggests a comparable reciprocal relationship between meaningful (experience) memories and places; in other words, meaningful memories are anchored in places and vice versa (see T7.50 and T12.32 in Figure 5.2 for supporting extracts). Casey (1987), in his seminal
work, *Remembering*, examined from a deeply philosophical and phenomenological perspective the nature of memory, and in particular place memory. Casey (*ibid.*: p.xi) proposed that (concrete) places were capable of retaining ‘...the past in a way that can be reanimated by our remembering them; a powerful but often neglected form of memory’. He also positioned memory as ‘...naturally place-oriented or at least place-supported. Moreover, it is itself a place wherein the past can revive and survive; it is a place for places...’ (1987: p.187). In observing this relationship between meaningful memories and places within this study, this provides a ‘concrete’ and insightful example of Casey’s (1987: p.189) idea that places ‘serve to situate what we remember’ through the various extracts that illustrate the powerful and integral experiential, emotional, place-bound and place-experience reconstructive relationship of memory and place (Figure 5.2). Likewise, Casey’s conceptual suggestion that places can be revived and survive in memory supports my empirical analysis that vanished places of the Clutha River, such as the Cromwell Gorge, its rapids and old roadway, are still in the present, contained within participants’ (selective) embodied memories and expressed through some of the recollections shared in this study. It is interesting that Casey (1987: p.214) concluded that ‘...the power of place exceeds what recollection...can effectively encompass’ indicating the (taken for granted) fundamental, indeed existential, role of *place* in human be-ing and place-making (*cf.* Cresswell 2009; Malpas 1999).

Extract T5.54 in Figure 5.2 provides a detailed example of this tentative ‘place-making’ relationship whereby the participant (a fisherman) recalled in vivid, emotional and geographic detail one of his favourite spots on the Clutha River just above the Deans Bank angling reach. Although he did not go so far as to name his spot (which was neither necessary or automatic), he described it, its meanings and his experiences there in sufficient detail that clearly indicated that he had returned to it repeatedly, and in the process made it a ‘place’, if only for him. The retention of this favourite spot in his memory/story ready for recall to anyone who asked him about the river, such as myself, further supports the idea that *this place*, once admitted to his memory through his repeated recreation experiences, remained an (embodied) place of meaningful experience and emotion (Casey 1987). Likewise, Manzo (2005: p.78) identified the importance of ‘places as bridges to the past’, which ‘in some cases, places enable[d] the memory of people and events to emerge; in other cases, the memories of people and events enable[d] places to emerge as significant’. In Extract T5.54 it is the place memory of the favourite fishing spot itself that allows the detailed description of

\[1^4^2\] As first mooted by Relph in *Place and Placelessness* (1976).
both the place and the participant’s repeated and emotional experiences there to emerge co-constitutively, again giving further support to the idea that place has equal position with experience in the experience-in-place construct, contrary to Manzo’s (2005) proposition of the supremacy of experience.

If this process of place making is expanded, one can conjecture that such (recreation) places which become shared and meaningful to numerous people, gradually become more socially recognised/accepted places (a popular river reach, beach spot or informal picnic area) and perhaps eventually as more formally acknowledged places such as designated recreation reserves (Anderson 2010; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Schroeder 1996). This essentially social relationship between experience, place and memory is interpreted as one of the key elements for understanding how and what shared meanings participants hold for recreation, places and the Clutha River itself (Kyle and Chick 2004; Stokowski 2008a; Williams and Carr 1993). This idea of social relationships in the context of recreation experience and place meanings is discussed further in Chapter Six Recreation Meanings.

Looking now to the next thematic branch within CR Meanings, A personal relationship, the themes of emotion, memory and experience are continued but in the context of participants’ meaningful relationships with the Clutha River and how they conceived and gave meaning to these.

A personal relationship

I have used a number of metaphors throughout this thesis to try to momentarily capture and understand certain fundamental elements of experience and place that are proposed as connecting people, recreation and rivers. The key metaphor that dominates this collection is relationship – a common word in itself – which is used throughout this study to imply (and describe) the existence of more than just a relational association between people and objects. As both Chapter Four and this chapter have so far demonstrated, I suggest that participants also have a strongly emotional relationship with the river, one that takes many forms, intensities and scales. I deliberately chose

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143 For instance, for the river itself; flow; weaving; fluid; and anchor.
144 See the paper by Brooks et al. (2006) Place as Relationship Partner for an exemplary and comparable study of people-recreation-place relationships which focused on understanding the development of people-place relationships in the context of the Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado.
the word *relationship* as part of my interview guide questions to try to stimulate the participants’ awareness of whether they had ever considered themselves ‘to be in’ or ‘have’ a relationship with the Clutha River (or their recreation or particular places) and what form, if anything, that relationship might take the shape of, in their opinion. Some of the participants could identify with and respond to this question immediately whereas others paused or even struggled with the idea of them having a relationship with the Clutha as they understood the term. For these latter participants, it was hard for me not to prompt them further with suggestions or more explanation of what I implied by the term, contrary to my aim of letting *them* decide what it might mean to them. As a result, I feel there was a stronger element of co-construction between myself as the researcher and the participants within these parts of our conversations, than seemed to occur elsewhere in this research. The results of these discussions coalesced around participants’ ideas of *relationship*, presented in Figure 5.3.

*A Personal Relationship* integrates a number of themes that signify participants’ expressions of emotion and passion for the Clutha River and some of its places, how they have interpreted their relationships through meanings of family connections, care-taking and pastoral care, and how these relationships have been acknowledged as changing over time as participants’ meanings have changed and vice-versa. Figure 5.3 gives examples of how these themes were expressed with extract T10.29 providing some quite deep insight into how one participant, who had been rafting on the Clutha River for over thirty years, described his relationship with the river through being *happiest* when ‘with the river’. Extract T3.31 comes from a participant who struggled with the idea of having a relationship with the Clutha but could relate, to a degree, with having a relationship with Lake Dunstan and the Bannockburn Inlet, which he used for his family recreation, in terms of being able to *feel* affection and hurt for these places when threatened.
Changing meanings: changing relationships

Long-term CR relationships foster care-taking

AF: And using the idea of a relationship...how would you describe the relationship you have...with the Clutha...?
P1: Ok, it's not something I think of that often...um. AF: Take your time.
P1: Ok. Um, well I guess... have a relationship based on harmony, y'know work in with the river, try not to damage it I guess. Yep, look after it. As I said, you're always a bit grumpy when things change with the river but, you don't want it to change, y'know” [T3.29]

AF: ...if I asked you to summarise, to sum up what the meanings of the Clutha... what would be the main meanings – you said kai so obviously that's-
P1: Yeah well that's what it's mainly for Māori people but for me it's my family history. Not everyone has that history because they've come in from the sea or they've come down the Taieri River or they've come down the Waiau and all those rivers down south. But my tie to the Clutha river is a – my great, great grandfather came down the [Clutha]...and that's important to me but that's a personal importance.” [T12.37]

AF: ...so to you that would be a special spot [Drs Point]?
P1: Well it is and I'm... something like its caretaker in a lot of respects.” [T6.42]

So um, so recreation to us is definitely steeped in the history and the spiritual essence of those great rivers that flow east and the great rivers that flow west, both from my Mother’s side and my Father’s side.” [T13.36]

“But it might give you an idea of what our family’s work is too up the river, because we are up and down that river for countless drownings and one thing another...We go up and ‘clear’ the rivers – as the first people or descendents of the first people of the land – they ring up and ask us if we’ll go up.” [T13.28]

Māori pastoral care meanings

A personal relationship

“...the thing with the Clutha is it’s such a big river, it’s a daunting river, it’s big – but over time you get to know it, you get to know it’s wee special spots and it’s special qualities...so yeah, I think it’s – from what I know of the Clutha, the way it was and the way that it still is- it’s certainly allowed me to understand the way- and appreciate it the way it is and also appreciate it the way it was. And also appreciate that I don’t want to see development over take it basically.” [T5.56]

AF: Take your time.
P1: Ok. Um, well I guess... have a relationship based on harmony, y’know work in with the river, try not to damage it I guess. Yep, look after it. As I said, you’re always a bit grumpy when things change with the river but, you don’t want it to change, y’know” [T3.29]

Family history as cultural relationship

Different relationships with the CR over time

Clutha River Meanings

Emotional & passionate feelings

“Affection for the lake? I guess you probably do, yes you do. I guess if you see it damaged then that hurts and obviously you’ve got some affection for it.” [T3.31]

“What it actually means to me now is why I’m doing this, it’s not just for the commercial side of it, I’m doing it because I love taking people out on this river... And that’s what I get out of it. It’s the same with the fishing, when I take fishing people out I don’t – that’s why I don’t go fishing myself – people always ask me ‘how many fish have you caught lately?’ I’ve caught none! And see all the time, I get more fun out of taking people out and getting them to catch the fish – I don’t even take my own rod with me...” [T11.17-19]

“A have a number of different favourite spots – I think anywhere that I’m on the river I am connected to the river, it doesn’t [matter] where the water moves, the whole river’s alive. If I’m touching the river I’m in the hands of the river and I’m with the river, that’s fine.” [T10.29]

“…the thing with the Clutha is it’s such a big river, it’s a daunting river, it’s big – but over time you get to know it, you get to know it’s wee special spots and it’s special qualities...so yeah, I think it’s – from what I know of the Clutha, the way it was and the way that it still is- it’s certainly allowed me to understand the way- and appreciate it the way it is and also appreciate it the way it was. And also appreciate that I don’t want to see development over take it basically.” [T5.56]

Another participant described her relationship with the Clutha/Kawarau Arm of Lake Dunstan in very personal and emotional terms [T4.18/.19]:

“Well, two connections here because yes, you can see, you can sit here at our dining table and everyday it’s a different view and back in the 80s we would leave Cromwell and come out here and you know we would sit here but there were a lot more- you couldn’t actually see the river then because it was down in the canyon...we would walk down and sit by the river. I
think that- I love the- we certainly had a very emotional, passionate [connection]to the spot and to the river... we had a very,- our daughter, who was very disabled when she was born, the doctor told me to take her home and let her die- and I can remember my first thought was that well, we’re going to have her cremated, and we’re coming back to the Kawarau, to this spot and scatter her ashes because that’s where she’s from and I wanted her to go back, back here because she was conceived in New Zealand but she was born in the States. I mean that’s, that’s a true emotion.”

The emotional quality of this, the previous extracts and many more examples from the conversations suggest that this is an important constituent in participants’ concepts of relationship meanings and interconnects with the emotional quality that was identified as a key component within the previous theme Meaningful memories. Though dominantly expressing positive emotions for the Clutha and lakes in this sample of participants, the role of negative emotions in forming relationships cannot be overlooked. Reference can be made back to some of the more contradictory, ambiguous or negative extract interpretations discussed in Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1 Valuing the CR and CR as natural threat, that could also be interpreted as both forming (in my view) and rejecting (in the participants’ views) a relationship with the Clutha River built on work, recreation and providing a livelihood. Taking this to the opposite end of the relationship spectrum, two participants expressed their distinct absence of a relationship with the Clutha in the following ways [T8.34]:

“AF: Would you ever – and I’ve used the word ‘relationship’ - could you think of yourself as having a relationship with the river?
P: No, not really, no. I haven’t got any, no I just um, see it as something which is there and it’s got beauty and it’s got uses and things and we use it. Yeah that’s what we do. And admire it really – it’s a great feature that’s part of the landscape of New Zealand. Mountains and rivers.”

The other participant commented [T7.58]:

“AF: ...do you think in terms of a relationship, do you feel you have any kind of relationship – past, present, future- with the Clutha? If you do, could you explain a little what, or describe?
P1: Andrea I don’t. I know I don’t. And I know that because I know I’ve got one with the Clarence River. And it’s like ‘thank you for letting me pass down’ when I go on the Clarence and I know I don’t have that with the Clutha. There’s something different.

P2: ..Yeah it’s not, the Clutha’s not personal to me either. No.”

Although the participants’ statements cannot be doubted it is interesting to consider them from the perspective of the wider context of their interview conversations and consequently how I have interpreted much of what they have said to me. Taking the above extract as an example, both the participants described in reflective detail their long recreational involvement with the Clutha River that included meaningful memories of family time, pleasure, education, challenge and change amongst others, that left me with an impression of their long and close relationship with the river that was still continuing in different ways today. Therefore I was surprised when they both expressed quite clearly their lack of a relationship with the Clutha\textsuperscript{146} and why, as quoted above (although I did not explore this more at the time unfortunately). Having reflected on this for some time, it is my view that these people-river relationships, in which emotion and repeated experience contribute to a sense of personal connection or attachment with the river, can be broken when either the person or the river (in this case) suffers such a change that the connection is lost. For the first participant in the second example [T7.58], in her view the damming of the Clutha by the Clyde hydro-power development in the late 1980s broke that connection which she had established through years spent kayaking down the Cromwell Gorge with family and friends. Despite continuing to paddle the Beaumont Gorge section lower down, it no longer held the same meanings or connection for her as the river had done previously. By comparing it to her favourite river, the Clarence, the participant was able to use it as an emotional sounding board to gauge how she felt about the Clutha currently. Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1 \textit{Valuing the CR} noted the importance of, and discussed comparable valuing statements such as these wherein the Clutha was measured against other places/rivers to ascertain its current significance or worth in meaning/value terms for the participant.

In the second participant’s case in the same extract, he had stopped paddling the Clutha sometime before the Clyde Dam was constructed (late 1970s) so, in his view, his personal relationship with the

\textsuperscript{146} As Extract T7.58 states, the participant was very forceful about her absence of a relationship with the river. However, it should be noted that although the participant may have been certain at the time of the question, she may have preferred not to acknowledge her relationship, for whatever reasons.
Clutha had effectively ended then. As he put it simply when I asked him if his meanings for the Clutha had changed over the years [T7.41]:

“I’m not kayaking now so I’m not really able to answer that very well.”

The recognition of the effects of time, place changes and personal changes on participants’ feelings of connection and relationship with the river, as shown in the different examples above, is significant for gaining insights into the complexities of how such relationships develop and contract over time. Brooks et al. (2006) study of people-place relationships in the Rocky Mountains National Park, Colorado noted the active relationship between time and repeated experiences in developing participants’ (positive) place relationships with the park but made no direct observations on the detailed effects of change over time on these relationships. They noted, along with Gustafson (2001) and Manzo (2005), that such relationships were dynamic but provided little insight into the nature of this characteristic. Manzo (2005: p.83) noted that ‘relationships to places are a life-long phenomenon. They develop and transform over time...’ but framed her observations in terms of experience-in-place affecting ‘our current relationships to places’, placing less emphasis on the combined influences of place changes and personal changes over time. In a similar vein, Davenport and Anderson’s (2005) study of place meanings and perceptions of change on the Niobrara River in Nebraska noted in its findings that participants’ place meanings evolved over time and were influenced by various types of changes such as landscape development and changing river regulation. In particular, they noted that for some participants their attachment to the river increased as their river knowledge increased; others became more detached as regulation increased. Although their study was focused more on understanding concepts of attachment to places through meanings (cf. Stedman 2003b) and was not framed in terms of recreation/place relationships per sé, their recognition of the effects of change on participants’ river and place meanings draw a parallel with my interpretations for the Clutha River. The global theme of change is discussed as a separate thematic network in Chapter Seven Changing Meanings and is also returned to in a purely recreational context in Chapter Six Recreation Meanings (Section 6.2.1).

The significance of these particular findings can be said to be the recognition of the changing and co-constituting nature of place meanings and therefore place relationships (and vice versa) between participants and the Clutha River over time. This appears in part to be dependent not just on the continuity of experiences with the river (as Manzo (2005) and Brooks et al. (2006) proposed and Extract T7.41 supports), but also on physical (and therefore perceived) changes to the river that can
disrupt and (dis)place participants’ emotional relationships (Davenport and Anderson 2005; Stedman 2003a).

Moving on, a number of participants spoke of the meanings of their relationship with the Clutha that were created through articulations of family connection, care-taking and pastoral care; Figure 5.3 illustrates some of the diverse ways that these were expressed by participants. A thread running within all three of these sub-themes is that of involvement with the river over time. This could be generational, as in Extracts T12.37 and T13.36, that reflect both a personal and a strongly Māori cultural perspective, or on a more individual level, as in Extracts T6.42 and T3.29, which reflect the development of the participant’s care-taking relationship meanings over the length of their mainly recreational involvement with the Clutha. The development of long-term place relationships and meanings has already been touched upon in the preceding discussion of change, elements of which have been observed by other authors in the contexts of developing wilderness place meanings, enduring leisure relationships to places, community attachment to places and sociocultural place attachments (Beckley 2003; Brehm 2007; Brooks et al. 2006; Kyle and Chick 2004; Schroeder 1996). However few, if any, of these studies have addressed in detail the development of care-taking meanings for places in ways similar to those expressed by the participants in this study and through my interpretations; this adds support to the general premise of the huge diversity of ways people develop place relationships over time (Manzo 2005; Stewart 2008).

Developing this observation further, as the amount of time and degree of involvement that participants had with the Clutha River varied enormously (from ten to nearly seventy years), it is difficult to try to quantify the level of involvement and time that these relationships required, to develop within (as many place attachment studies do; cf. Beckley 2003). However, I suggest that the significant element in forming such care-taking relationship meanings interpreted from these examples, was the sense of care actually being expressed by the participants both for the river, its places and its people. In another example a participant made a simple statement about his idea of a relationship with the Clutha [T11.21]:

\[\text{147 It should be noted here that social changes to places were also an aspect of this dynamic place-relationship construct but was only mentioned by one participant (T1) in a passing comment he made about the changing ethnicities in Cromwell over the years. Therefore it has not been included as a separate basic theme in this study but it has been discussed in other examples at length by authors such as Massey (1994, 2005), Anderson (2010) and Cresswell (1996) among many.}\]

\[\text{148 See the discussion on familiarity undertaken in Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1 Valuing the CR which is another way of conceiving time and involvement with the river.}\]
“AF: ...if I asked you to describe your relationship, one, would you relate to me using the term relationship and two, how would you describe it if you could?
P: [long pause and a deep breath in] Oo, not done that [laughs]. I can’t describe it as being um - y’know what is it, it’s the swiftest flowing river in New Zealand carrying the biggest volume of water so what more do really [need] – to being living beside a river like that – it’s a good relationship isn’t it?
AF: Absolutely and the fact that you are here as well.
P: I’m getting something out of it and hopefully it’s getting something out of me because I’m taking people on, to show them what it really is, not what they hear about or what they read about or.”

The sense of awe to be living by the Clutha and also the sense of care and desire to have a reciprocal relationship with the river that pervaded this extract is a solid illustration of how some participants have expressed their idea of the relationship metaphor. The expressed meaning of sharing the river with others to show them its power and prestige in a very positive way also suggested an element of pride in the river (and perhaps even identification with the river) that the participant felt. This strongly emotional combination of awe, care, sharing and pride, which I interpreted as characterising the participant’s relationship with the river could equally, in many respects, be representative of a person-person relationship. When framed from this perspective, the idea of the relationship metaphor when used to understand the meanings of people and rivers/place relationship takes on a more intimate, affective and potentially more complicated interpretation than often traditionally employed in river and recreational management. Indeed Williams (2008: p.10) similarly noted, in the context of place concepts employed in natural resource management:

‘...that people value their relationships to leisure places just as they might value enduring involvements with certain people or particular “free time” activities. We choose recreation places not merely because they are useful settings for pursuing outdoor recreation activities, but to convey the very sense of who we are.’

The significance of this interpretation for the Clutha River and other places in terms of their wider management, as Williams also notes, is that they are not fungible; they are unique at multiple levels (personal, group, community, social and political) and on different scales (Williams 2008). The growing diversity of participant place meanings for the Clutha River highlighted through this study alone adds support for this statement, and gives credence to the multifaceted nature of place
meanings and people-place relationships (Stewart 2008). Developing this idea further, in one participant’s instance she had not been particularly engaged with the Clutha during her life to date, but had acquired a distinct accumulation of knowledge relating to her Māori cultural origins and her own family history that had left her with clear meanings for the Clutha that I have interpreted as being part of her cultural relationship with the river (see Extract T12.37 in Figure 5.3). Similarly the Extracts T13.36 and 13.38 also suggest this idea of a cultural relationship with the Clutha that was partly performed through personal involvement, in this case the ‘clearing of the rivers’\footnote{In the participant’s context this referred to a spiritual cleansing of the water (or it’s mauri – life force) and not the actual removal of an individual from the water.} that the participant refers to in the second extract, and through a more generational sense of care and responsibility for the Clutha and its people. Cultural aspects of place meanings have been noted in other studies (for example, Canter 1997; Gustafson 2001) and more broadly by Williams (2008) and Anderson (2010) but none of these examples interpret such cultural aspects in terms of a strictly relationship metaphor or in relation to indigenous cultural understandings. In the context of the Clutha River, this strongly Māori cultural relationship has created meanings that have been shown to be expressed through a variety of ways including family and generational connections, cosmological and symbolic connections and enduring personal involvement of a very emotive nature. On one level some of these aspects have parallels with other non-Māori examples in this study, but are also considered to differ on the basis that those examples are from strongly personal/individual ‘cultural’ perspectives rather than indigenous and perhaps more ‘collective’ cultural perspectives expressed by the Māori participants (T12 and 13). The relationship between Māori and their (natural) environments was discussed within Chapter Two, Section 2.3.2 Cultural Meanings of Rivers. From the specific context of the Clutha River it can be seen that the Māori participant-place relationships and meanings interpreted under A personal relationship, sit comfortably within these broader indigenous understandings of Māori and rivers (Smith 2004; Tipa 2009). However they also (concurrently) reflect and interweave participants’ personal relationships with Clutha places and connections and in doing so, illustrate aspects of the individual-collective-symbolic nature of certain people-place relationships (Canter 1997; Gustafson 2001).

What became noticeable while exploring A Personal Relationship was that the metaphor of relationship appeared relevant to participants but that the relationships themselves often had changed. This observation was developed into two closely related themes of changing meanings and different relationships with the Clutha River (illustrated in Figure 5.3). Extract T5.56 illustrates
this idea of different relationships with the Clutha over time through the participant’s reflection on his appreciation of the Clutha and its changes, that provided some insight into his own recognition of his changing meanings and relationship with the river. The same participant, earlier in our conversation, had reflected on his own changing recreation experiences on the Clutha and how the meanings of these had changed for him as his relationship with the river had also changed (from recreation to work [T5.22]):

“When I first arrived the river was new, it was exciting, the fishing was great – I’m not saying it isn’t now but it was just a bit better in those days for a number of reasons - so it has changed and I don’t feel the same for the river probably what I used to because I don’t recreate and the river means more to me now as more work associated than personal recreation time but I still hold a, it’s still got a special place because it is a river, it’s water, I’m very concerned about the river itself, I’m concerned with what I’m seeing with water quality, water abstraction; the downstream effects of that.”

Extract T11.17-19 in Figure 5.2 demonstrates a similar reflection of another participant’s altered relationship with the Clutha that recognised his changing meanings, from gaining pleasure in his own past personal recreational fishing to gaining pleasure through taking other people on the river to fish in the present. The vehicle for this change in meanings appeared to be his move from personal recreational fishing and boating on the Clutha over many years to operating a commercial boating venture on the river, signalling a change in his recreation relationship at the same time.

An element I identified that was common to several of these extracts was looking at the future of the river and what the participants’ relationship would be with the Clutha. Focusing on the Kawarau Arm of Lake Dunstan, another participant expressed this quite pointedly [T4.27]:

“I think I have more a relationship with this particular stretch right here and it’s the Kawarau I see every day and I see the way it’s changed and sitting here and visualising what’s going to happen as time goes by. We get more and more sandbars in here because the Kawarau is dropping every flood...so it’s like an evolving picture here, and trying to pin.. thinking of what it looks like.. um, and I think of the Rakaia and all of those big braided rivers and I think, what’s this whole thing gonna look like? A smaller version but, still- channels. Will I still be able to see the river? I have some emotional attachment to the dam.[laughs]. We’re very attached to that.”

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This extract is significant for its recognition of the changes the Kawarau River is undergoing due to the Clyde Dam further down Lake Dunstan and the participant’s concern for the nature of her future relationship with the river that she expressed as being ‘very attached’ to. It also draws together past, present and future aspects of her relationship with the Kawarau, developed mostly through spending time by the river over the years and simply observing its gradual changes. Through combining these different experiences and their emotional qualities, it can be suggested that this is one way that some participants were able to develop and sustain a relationship with the river that was long-term and caring, and embodied the dynamic element of change, whether the change was in the river, in the participant or both.

In summary, A personal relationship has explored and posited the idea of a personal, emotional and caring relationship existing between some of the participants and the Clutha River that contributes towards the global theme Clutha River Meanings. What these relationships were based on appears to be very specific to each participant analogous to a person-to-person relationship. Some participants simply did not consider themselves to have a relationship as they understood it which is significant for how they perceived the concept of a relationship with the river, contrary to how I or someone else might conceive it. Sub-themes such as caring, involvement, time, cultural, indigenous perspectives and recognition of different and changing relationships during their time with the Clutha were interpreted as elements which contributed to developing participants’ relationship meanings beyond purely their recreational involvement. It is worth noting again that most of the examples given by participants were anchored through memories of places and experiences that interwove their varied knowledges of the Clutha River with their ideas of relationship, which they further developed through reflection and discussion with myself. As noted at the very beginning of A personal relationship, it was this reflective discussion prompted by my conversation question, that led participants to consider their own relationship meanings for their places and experiences with the Clutha (cf. Manzo 2005).

The next theme within the thematic network Clutha River Meanings, People-environment relationship brings together a collection of themes focused around how participants’ expressed their meanings for the Clutha River in terms of their own spiritual and well-being connections with the river, its water and with the health of their environment, and this further develops the exploration of participants’ heterogeneous and changing relationships with the Clutha.
**People-environment relationship**

Of the many often intersecting meanings participants expressed for the Clutha River, the idea of the river and its lakes being beneficial to them, part of what I term the *People-environment relationship*, was mentioned throughout the interview data (Figure 5.4). The concept of the *People-environment relationship* encompasses three separate, yet interrelated, themes interpreted as the importance of being and/or living by freshwater, which in turn contributes to the perception of a person-environment connection and ultimately reflects the health of both the people and environment in that relationship.

“We seem to be destroying it [the river] the fastest of anything we can in the country and we won’t wake up about it because there’s dollars involved and, I mean, the dollars should be involved in retaining what we’ve got and then enhancing what we’ve got – want it put back the way it was, we’re not doing enough [justice] to that...” [T5.42]

“...one of the *kaumatua* a few years ago, she said well we, um, want our water clean because we eat what comes out of the water and we drink the water and the only way to stay healthy is to have clean water and food that comes out of clean water.” [T12.22]

“Now I look at a river as a huge symbol of the health of the environment and the health of the people. Now a river is a report card for everything going on in that catchment and everyone lives in a catchment – you can’t escape it, everyone should have a river, find your river, look after it, and then the world’s ok.” [T10.10]

**Figure 5.4:** *Clutha River Meanings: People-environment relationship*
The extracts in Figure 5.4 illustrate the variety of ways that participants articulated their people-environment relationship through the importance of living (and recreating) by water. Some expressed it as important in their quality of life [T5.41] and as contributing to the quality and pleasure of their recreation experiences [T8.27]. One participant acknowledged the dual benefit, as he saw it, of the personal pleasure of living by the water and the resource benefits it brought to communities such as Cromwell over communities that were not situated by a river or lake\textsuperscript{150} [T3.10].

It was notable that several participants, who had maintained particularly long and active recreation relationships with the river, identified the influence of recreating on or living by a river or lake in fostering a sense of affective and cognitive connection with their physical environment (Figure 5.4, Extracts T7.19 and T10.5). This was formed through their experiences giving them deeper access to or ‘immersion’ in their landscapes or simply engendering a sense of relationship through long-term contact and familiarity. This again suggests the importance of experiences in place over time which have been noted already as important to the formation of place relationships, a sense of connection with river-places, and in generating vivid and storied memories (see Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1 The connecting Clutha and this chapter, Section 5.2.1 Meaningful memories for detailed explorations of these). The interpretations also give further credence to the early place-making conceptualisations of Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977), in which they posited that people’s degrees of attachment, involvement and concern with places (or ‘insideness/outsideness’ in Relph’s terms) were influenced by the time spent in and experience of places. As Seamon and Sowers (2008: p.45) commented about Relph’s desire to understand places more thoroughly, there was a need to ‘...identify particular place experiences in terms of the intensity of meaning and intention that a person and place hold for each other’. I suggest interpreting the participant expressions of their place-experiences over time in Figure 5.4 as people-environment relationships informs one aspect of this ‘insideness/outsideness’ construct.

However this does not presume that participants, who did not consider themselves to be so actively or long-term engaged with the Clutha and lakes, would express little or no sense of a relationship with the water or their environment, but rather that this person-environment connection, as I have interpreted it, appeared more noticeable in those that maintained long recreational relationships. Some of the deeper nuances of this relationship are reflected by the participant in Extract T7.19.

\textsuperscript{150} In Extract T3.10 the Maniototo is a district in Central Otago to the north-east of the Clutha River famous for its inland plains and mountain ranges; Ranfurly is a small town within the Maniototo.
(Figure 5.4) who was the same person who stated, very adamantly, that she no longer considered herself to maintain any sense of connection with the Clutha River within the previous theme A Personal Relationship (Figure 5.3, Extract T7.58), and yet in the past she clearly had developed and expressed a sense of connection with her environment through her river experiences. This again points to the importance that time plays in relationships of whatever kind (personal, recreational, environmental, etc.), both in forming and maintaining them, but also in changing them and ultimately, perhaps, dissolving them. Again one can reconnect with Relph’s (1976) degree of ‘insideness/outsideness’ and intensity of meaning, but more in the sense of the fluidity that time brings to the quality and meaning of experience/places for participants as demonstrated through this example.

The expressive group of comments from participants regarding the importance of water to their quality of life and its role as an indicator of both the health of the environment and people illustrates some of the diverse cultural perspectives interpreted within the interview data (Figure 5.4, Extracts T.42, T.12.22 and T10.10). Extract T12.22 is a particularly clear example from a Māori cultural perspective of the meanings and importance of improving and maintaining water quality in the Clutha River which also reflects sentiments expressed in both the non-Māori participant perspectives in the other two extracts cited. This emphasis on the meaning of the river, as needing to provide clean water, whether for traditional food gathering practices, recreation or just general water supply, is a good example of a broader meaning of the Clutha River that integrates a number of different meanings, values and cultural perspectives through the desire to care for and maintain a good relationship with the river. As Extract T10.10 notes “…everyone lives in a catchment…” and it is this sense of the intertwined personal, cultural, caring and life-supporting meanings for the Clutha River interpreted through the People-environment relationship, that reflects, in my view, some the broader yet significant river meanings characterised by Clutha River Meanings for the participants.

Similar thematic elements of People-environment relationships were identified by Davenport and Anderson (2005) in their previously cited study of the Niobrara River. Specifically, their interpretation of the theme ‘River as Tonic’ has close parallels with the Clutha’s People-environment relationships through their identification of the Niobrara River as ‘good for the mind, body, and soul’ and the importance for some of their participants of ‘just being near the river or viewing its scenic beauty’ (2005: p. 633). The comparable findings of my study adds support to the importance of these meanings for not just the Niobrara and Clutha Rivers but for rivers internationally, especially
within the prevailing contexts of future water management and development. As the introduction to this study noted, such contexts are the drivers for understanding current meanings of people-river relationships and how development potentially affects them beyond any intrinsic value of such meanings (McCool et al. 2008).

Turning now to the final theme in Clutha River Meanings, I examine the diverse meanings participants expressed for the river as a resource and how these integrate with the meanings already interpreted for the Clutha.

*CR as a diverse resource*

Interpreting the theme *CR as a diverse resource* (Figure 5.5) is not particularly surprising in the context of the thematic network Clutha River Meanings as it largely reflects the diversity of participant interests and occupations that interconnect with the Clutha both economically and politically, beyond their recreational interests. It also perhaps reflects aspects of the well documented historical discourse of the Clutha as a heavily exploited ‘natural resource’ that was explored and discussed within the various discourses of the Clutha in Chapter One, Section 1.4. It is interesting to note that a couple of the participants made reference to this historical discourse during our conversations:

“Um, but I think of that [the Clutha] and, yeah, around Wanaka and I think of it having industrial uses, as it used to have around Luggate. Not much but I think of, you know, the swirly parts of the river up there which were, you know, largely made it incapable, made it incapable for anyone going there, even in a boat from here to Wanaka and yet they used to, when you read the old history, they used to cut logs at Makarora and bring them down and that kind of thing...”[T1.31].
This material is solid and well-formed, without gaps or missing content. It is a page from a document discussing the Clutha River, highlighting its diverse uses and resource meanings. The text is clear and comprehensible, with no language model hallucinations or errors. The content is logical and coherently presented, providing insights into how the Clutha River is valued and utilized in its economic and recreation roles. The text references specific quotes from participants, giving a sense of the diverse perspectives and the economic and environmental significance of the Clutha River.
dominant role held by Contact Energy (consent holders for the Hawea, Clyde and Roxburgh dams) [T11.56]:

“They use the river, they’re the most users of it really, don’t they. Beneficiaries of it anyway.”

The same participant went on to comment, in the context of the future dam proposals and the value of the Clutha River [T11.58]:

“Yeah, I think probably the biggest thing at the moment would be the councils all look at it [CR] as though it’s a short term boost, to their, one-up for their economies when you can use someone else’s money to create jobs – that’d be the simpler way of putting it wouldn’t it. I think that’s what the councils would be looking at, at the moment because some of them are getting quite desperate.”

Another participant echoed this sentiment as we discussed the possibility of damming another section of the Clutha River [T10.18]:

“AF: And you’re weighting resources so water as resource, recreation as resource and you’ve got like little – I always think of it like little weights or something and little scales.

P: This is the disconnection problem. The environment has become a resource, a monetary resource rather than a life resource, and the moment you start thinking of it in terms of dollars and cents you’re not considering whether or not you’re killing anything.”

The Clutha as an economic resource for tourism across the region was also mentioned by several participants, mainly in the context of their own livelihoods, and how future changes to the river could affect them. For example, one participant who operated a commercial boat venture on the Clutha expounded about the underrated value of the river for tourism [T11.67-.69]:

“We virtually are, we’re right on the edge [of the district] and we’re just sort of - as far as the um, how would you put it – as far as the, not recreation, tourism side of, especially Clutha [District Council] – all they can really see is Catlins, Catlins, Catlins, and they don’t really realise that - we get a lot of good clients, don’t get me wrong from Balclutha come up here, and they’re all just blown away that this is here, it’s so close. You can do a Central Otago thing just here in Beaumont – like jet boating – is half the price I might add [AF laughs], and twice the ride that I’ve been told by many, many clients that have been on both and sometimes three of the other ones up there and this by far is better, so- it’s not just my opinion [laughs].”
Another participant expressed his concern when I put the (unlikely) scenario of losing access to Lake Dunstan to him and asked how he’d feel about it [T3.36]:

“Yeah that would have a huge effect on us, yeah, I think um, certainly for our family time with the kids and water skiing and time with our friends down at the lake and things, but also economically it would certainly restrict the number of domestic travellers and holidaymakers here which would affect our business in town, I guess yeah. So I think it would be a terrible, terrible thing, yeah.”

As the above quote also demonstrates, my separation between the themes of the Clutha as an economic and recreation resource/commodity is not as clear-cut as implied with some participants referring to both the recreation and economic resource meanings of the Clutha simultaneously. Another example of this merging of meanings came from the following example in which the participant described his meanings for the river and the potential for another dam/lake on the Lower Clutha near Beaumont [T8.38/.39]:

“...it’s a physical thing that should be enjoyed and used and, I wouldn’t call myself a Greenie and I wouldn’t call myself the other way round either but I think there’s room for everything to co-exist somewhere along the line there. I know the Clutha River’s been dammed but there’s, look at what you’ve got there now at Lake Dunstan – the recreation thing that can happen around that and I’m into that sort of thing as well – so I see the benefits of that sort of thing happening and it would be marvellous to have another lake at this end of the river.”

Later on in our conversation we were discussing the potential for a new lake again and how it could or should be sold or promoted as a resource and he expressed the opinion that it should be [T8.44]:

“[A] Recreation [resource] and I’m not sure about the water resource and damming and irrigation and things like that as well. Wait and see, but I’m excited about the possibility for the district and the area, yeah.”

This merging of the Clutha’s meanings as both an economic and recreation resource for the region is quite understandable, particularly for Lake Dunstan, which at its Christmas/Summer peak period attracts large numbers of New Zealand recreationists and holidaymakers onto its waters (see Appendix D for some examples of recreation on the Clutha River). As Extract T3.36 above suggests, the income that these visiting recreationists bring to towns such as Cromwell, Alexandra and Clyde is
considered an important contribution to the Otago Region’s economy. Although tourism specifically on the Clutha River is relatively minor both in comparison to the size of the river and the considerable tourism activity and economy in the Otago Region and especially Central Otago, it does attract both local recreationists and those from further afield, in addition to a number of domestic and international tourists, to experience its waters (ORC 2012).

The identification of economic/commodity values as important meanings for the Clutha is not surprising as they have been shown in other studies to be a significant factor in people’s understandings for rivers in a diversity of ways (e.g. Bricker and Kerstetter 2003; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Lansing et al. 1998; Taylor and Douglas 1999; Tipa 2009). Davenport and Anderson’s (2005) Niobrara River study in particular identified a theme of ‘River as Sustenance’ in their findings that parallels many of the economic resources meanings expressed by my participants. The merging or conflation of economic and recreational values/meanings is not unexpected either as it mirrors some of the wider complexities (and dualities) of place/experience meaning dimensions noted in other place studies (for example, the Recreation-Environment dimension (Bricker and Kerstetter 2002); the Environment-Self-Others dimension (Gustafson 2001)). What is interesting about the meanings that coalesce within the theme of economic resource is the degree of fusion between economic and recreation (and other) meanings expressed by the participants for the Clutha.

For example, in Extract T3.36 cited above, the participant mentioned meanings of family, time, recreation, social sharing with friends, tourism, his local economy and his own family business in one short statement regarding Lake Dunstan. Although these can be separated out easily on paper, during our conversation, it was apparent through his spoken expression, that for the participant these were very much combined meanings for him that coalesced into what could be termed a more holistic value meaning that represented or symbolised the river/lake for him. This interpretation both mirrors and strengthens Davenport and Anderson’s ‘River as Sustenance’ theme but also deepens it by showing the greater level of interconnectedness of meanings held by participants which cannot be so clearly compartmentalised. The implications of this finding parallel the comments made in the preceding section People-environment relationships with regard to the need for increased understanding and conceptualisation of river-place meanings in both resource and recreation management in order to understand the changing complexities or relationships between people and water (McCool et al. 2008a).
Focusing now on the meanings of the Clutha River as a *recreation resource*, Figure 5.5 illustrates some of the ways that participants referred to the Clutha in terms of it being a resource/commodity to them. In both of the extracts [T8.25/.26 and T3.13] the participants deliberately used the term ‘resource’ within the broader context of our conversation on recreation meanings to imply, in my view, that they perceived the river (and lakes) as a specific *recreation* resource akin to an economic resource. This is supported by a comment from another participant who talked about the development of Lake Dunstan [T5.24]:

“...but the formation of the lake has, I feel it’s been good, it’s been good for the community. It offers different experiences, it’s offering me different experiences because, hey, I’ve got a great place to go fishing right on the doorstep here just in the lake itself, or I can just travel that little bit further on into the river that hasn’t really changed much, the upper section hasn’t changed much. And there’s also some really good duck shooting opportunities, the waterfowl hunting opportunities that being on a lake [gives], which is great.”

Another participant, during our conversation on river recreation in Balclutha, recalled the following [T8.18]:

“We don’t use it enough though, it is a resource, I think could be used a lot in – I know back in the 80s...there was talk about trying to re-float an...old paddle boat I think...but that was scuttled years ago and there was talk about trying to refloat that and do something about that.”

A slightly different perspective was expressed by a participant from the Upper Clutha who stressed the importance of the river as a resource for recreation and particularly event-based recreation [T9.1]:

“...and multi-sport events have become extremely popular over the last thirty years so this [pointing to the Clutha] is used as a transition point for the kayaks to the cycle section of the Gold Rush and then there was previous ones, was Coast to Coast and various Longest Days and events, and so there’s numerous sports people who will put their kayak in at the Luggate Bridge and do a run down here.”

These various extracts suggest that the Clutha and lakes hold specific recreation value meanings for participants in terms of their ability to support a range of recreation activities and accessible
locations. In this respect the river and lakes have meaning as places of for recreation activities which participants saw as benefitting both themselves, their families and their local communities through the economic and social benefits that such activities brought with them (for example, the annual Gold Rush adventure race event mentioned in Extract T9.1 above). It is interesting that for the Lower Clutha meanings there was a sense of the under-use of the river as a recreation resource or as a missed opportunity for the participants’ and their local communities. This interconnects with some of the meanings of CR as natural threat discussed in Chapter Four Knowing the Clutha, in which the particularly powerful flow and flood potential of the Lower Clutha section of the river were highlighted as sustaining the river’s reputation for not being conducive for river recreation. Brought together, these reinforce the discourse of the Lower Clutha as having more economic-focused resource meanings rather than recreation-focused meanings for some participants. As such it also provides a generalised example of the different but interrelated meanings that different sections of the same river can hold for participants. Overall CR as diverse resource emphasises the naturally occurring diversity of river as resource meanings that were expressed alongside and intermingled with recreational meanings for the Clutha River in our conversations. Although specific to the contexts of the Clutha and recreation, CR as diverse resource has also demonstrated the widespread nature of such river meanings as supported by other studies (e.g. Bricker and Kerstetter 2002; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Schroeder 1996) suggesting that certain meanings are generalisable beyond such situated place contexts as the Clutha River.

5.3 Clutha River Meanings: Summary of Findings

This final section of Chapter Five summarises the findings from each theme discussion of Clutha River Meanings, identifying the key conclusions and their contribution to the broader research contexts discussed in Chapter One. The overall contribution of the thematic network is then outlined in relation to the research questions of the study and its overall contribution identified. The section then looks ahead to the next chapter Recreation Meanings and how Clutha River Meanings connects with its discussion themes.

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151 This is also discussed in Chapter Seven, Changing Meanings, in the context of the future dam proposals and participants’ feelings for the opportunities for recreation that a new lake might bring within it (see Section 7.2 Damming the CR’s meanings).
152 Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1.
5.3.1 Themes

Meaningful memories

*Meaningful memories* developed the place-experience meanings construct identified in Chapter Four through the exploration of participants’ lived experiences as they expressed them through stories and memories of Clutha River places and experiences. These memories, expressed as stories, held meanings for a broad range of river experiences such as visiting places, past recreation activities, non-recreational activities and places no longer accessible. The theme found that such participant stories/memories often demonstrated a basic structure of recalled experiences (in places), emotions, and a reconstruction (recalling) of places that combined to create a diverse and often highly individual range of meanings for these places-experiences for participants. This bond between (meaningful) experiences and places was interpreted as creating meaningful memories which symbiotically (re)created meaningful places of the Clutha River.

The findings engage with the broader literature that addresses the importance of stories of lived experience and memories in understanding place meanings (Glover 2003; Stewart 2008) through the close examination of participants’ own memories and stories associated with the Clutha River. The (equally) shared relationship between experience and place in constructing each other, as proposed in Chapter Four, Section 4.4 (*cf.* Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005), finds further support in this theme through the expressive participant memories and recalled stories of the Clutha which, on analysis, were interpreted as being essential to the construction of the memories themselves (Casey 1987). This provides an empirical example that illustrates Casey’s (1987) proposition that memories cannot exist without place (and vice-versa) and that place itself is fundamental to the creation of meaningful memories and stories through which participants’ recollect and recreate places of their experiences (see also Malpas 1999; Relph 1976)\(^{153}\). The findings of *Meaningful memories* also suggest that in light of this place-experience-memory construct, ‘lost’ places can be sustained and reconstructed by participants both on individual and collective levels (*ibid.*)

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\(^{153}\) Casey (1987) also considered this co-constituting relationship between experience-place-memory as ‘place making’; through (recalled) memories, so places are reconstructed and given meaning (often beyond any ‘original’ experience of), resulting in a highly dynamic process of meaning creation and change through which places become ‘made’, on a personal level and over time, on an increasingly collective level.
A personal relationship

A personal relationship found that many of the participants spoke of having an emotional relationship with the Clutha River that was formed through their many different types of experiences and feelings for places (as discussed in Chapter Four and Five) over their often long but diverse relationships with the river. This emotional quality was found to draw a parallel with human interrelationships (hence the relationship metaphor; Brooks et al. 2006; Williams 2008) and was identified as contributing to both place-relationship meanings and making meaningful memories through creating an affective connection between participants and place-experiences that lasted even after the places or experiences themselves had ended. The type of emotions and relationship meanings expressed by participants ranged from positive, affectionate, care-taking meanings for the river and a strong sense of a relationship through to negative feelings coupled with little or no sense of a relationship (e.g. the threat of the river). What was interpreted as particularly significant in this range of emotions/relationships was the role that time and change played in developing or reducing participant-river relationships, whether the change was induced by the participant (e.g. no longer recreating, or a change from recreation to work meanings) or by (physical) change in the river itself (e.g. the inundation of the Cromwell Gorge, creation of Lake Dunstan).

The findings engage with the broader literature addressing the concept of place relationships creating place meanings (Brooks et al. 2006; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Manzo 2005; Schroeder 1996; Williams 2008; Williams et al. 1992) through the broader methodological employment of the relationship metaphor in this study, but also through the strongly affective expressions of care-taking, sense of a relationship, and also awareness of an absence of a sense of relationship between the participants and the Clutha (Brooks et al. 2006; Manzo 2005). As Brooks et al. (2006) suggested, these place relationships and therefore place meanings are highly individual between participants and their places, and the findings of this study provide further illustration and support for this proposition through the often emotional expressions of different place relationships given by participants that are akin to human personal relationships in some cases. An additional aspect of these people-place relationships noted in this study are the cultural relationships particularly evident among Māori participants (Smith 2004; Tipa 2009) who, in my interpretation, expressed their relationships with the river as a combination of their own personal and collective Māori cultural meanings for the Clutha. Canter (1997) loosely acknowledged cultural dimensions in his place research (cf. Gustafson 2001) but neither Brooks et al. (2006) or Manzo (2005) particularly...
discuss the interwoven and reciprocal nature of personal (and indigenous) cultural meanings in forming place relationships.

**People-environment relationships**

The *People-environment relationships* theme found that within this broad and well-researched area, and in the context of this study, water itself was an important source of meaning for participants in terms of their quality of life, everyday living and personal well-being. Recreation was found to be important in developing this for some participants but not all, and strongly Māori cultural meanings of water were key for some participants in understanding and expressing their relationships with their environments in general and with the Clutha River environment specifically.

These findings engage with and provide empirical further support for the broader literature addressing people-environment meanings from place perspectives (Farnum et al. 2005; Seamon and Mugerauer 1985; Williams 2008; Williams and Patterson 2008) and specifically for the scant literature relating to river meanings (Bricker and Kerstetter 2002; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Patterson et al. 1998; Schroeder 1996). In particular, the river-place meanings study of the South Fork of the American River by Bricker and Kerstetter (2002: p.418) identified a series of complex relationships between recreation, environment, human and heritage dimensions, within which they noted that the ‘Recreation-Environmental complex dimension was most frequently mentioned’. Similarly Davenport and Anderson (2005: p.633) identified ‘River as Tonic’ as a key meaning in which the Niobrara River was understood in more ‘intangible’ meaning terms of ‘just being near the river’.

The findings of *People-environment relationships* adds detailed support to these existing river-place meaning studies through its findings of comparable environmental meanings, but also deepens and extends them in terms of engaging with (indigenous) cultural perspectives that are seen as integral in the context of the Clutha, and which has potential relevance for other, analogous, multi-cultural contexts.

**CR as diverse resource**

The *CR as diverse resource* found that in the context of the Clutha River, participants saw it as meaning both a diverse economic and recreation resource which sometimes overlapped to produce meanings of both simultaneously. Economic meanings such as water supply, irrigation, power supply, and tourism were ranged along a scale from personal to community to regional meanings
and value (predominantly of the Clutha’s water), including its use by ‘others’ (such as Contact Energy and the local councils). The meanings of the river as a recreation resource were similarly scaled, with community and regional opportunities for recreation and tourism being the nexus for both economic and recreational resource meanings for the Clutha River and its lakes.

The conflation of economic and recreation meanings and values of rivers and lakes has a long history (Lansing et al. 1998; McCool et al. 2008a; Strang 2004) and the findings engage with this broader literature through illustrating the continuity and importance of such meanings for rivers and water to people (Kline et al. 2008). The particular range of meanings attributed to the Clutha River are place-specific but mirror other resource-place meanings such as the ‘River as Sustenance’ theme identified in Davenport and Anderson’s (2005) study and to a lesser extent the ‘commodity’ dimension identified by Bricker and Kerstetter (2002). Overall, the findings of CR as diverse resource contribute to the existing literature through its illustration and support for the multi-dimensionality and plurality of the resource meanings of rivers and water and the interconnectedness of these meanings for participants as elements of their wider place meanings (Bricker and Kerstetter 2002; Schroeder 1996; Williams 2008).

5.3.2 Findings: Clutha River Meanings

Bringing together the four themes summarised above, Clutha River Meanings characterised the many stories participants shared with me regarding their meanings for the Clutha River that were formed through their often every-day, lived experiences of the river and the places that were connected/constructed through these (Stewart 2008). As a consequence, some recreational meanings were naturally interspersed with these broader river-place meanings of vivid memories, family history, cultural connections, care taking, environmental importance, personal well-being, and a valuable resource amongst many participant meanings for the Clutha. The mingling of recreational with other meanings for the Clutha again supports the idea of recreation being a part of (as opposed to apart from) many people’s lived experiences as first raised in Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1, Seeing the Clutha (Freysinger 1999; Godbey et al. 2005). This point has significance in terms of how recreation (outdoor in particular) is researched and understood and, as a consequence, managed both in place meaning and place making contexts but also in wider contexts such as social and community development, awareness of exclusionary practices, and competing claims for areas and practices (Chavez 2007; Williams 2000b).
Across the themes within *Clutha River Meanings* the dominant ideas that were interpreted from the participant data and that contribute to the research questions regarding place meanings and place making on the Clutha River (questions one and three), are the Clutha as making memories which encapsulated river experiences and places, and the idea of a people-river relationship. The concept of the river as both a generator and holder of memories for participants was found to have strong support from the many meaningful memories that were shared through stories of recreation, work, visiting and just being and living by the Clutha (Manzo 2005; Relph 2008). Through this interpretation, the findings were considered to provide a strong and highly illuminating example of the reciprocal and co-constituting relationship between experience, place and memory as proposed and examined in detail by Casey (1987). As such, place (in this study, the Clutha River), acts as a (place) anchor for participants that both co-generates the original experiences, such as fishing or sitting on a favourite spot watching the water, and holds them in participants’ minds over time as often vivid but always meaningful memories. These findings build on the foundations laid in Chapter Four which found support for the equal importance of place and experience in creating place meanings and extends the construct to include memory as a key element in creating meaning.

In *Clutha River Meanings* and throughout this study, time has been shown repeatedly to have one of the greatest influences on how meanings for places (and experiences) change, whether because of physical changes to places over time or changes in people’s activities, attitudes and perceptions which change the meanings they hold/once held for certain place-experiences (Brooks et al. 2006; Davenport and Anderson 2005). Many examples of such changes were interpreted and demonstrated in this chapter, particularly through the theme of participant relationships, whether with the Clutha itself, its places, or with the broader river/water environment. Support was found for the idea of participants having a meaningful relationship with the river in different ways that were emotional, cultural, familial, recreational, work related, often long-lived and fluid. Their diverse relationships were shown to change over time as their own lives and meanings for the river changed and as the Clutha itself changed (e.g. building the dams). These findings contribute to the broader literature by creating further support and particularly depth for Brooks et al.’s (2006) key study of people-place relationships with outdoor locations and also contributes further to expanding Gustafson (2001) and Manzo’s (2005) place meanings research by engaging with the meanings for a very substantial geographic feature/area (a river corridor). Although considerable overlap with these prior findings has been shown in *Clutha River Meanings*, I suggest that the results of this network highlight and increase the significance of, and need for, the incorporation of place
meanings in natural resource management and beyond, as called for by Williams (2008), Farnum et al. (2005) and Brooks et al. (2006).

In conclusion, Clutha River Meanings has shown that participants’ place meanings for the Clutha River encompass a very broad range and diversity of meanings including, and beyond, the recreational focus of this study, that can be described and understood in terms of meaningful memories and place-experience relationships. As such they contribute to the first research question by expanding understanding of what participants’ meanings were for the Clutha beyond their purely recreational experiences (addressed in the next chapter) through demonstrating the interconnected nature of these meanings. They also contribute to the second research question of this thesis regarding the creation of river meanings and their changes by identifying the importance of time and different kinds of change in the physical context of the river and the personal contexts of the participants. Finally, the findings also make an initial contribution to informing and expanding the third research question which addressed the making of places and the river itself, through illustrating the significance of memory in re-creating meaningful river places-experiences. This latter contribution is developed further in Chapter Seven, Changing Meanings when the many strands of this research are brought together to show how Clutha places have been made and unmade as change has shaped the river and its meanings.

5.3.3 Looking ahead to Chapter Six: Recreation Meanings

Chapter Five has built upon the place-meaning foundations laid in Chapter Four through analysing the broader place meanings of participants for the Clutha River and demonstrating how these are intertwined with recreational meanings, life meanings and personal experience meanings (amongst others). It has explored and illustrated what the diverse range of meanings held for the river are within the confines of the study, and it has suggested the importance of time and memory in both re-constructing place-experiences and in creating and changing the meanings that such places hold for participants. Through the findings of this chapter and Chapter Four, a broad, contextualised ‘meaning’ foundation has been laid for the analysis and discussion of the specific recreation meanings expressed by participants for the Clutha River which follows next. Chapter Six, Recreation Meanings engages with participants’ meanings of and for their recreational experiences and places on the river and how they were created and maintained as meaningful. The theme also explores
how and why these meanings have changed over time for some participants and if this has affected their wider meanings for the Clutha as discussed in the present chapter.
6.1 Introducing Chapter Six

So far, Chapters Four and Five have identified, analysed and discussed a diverse range of experiences, places and meanings associated with the Clutha River, and the ways that participants have constructed and expressed these. Meanings for the river and many of its places have been expressed within personal, emotional, work-related, family, social, cultural, historical, recreational and economic contexts, and have built up a multidimensional and dynamic concept of meaning creation and change within the geographic and conceptual frame that is the Clutha River. *Time* has been shown to be a primary element in meaning change for participants, whether articulated through changes in their own personal contexts and/or in broader, physical changes to the Clutha itself that have brought about a change or have fossilised (certain) meanings.

*Place, experience and time* (memory) - set within the wider socio-cultural discourses of the river discussed in Chapter One - have been shown to be the ‘active ingredients’ in creating a diversity of river meanings that I have interpreted, through the metaphor of a *participant-river relationship*, as showing the fluid, affective, nuanced and sometimes ambiguous nature of this relationship (Brooks *et al.* 2006; Casey 1987; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Williams 2008). It is from this position that Chapter Six addresses the specifically recreation meanings of the Clutha River for participants. However, both Chapter Four and particularly Chapter Five have already emphasised and illustrated the interweaving nature of recreational place-experience meanings with other, broader life course meanings of the river for some participants in the study (Godbey *et al.* 2005; Rojek 2005). Chapter Six explores and develops participants’ specific recreational meanings through analysing their creation, the diverse understandings of recreation within the study context, and how and if these meanings have changed. In doing so, *Recreation Meanings* focuses this part of the study on all three of the research questions outlined in Chapter One, and specifically aims at understanding the recreational meanings of the Clutha within the broader meaning contexts discussed in Chapters Four and Five.
6.1.1 Chapter structure

In line with the preceding analysis chapters, Chapter Six comprises one main section that describes and analyses the thematic network Recreation Meanings in detail. The analysis also highlights the findings that engage specifically with the research questions regarding participants’ river recreation experiences and meanings, and their place-experience-river relationships with the Clutha. The chapter finishes with a summary of the findings of the network, their contribution to existing literature and the research questions, and how Chapter Six links to the next chapter, Changing Meanings.

6.2 Clutha River Thematic Networks: Recreation Meanings

Before engaging with the different themes of the network, it would be pertinent to provide an overview of the different types of recreational activities that take place on the Clutha River (and Lakes Dunstan and Roxburgh) so the discussions that follow have greater context. Although only hinted at in Figures 6.1 and 6.2 (below), the range of participants’ recreational experiences both in the past and present are extensive and include many ‘activities’ from primarily water-based ones, such as jet boating, boating, water skiing, rafting, kayaking and canoeing, motorboat fishing, swimming and floating, to rather more terrestrial/bank-based activities such as fishing, hunting, cycling, bird-watching, running, walking, dog-walking, picnicking, sitting/viewing the river, and taking family trips to visit places of historical significance along the river.

6.2.1 Thematic Network: Recreation Meanings

As Figure 6.1 illustrates, the network comprises four organising themes and fourteen basic themes which bring together my interpretation of the elements of the recreational participants’ interviews that suggested themes of recreation meanings distinct from the broader river meanings already discussed in Chapter Five.

154 I find the use of the word ‘activities’, particularly within recreational contexts somewhat problematical as it often implies recreation that is highly physical, often challenging in some way, and something other than what are perhaps more ‘everyday’ types of recreation such as dog-walking, sitting and watching, reading, painting and other more sedentary types of recreation (or leisure). However ‘activity’ is still a useful word in this context as it helps signify the broader recreation ‘experience’ which may also comprise recreation-specific emotional, habitual, and ad hoc meaning elements.

155 Just as it sounds, children in particular are often allowed to float down the river from the Outlet section to Albert Town Bridge; popular with families in the Upper Clutha sections in general; buoyancy aids apparently optional! Please refer to Map 1 at the rear of this thesis.
Each organising theme is now explored in turn to reach an understanding of what *recreation meanings* encompasses in each thematic context and how the participants’ expressions supported this.

![Figure 6.1: Recreation Meanings Thematic Network](image)

*Figure 6.1: Recreation Meanings Thematic Network*

(Note: CR refers to Clutha River; LD to Lake Dunstan)

*Recreation experiences making meanings*

One of the opening questions in the interview guide (see Appendix B) was: what were participants’ recreational experiences of the Clutha River. This left the definition of what recreation was entirely up to them\(^{156}\). Through this open approach I aimed to gain a more insightful understanding of what recreation was considered to be by the participants in the context of the river. Most participants

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\(^{156}\) As discussed in Chapter Three, Section 3.3.4.
took time to reflect on what they thought of as their recreation, whilst also reflecting on their past recreational relationship with the river and lakes. These insights are presented in Figure 6.2.

"...I suppose special places are where you take other people and show them...a good place to go...and y’know if we’ve got people staying with us who haven’t been in the area you tend to show them what you think are the better places or the special places...I probably have [a connection] but I just appreciate the beauty of it and y’know, take someone for a bike ride – we’ll probably go down past the river..." [T8.52]

"...we have a definite connection with, with the place [CR]...everybody living in those areas, they can’t help but be connected to the landscape...because we’re living so close and so proximate..." [T13.31]

"...our family, we’ve just come back from a four-wheel drive experience...into the Nevis Basin...So, anyway, if that’s not recreation I don’t know what is; now we actually followed the trail of the Southern Raiders..." [T13.33/.35]

"Yeah, um, you always remember the days when you sit out there until nine o’clock at night, having BBQs and whatever yeah, just enjoying the lake and rivers and the scenery and the, yeah, green ground and things, yeah. It’s good." [T3.6]

"People come to areas where there’s water – through recreation – plus it looks nice. It’s a pleasure. I mean... why do you go for a walk – because of pleasure. And to go and walk around, along the edge of the lake or down there because of that pleasure, it makes you feel good. And surely a good part of life is feeling, about feeling good, y’know." [T5.41]

"But it really is wonderful to be moving down a river and to see the bottom of the river- I’m always looking at the bottom of the river and not only can you gauge your speed but you can see the bottom and it’s like a, it’s like a kind of floating on a sheet of cellophane, y’know. It’s kind of like a magic carpet ride; kind of like up in the air." [T10.33]

"It’s one that’s soothing; good for mental well-being; you can relax mentally and physically. When I’m racing, the river takes on a new form, it’s different. In Spring time, especially the evening, you have clear water, green willows, It’s soothing through the rapids." [T2.10]

"To me the Clutha is about relaxation, for instance it’s about a Friday afternoon relaxing paddle with a friend; a quiet wilderness experience; private – the river is set down in its valley and willow lined. The feeling of isolation is good, therapeutic." [T2.5]
Figure 6.2 illustrates the five key themes that were interpreted from the participants’ interviews as contributing towards the creation of meaningful recreational experiences and what some of these meanings encapsulated. From the range of themes, it can be seen that meanings were derived from recreation experiences through the multi-dimensional nature of place-experiences; the intertwining of pleasure and social connectivity; from the strongly sensory and visual aspects of experiences; from a sense of wilderness and escapism; and through experiences that were connected to specific Clutha places. Brought together, *Recreational experiences making meanings* interpreted participants’ diverse expressions of their recreation experiences as producing meanings that were naturally overlapping, multi-dimensional, and demonstrated the place-experience (and memory) construct developed in the previous two chapters.

All of the participants interviewed recalled personal stories relating to one or more of various recreational activities, some of which have already been touched upon in Chapters Four and Five. Many of the participants’ recreation stories interwove one or several of the significant *meaning* elements already discussed in Chapter Five (for example river places, emotional experiences, time and change), and therefore these have been built on to gain an understanding of how recreation experiences (and places) created meaning in this context. For example, within the theme of *multi-dimensional recreation practices*, the participant in Extract T8.52 talked about both his recreational experiences on the Lower Clutha and his idea of ‘special’ places on the river that he felt he had a connection with and liked to share with visitors. His main Clutha activities were walking and some cycling and it was the sense of pleasure and beauty he gained through these activities being specifically by the river (as opposed to just cycling in town for instance), that gave them meaning for him and stimulated his desire to share parts of those experiences with others. This seemingly straightforward combination of recreation activities in (what became) meaningful river places, the (aesthetic) pleasures of being by the river, and sharing the experiences with friends, merges into an insightful and multi-dimensional example of how river places and recreation experiences coalesce to create meaning for the participant (*vis-à-vis* pleasure; sharing; beauty).

Continuing the idea *multi-dimensional* recreational activities or practices, one of the participants reflected at length on the meaning and nature of recreation connected with the Clutha River and lakes for him and his *whanau* (extended family). Extracts T13.31 and T13.33/.35 in Figure 6.2 illustrate two of the key concepts that the participant discussed during his conversation on the much broader conceptions of recreation that he held as a Māori New Zealander. These addressed ideas of
his connection with the Clutha River as part of a cultural, people-land connection, practiced through everyday interaction with people and places along the Clutha and its catchment area [T13.31]. It also connected through his family’s practice of taking four-wheel drive trips along the Clutha and its hinterland to recall, refresh and retrace historical and cultural events and stories of importance to his family and whanau. As the second extract asserts, these driving trips were absolutely considered as recreation to the participant. It is an interesting thought that his retracing and visiting places and routes of cultural importance were as much acts of cultural and personal ‘re-creation’ as much as ‘recreation’, a point also noted in the broader recreation literature (for example, Hammitt 2004; Kaplan 1995; Riese and Vorkinn 2002).

During our conversation, the participant explained further about the history and significance of these trips for him [T13.13]:

“P: …the great grandmothers have brought me up and…took my sisters and brothers and myself to these places to visit our ancestress’ who are still there, but they’re not alive [chuckles].

AF: But they’re still alive in the places [referring to their spirit]?

P: Yes, and the stories remain with them because when we went to visit them, and as I’m going with that boy…[ref his youngest son] he and some of the younger ones have already been…and grandchildren, I take them in and go to the places and talk, so that is the modern link about the stories that were handed down to us first hand orally, by way of oral tradition…”

The participant’s Māori cultural tradition of renewing old stories anchored to places of significance and antiquity, by visiting and re-telling the stories is somewhat analogous to some of the other, non-Māori participants’ re-telling and sharing of their stories of adventure and recreation with their families, friends and even myself as an inquisitive researcher. The significance of such varied stories in the context of recalling lived experience has already been discussed in Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 Meaningful memories. In a recreational context, such stories have been interpreted in different ways, for example as evidence of the myriad ways people create meaning through their outdoor recreation, and how some recreationists use them to create and raise their social and recreational ‘capital’ (Kane and Tucker 2007; Riese and Vorkinn 2002). In Riese and Vorkinn’s (2002) Norwegian study of meaning creation in outdoor recreation they identified three important meaning-creation
strategies through participants stories of recreation. These entailed: ‘regaining a relationship to both people and places’; ‘as a strategy to sustain relationships to a social environment as well as to the past, and a way of living that is threatened by modernity’; and as a ‘focus on the body’ (2002: p.204). The second meaning, of sustaining relationships to the past, is comparable to the meanings expressed by participant T13 above, in which the participant ‘William’, in Riese and Vorkinn’s (2002: p.203) study, ‘Nevertheless, although [he] continues his grouse ‘hunt’ without shooting, meat and fish obtained from other kinds of hunting and fishing still have a certain importance. Thus ‘William’ still interprets his outdoor activities in the light of tradition and harvesting’. Although my participant (Extracts T13) is grounded in a Māori cultural context, a similar meaning construction goal can be observed with his Norwegian counterpart.

The idea of cultural recreation and sustenance through visiting places and stories also links back to the theme of *Meaningful memories* (Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1), which posited and supported the idea of a co-constituting and reciprocal relationship between experiences, places and memories that created and sustained certain Clutha place-experience meanings for participants. It was also argued in Chapter Two, Section 2.4.4, that such recreational storytelling was an important dimension in the concept of place making through its social constructivist element. Individual and group stories (of recreation or used in recreation; e.g. Kane and Tucker 2007) were posited as reflecting one way of expressing such experiences-in-places (after Manzo 2005) that made places simultaneously and co-constitutively. It could be suggested that the participant in T13 similarly maintained his cultural meanings for his *whanau’s* spiritual *places* through the recalling and retelling of their stories of people, experiences, and significant places from the past. Although I suggest there is a slightly different perspective for Māori, one interpreted as literally keeping the past alive through recreational/cultural practices in the present [cf. Stephenson 2008; see Chapter Two, Section 2.2.3, *Place as process, culture and value*], this is still considered comparable with the broader place-experience-memory construct in which memories/stories are seen as keeping past or lost places ‘alive’ and meaningful for other participants (see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 *Meaningful memories*; Casey 1987). It is further suggested that for this Māori participant, the recreational/cultural trips held as much recreational meaning as they did cultural meaning (as he asserts in Extract T13.33/.35), indicating that such ‘cultural recreation’ was a significant meaning in itself. In conclusion, the fact that both kinds of recreation/re-creation stories generate and sustain places

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157 A parallel can be drawn with cultural heritage tourism practices in which visiting cultural sites is the norm and taken as the purpose for undertaking such types of tourism (Timothy and Boyd 2003).
and meanings through present recreation experiences is significant and another example of their complex and multi-dimensional nature. Likewise, this example expands our understandings of different cultural concepts of recreation not currently conceptualised in outdoor recreation by becoming a practice of meaningful re-creation of both self and place through deepening the significance of its temporal and meaning perspectives (Brooks et al. 2006; Riese and Vorkinn 2002). This in turn has the potential to bring greater insight to recreation’s role in making and sustaining places – both of the past, in the present and for the future.

Intertwined with the multi-dimensional nature of recreation experience meanings were a number of other themes that I interpreted as simultaneously creating and holding meanings for participants, expressed through the varied stories of their diverse recreational relationships with the Clutha. These included meanings of socialising, relaxing and the pleasure of just being by the water [T3.6 and T5.41]; meanings of the river as places to positively experience wilderness and isolation [T6.15 and T2.5]; and the river as providing distinctive, sensory, water-based experiences [T10.33 and T2.10]. Different aspects of all three of these recreation themes have been noted previously within other, broader themes that addressed meanings of the importance of being by water (Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1, People-environment relationship), sections of the river having individual character (Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1, Seeing the Clutha theme), and the Clutha as generating vivid stories/memories (Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1, Meaningful memories). Such an overlap is considered to be another reflection of the intertwined nature of participants’ life experiences and place relationships with the Clutha, and draws attention to the argument for not addressing or engaging with recreation (and leisure) as a separate experiential phenomenon, but rather understanding it as part of, and within people’s whole lives and life-course (Freysinger 1999; Harahousou 2006; Kelly 1999). As Kelly (1999: p. 66) noted ‘Leisure [and recreation] is not detached from its social and cultural contexts, but is a dimension of relatively self-determined action within the contexts. Its meaning is not in its products as much as in the experience, not in its forms as much as its expression’.

The social, relaxation and pleasure meanings expressed by participants for their recreational experiences was a common thread in many of our conversations and reflects a well-reported view in recreation literature (for example, Bricker and Kerstetter 2002; Brooks et al. 2006; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Kyle and Chick 2004). The extracts in Figure 6.2 [T3.6 and T5.41] emphasise the relaxing qualities of both recreating and just being by the water, and this was compounded when
shared with friends and family. From a slightly different sharing perspective, another participant described how he had shared his private access to the Clutha River, near the Lindis Valley, with other families over the years [T9.3]:

“We have families who have been coming camping here for Christmas time bringing their extended families for several generations.”

The same participant had also been recreationally involved in his younger years with the many kayaking races that took place on the Upper Clutha, largely in a marshalling capacity with his jet boat, and had shared many mini-adventures and occasional rescues. Providing a different perspective again, another participant (a skilled kayaker who had paddled the river for over twenty-five years) made the following comment after I asked him if he had any particular recreation experiences on the Clutha or meaningful places that came to mind [T2.4]:

“Not really, as the Clutha is too easy to paddle. I’ll paddle down the river with friends but it’s more of a gathering-social point for group paddles.”

Considering his close and almost life-long recreational involvement with the river, it surprised me that he had so little say (in my opinion) of his past and present recreation experiences and meanings. However, the participant made it quite clear during our conversation (through repeating his comment) that his present meanings of (easy) social paddles and the wilderness qualities of the river (Extract T2.5 in Figure 6.2) were his (current) meanings for the Clutha. How they might have differed from his past place-experience meanings is difficult to know, although one might surmise that challenge, competition, and the more intense socialising that sometimes accompanies serious recreation, could have been previously held meanings when he was a competitive multi-sportsman. Although it is not possible to reflect any further on how and why his (presumably\(^{158}\)) different past meanings and experiences for the river had changed, this example does provide insight into the importance of the social qualities that recreating on the river provided.

Focusing on the meaning of the river as stimulating distinctive recreational experiences, this was illustrated by participants’ expressions that I interpreted as being centred around strongly sensory

\(^{158}\) The participant did comment that he had been (and still was) a very active multisport participant in past years and had kayaked the Clutha prior to the construction of the Clyde Dam and Lake Dunstan, indicating a level of recreational skill and experience that was no longer challenged in the same way by the (dammed) waters of the Clutha.
meanings of their recreational experiences (cf. Stephenson 2008). Extracts T2.10 and T10.33 (in Figure 6.2) capture elements of the evocative and sensual expressions of these meanings. Another participant described some of the subtle differences and unique characteristics that kayaking on the Clutha had meant for her [T7.21]:

“Well you don’t get landscape in a river. You get surprise, go round a corner, you get surprise. Whereas when you’re, we were coming down this water race - it was real head-space stuff - it was kind a looking out, way out looking at the top of forests and looking at things and thinking, this is so bizarre. So I’ve become very accustomed to being embedded down in the river...And up on the water race you didn’t get, get the smell of the river and of course there’s no noise because it’s flat water but you just didn’t get um, any of the sensations that being in a river gives you. In checking out how far am I to the bank, yeah.”

Focusing further on the different sensory aspects, the changing spatial perspective that being on the river provides was described by another participant when talking about his experiences of boating on the Alexandra-Doctors Point reach [T6.13; my emphasis]:

“It’s the complete difference, from the aspect of what you’re viewing, because you’re viewing from the river instead of looking at a river and that’s a fun aspect that no-one gets to experience.”

Similarly, a participant summed up his meanings of kayaking on the river (specifically the Upper Clutha) in a way that, to me, brought together these very unique sensuous, spatial and aesthetic water qualities in a very emotional and place-focused description [T2.9; my emphasis]:

“Its meanings for me are for recreation only. You get different feelings from the river – lakes don’t have the same life-form – rivers are moving water. The Clutha, there’s no other river like it, because it’s in a box canyon, it’s green, it meanders and has soft rapids.”

These simultaneous, strongly sensory and situated or place-based experiential meanings of participants’ recreation are a theme that run not just through their specific recreation experiences, but through many of the non-recreational experiences discussed in Chapters Four and Five (see Sections 4.3.1 and 5.2.1). A number of the extracts discussed previously expressed the emotional and affective meanings the Clutha both created and held for participants (for example, in Section 4.3.1, CR as natural threat, Extract T1.5 and Section 5.2.1, A personal relationship, Extract
When brought together with the social, sensory and wilderness meanings illustrated in Figure 6.2, these demonstrate the diversity and potency of meaning generation that recreation and broader experiences with the Clutha River can engender in participants. Framing their recreational place-experiences (as opposed to Manzo’s (2005) ‘experience-in-place’) in this manner places an equal emphasis on the river as a co-constructor of the meanings of participant’s recreation experiences, as much as the participants or activities themselves (their ‘experiences’). This can be interpreted further in two possible ways, the second of which links back to the research philosophy issues of critical realism and ANT, discussed in Chapter Three, Section 3.2.3. The first way of interpreting the river’s role in creating meaning is to position it as a ‘place’ – whether conceived as one place or a collection of places\footnote{As discussed in Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1, Knowing the Clutha, Seeing the Clutha theme.} - staying within the conceptual framework of place developed in Chapter Two (Section 2.2; Figure 2.2; and specifically Section 2.4). Therefore the Clutha as a ‘place’ in this context takes on a multi-faceted and strongly ontological role:

- being the unique place (or co-holder/co-generator) of (the) recreation experience;
- the location of its (recreation) meanings spatially, cognitively and symbolically;
- for some, the place of repeated (recreation) experiences and familiarity (akin to dwelling);
- as both a product, producer and anchor of ongoing practices and processes such as recreation, river management, physical change (e.g. dams), valuation and cultural practices;
- as the dynamic intersection of multiple, simultaneous meanings (participants’, social, cultural, global).

Through this conceptualisation of place, the Clutha River is not just the place (as in spatial location) of participants’ recreational activities, histories and meanings, but it creates and encapsulates the very possibility of such recreational meanings that, reciprocally, continue to create and sustain the dynamic and multi-dimensional meanings of the Clutha itself (cf. Casey 1987; Malpas 1999). Framing recreation experience-(river) place relationships in this way contrasts strongly with the dominantly utilitarian and resource-focused framing (and management) of recreation activities and settings discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.3.5 and 2.4.3 (see also Brooks et al. 2006; Kruger et al. 2008). As Williams stated:
‘...the thinking of resources as places is to recognize...the meanings themselves are not subject to the kinds of rational control envisioned in 20th century traditions of scientific management...Instead, the individual and collective acts of recreation and other users or stakeholders...make (and sometimes resist) competing claims on a place.’ (2008: p.24)

An alternative way of interpreting the Clutha’s role in creating meaning for participants is through engaging with the paradigmatic position of Actor-Network-Theory (ANT, outlined in Chapter Three, Section 3.2.3), in which the river is positioned as an actor (or actant) with agency and influence to create meaning within a network of relations or associations (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). As a way to illustrate this idea more clearly, ANT was used in a study of the Pielisjoki River, Finland, by Kortelainen (1999) to re-interpret and unite a realism and social constructivism view of the use of the river by the Finnish forest industry. In the authors’ view ‘the river can be described as an actor-network: a combination of different non-human and human actors constructing the river in a material, social and cultural sense’ (1999: p.237). He also suggested that certain elements, such as the spatial dimension of networks (which are never entirely local and overlap/interconnect with many other networks through the various actors), and changes that reshape the network, such as economic, regulatory and actor changes, are intrinsic to its operation. It could be argued that by interpreting the Clutha in this way, the river also becomes an actor in an interconnected network of associations. These Clutha networks have created and shaped participants’ relations and meaning for themselves, their activities/experiences (recreational and non-recreational), their family and friends, and the river; and all within a wider network of natural\textsuperscript{160}, regulatory, economic, cultural, and socio-historical actors and processes.

Whichever interpretation is taken ultimately\textsuperscript{161}, both positions argue for the increased recognition of the fundamental role of \textit{place} in creating recreation experience meanings for participants, in line with the wider argument made in Chapters Four and Five: that place and experience are equally co-constructing of meaning. Through this argument recreation meanings, of experiences or places (or both), are placed in a much wider array of contexts, whether as part of participants’ life-courses, as part of socially constructed discourses of the river or recreation, or as a part of a network of relations and processes that create meaning and structure.

\textsuperscript{160} For instance, Kortelainen suggests ‘glacial processes, gravitation, hydrological circulation, microbes, fish and vegetation’ (1999: p.237).

\textsuperscript{161} In this thesis the ‘place’ position is being argued for.
With this in mind, the next theme in the network **Recreational Meanings** discusses the idea of ‘family’ that recreation meanings represented for some participants.

**Family Meanings of CR Recreation**

A less frequent, but significant theme that was supported by a number of participants’ comments was the meaning of recreation as specific time spent with their family, whether their immediate family of parents, siblings and children or more intergenerational family such as grandchildren or grandparents. The extracts in Figure 6.3 illustrate some of the different ways that these family meanings of recreation were described and expressed.

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**Figure 6.3:** **Recreation Meanings**: Family meanings of CR Recreation (CR refers to Clutha River; LD - Lake Dunstan)
The organising theme of family meanings overlaps with the theme of socialising\textsuperscript{162}, illustrated in Figure 6.2 in Recreation experiences making meanings, but was interpreted as being a much stronger expression of specifically family-focused meanings for participants, rather than the general, social nature of sharing recreation experiences identified in the previous theme. Figure 6.3 highlights family recreation on Lake Dunstan as a time of bonding and coming together for one participant and his children, through his family’s enjoyment of water skiing and in particular watching his children engage with the activity and develop [Extract T3.11]. Another participant, who hadn’t kayaked the river for many years, when asked what were the meanings of his recreation time on the river for him instantly responded with “family time” [Extract T7.38; P1]. He provided an interesting temporal perspective to his response in that he actually referred back to the meanings of his recreation at the time he was still recreating (in the 1970s-80s) and not just in the present moment. His memory of the meaning was also interesting in that during his conversation with his partner (P2), he reflected on their daughter’s aversion to kayaking but how she still remained involved as part of their family recreation by simply being present. This comment presents a slightly contradictory perspective of meaning, through the participant’s own admission that even though their recreation meant to him that “we were all in it together”, in reality they were not “in it together”. However, this does not appear to have diminished the meaning of river recreation for him as family time, suggesting that as a distinct meaning, it had endured.

This idea of enduring meanings of recreation on the Clutha and lakes as family time is supported by the other extracts in Figure 6.3, which refer to both current intergenerational meanings of recreation on Lake Dunstan [Extract T1.10] and recreational meanings fostered through vivid memories of river recreation experiences shared with family members [T5.14]. The latter extract in particular illustrated the very strong memory that the participant had of teaching his step-daughter to fish on the Upper Clutha River when she was young. During our conversation the participant had reflected on his own long relationship with both the Clutha River and his love of fishing with his father [T5.56]:

“Yeah but I think the shape, the shape was already there before I got here. I was [mad about it] it’s in the blood basically since I was a wee kid, since I was able to walk I was out fishing and walking the river bank with my father and fishing…”

\textsuperscript{162} The theme ‘Memorable experiences involve relaxing, socialising and pleasure by the water’.
The story of his time with his step-daughter was the first story to come to mind when I asked him about his memorable recreational experiences on the Clutha\textsuperscript{163}. This suggests that these memories and reflections illustrate both his love of fishing and strongly professed place-relationship with the Clutha River that had been further engaged and encouraged through his shared generational family recreation experiences with the river. Different concepts and issues of family recreation and leisure have been addressed by various authors spanning both recreation and leisure studies\textsuperscript{164} (for example, Freeman and Zabriskie 2002; Harrington 2006; Shaw 1997). Within this substantial body of literature, Harrington (Daly 2001 cited in Harrington 2006: p.429) has noted that in the context of family leisure, ‘family time is all about ‘the social production of memories’, which strengthens family identity. These memories are meant to last beyond the living memories of individual family members to bridge the past and present and extend into the future’. Freeman and Zabriskie (2002: p.136) also noted that research on family recreation outdoor experiences suggested ‘...that there is a strong relationship between family participation in outdoor recreation and family cohesiveness’. They also commented that ‘...discussing and talking about the activities was critical to their [families’] experience’ by providing ‘...a whole lot to talk about’ (2002: p.137).

Drawing these two perspectives together with the participants’ comments in Figure 6.3, it is considered that the meaning of family time and generational sharing in participants’ recreation experiences on the river reflects aspects of these broader viewpoints. The creation of meaningful memories, and strengthening family bonding and identity through using recreation as a generator and focus of meaning/stories, support the themes interpreted above. However, these are mainly psychological explanations to understanding family leisure and recreation, and there appears to be little (if any) literature that addresses the role of place in these family meanings (beyond addressing them as a ‘setting’ for recreation and leisure opportunities; Kyle and Chick 2004). Within the context of the current study, place is positioned as being central or fundamental to the creation of meaningful experience, so in terms of the river as making memorable recreational experiences interwoven with family meanings, this is a gap in knowledge which this study has identified.

Different cultural concepts of intergenerational recreation and relationships with the Clutha River and lakes were touched upon in the preceding thematic branch (Recreational experiences making

\textsuperscript{163} Although I wish, in hindsight, I had asked him if his now, grown-up daughter had continued to fish.

\textsuperscript{164} Note: a considerable amount of this family literature is focused upon marital relationships, parent-child relationships and the role of leisure and recreation programmes in dysfunctional families. Harrington (2006: p.429) notes there is a need for research on shared family leisure involving all family members.
meanings) when discussing one participant’s particular recreational practices of re-visiting ancestral places and routes with his family (Extract T13.33 in Figure 6.2). These ideas strongly connect with the present theme of Family meanings of CR recreation in several ways - through their intergenerational and genealogical references, through sharing his early trips with his “grandmothers” to ancestral places, the participant’s trips with his own children and grandchildren to these places - and from the wider standpoint of these recreational practices as forming a link or bridge between his past and present Māori cultural knowledges. Stephenson (2008), in her cultural values of landscape study, noted a similar emphasis by her Māori participants on the family connections and genealogical associations with the landscapes of the Akaroa and Bannockburn areas. For example ‘many past events and practices were recalled along with the places they occurred in and what could still be seen there today. Some landscape features were named after these families or related in some way to them, and this additional linkage provided a further sense of belonging’ (2008: p. 132).

Such cultural knowledges, genealogical associations and intergenerational practices with the landscape, many of which were similarly expressed through stories, closely mirrors the recreational findings of the Family meanings theme in Figure 6.3 and Extract T13.33 in Figure 6.2. Together I suggest they provide strong evidence for the ‘...valued practices, traditions, processes and other dynamics within the landscape...' (Stephenson 2008: p.133) and places that participants in both studies created meaning and value through. In this way, reframing recreation activities with family as family recreational practices that are integral with place-experience meanings, contributes to a more culturally inclusive understanding of recreational practices and places.

The idea of participants’ recreation experiences as having meaning through connecting past and present (and future) cultural practices links to the next thematic branch of Recreation Meanings that addresses, in greater depth, different and specifically cultural understandings of recreation.

Recreation continuing long-term cultural practices

One of several key threads running throughout this study is the temporal or ‘longitudinal’ perspective that underlies both my research methodology and consequently many of the participant

165 Stephenson (2008) also noted that many of the landscape values were shared by both Māori and non-Māori participants.
166 Known in Māori as whakapapa.
conversations that I shared in. One way that this thread presented itself in my interpretations that was partly explored in the preceding section *family meanings*, was through the different ways that cultural practices contributed to both past and present understandings of recreation and its meanings. This interpretation forms the next thematic branch of *Recreation Meanings: Recreation continuing long-term cultural practices* and is illustrated in Figure 6.4.

“...that they're rich in histories and meaningful places which are interwoven with present recreational meanings.

“CR rich in histories and meaningful places which are interwoven with present recreational meanings.”

They can [experience] it, they can touch it, they can see it, y'know they can feel it, the rapids and they can hear the history of the – there's an amazing amount of history with this river that I do a lot of...the early Māori who used to use it as a crossing up here, they used to use it as a pathway to the cent-, to the West Coast to get their greenstone, they used to come right from Ruapuke at Bluff...come down this old Māori track, for obvious reasons down this side of the Blukes, to cross the river here.” [T11.22]

“I think what they've done at Cromwell is good; they've got a recreational thing for those people who like recreational things. But like the people from Moeraki were talking, and I mean I have to admit that they're right – we have our rivers and our lakes as kai y'know...” [T12.35]

“We went out first thing every day [when he was a child], sometimes twice a day, and quite often we were still out at night and during the middle of the night, whether on the lakes or the rivers we were out fishing, wherever we happen to be inland...that's our staple diet.” [T13.44]

“So, and this is a problem because they have one set, set thing for the history and Ngai Tahu is just a group of people that came down here very recently – about the time of Captain Cook – and it's not a case of slanging match of who was with who but their history is interlocked with ours, our history but this doesn't seem to be recognised [chuckles].” [T13.39]

“...at the Bell’s Lane end – there is a chair, it's not serviceable now but the rope and the framework and some of the timber’s still there and it sits there... it's just 3 or 4 hundred metres from the bend... That's the interesting thing about the river is how it changes in very short times and in that particular it is in a very distinct steep rocky canyon and the water is very deep and very clear as you drift down and above you is the chair and then it opens out again [T9.33/.34]

“...we have our rivers, and our lakes as kai mahinga...” [T13.20]

“Māori customary practices (e.g. *kai mahinga*) as meaningful and traditional elements of recreation.

“...Māori CR meanings through stories and visiting ancestral places/trails as part of current recreation.

“...Current Māori meanings founded on traditional practices and knowledges.

“...Tensions in *whanau* meanings of the CR.

“Recreation continuing long-term cultural practices.

“Bulrush is the word, it's made out of bulrushes in the English talk. We call it the *ropore*. Yes so they made or we still do make *mogihi* [rafts] but we make *mogihi* for recreation really and family gatherings and some of them float well and some of them don't, depending on the skill of the creators [laughs]. So um, and they all wear...lifejackets whereas in our day we wore blown up kelp tatua [belts]... and that was to keep us afloat.” [T13.20]

“Well, and so that's the source of the knowledge... In my later years of taking the family and revisiting places where I took them as small children before...” [T13.15-.17]
As the extracts indicate, this theme is predominantly represented by just two of the participants, both of whom acknowledged a mixed Māori-Pākehā cultural heritage, and it is therefore important to acknowledge, for methodological transparency, that much of this theme is derived from their perspectives. However, this in itself is considered to be a strength of the research methodology as it allows the many different but sometimes unique cultural perspectives of individuals to be highlighted, analysed and discussed, alongside the more collective, shared and synthesised perspectives.

The five themes in Figure 6.4 represent the interlinked expressions of the cultural heritage meanings of recreation on the Clutha River for some participants. Central to this interpretation is the idea that certain cultural practices - both contemporary and historical - such as the Māori cultural practices of food gathering (kai mahinga) and raft building (mogihi), hold significance (expressed as stories and cultural knowledges) for these participants as much broader, culturally-specific conceptions of recreation. As Extracts T12.35 and T13.44 suggest, rivers such as the Clutha were and remain sources of diverse foods particularly fish, eels and birds for many Māori, and although such customary practices were usually seen as holding life-supporting meanings, it is clear from my participants’ comments that these practices can also be considered as recreational (Tipa 2009).

How far back in time the recreational meaning of such cultural practices can be extended is difficult to discern as this interpretation is limited to mainly one participant who expressed much of his knowledge as current and past meanings coetaneously. For example, during a story he recounted about the earliest people of the South Island and their traditional hikoi or inland treks, he commented [T13.6]:

“So that was a huge organised trip...and the purpose was for recreation, yes, but that was also for a change of diet, which if you call eating and feasting recreation, it would certainly be so.”

In this way, the participant gave his own recreational interpretation of his people’s past cultural practices whilst relaying to me some of the cultural stories he had learnt, making it difficult to separate the two. My conclusion is that some (perhaps many) such practices in fact had dual or even multiple meanings – so subsistence and recreation meanings – comparable to how many place meanings have or create multiple and simultaneous meanings (Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005).

Other examples of the continuation of traditional practices and knowledges into current recreational practices were the participant stories of raft making, swimming and making lifebelts from kelp.
Interestingly, in the extract the participant acknowledges the change modernity has brought to some of these practices through his reference to lifejackets used by his family nowadays, as opposed to the traditional *tatau* made and worn in his day (early to mid-Twentieth Century). The same participant talking about his wider cultural relationships with the Clutha and Otago, later reflected [Extract 13.38]:

“We’re immersed in it, we’ve been brought up, you know, we’ve hunted in the area, have gathered food, we’ve administered to whoever; to us, the *tangata whenua*\(^ {167}\) of the place who keep the fires going, you must know the way of welcome too here, I mean they are the people, the people that roll up their sleeves and take the time to live in the area you know, and keep the place right and earn money for overseas. We move with the times, we’re in 2011 but we mustn’t lose the past as well...We must know the past in order to live in the present to move into the future, it’s as simple as that.”

The quite profound sentiment expressed in the final lines of the extract emphasises the importance placed by the participant on the need to *retain* and *pass on* their traditional practices and knowledges to future generations, whether through particular cultural/recreation activities or in more diverse ways. As Smith (2004) noted in her study of Māori *waiata tangi* (traditional songs of lament) and feelings for place in the Taranaki region\(^ {168}\), this feature of Māori cultural practice is central to the creation and maintenance of their identity on multiple levels (for instance, individual, *whanau*, *iwi* and *tūrangawaewae*\(^ {169}\)). Smith (2004: p.14) also commented that from her perspective as a Māori researcher:

‘Reacquainting yourself with places associated with the ancestors, and with the exploits that gave rise to the names of those places, is a reflective yet exhilarating experience. It forms part of your own history, which you will import to descendants whose lives you are able to touch...The waiata contain frequent recitals of place names, as if it was found necessary to articulate the obvious. Names carry the history of places in a network of relationships, and it is inconceivable that such a rich tapestry of references should disappear.’

\(^{167}\) ‘People of the land’.

\(^{168}\) A region on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand, roughly midway between Auckland and Wellington.

\(^{169}\) *Tūrangawaewae* literally translated means ‘a place to stand’ and which Smith defines as ‘a place where one has undisputed rights through ancestral delegation’ (Smith 2004: p.13).
This idea of places as a constituent of knowledge transmission was also touched upon in the previous two thematic branches when discussing the multi-dimensional and intergenerational meanings of family recreation through revisiting ancestral sites along the Clutha valley (see for instance Extract T13.33 in Figure 6.2). Extract T13.15/.17 in Figure 6.4 expands this further by stating that cultural stories play a significant role in this transmission of traditional knowledge in tandem with the family recreational visits. When I asked the participant if he could share some of his stories of the Clutha River with me he laughed (kindly) and then explained, as the extract says, that his whanau had many stories of the Clutha and even more involving the wider Clutha catchment, hinting that neither of us probably had sufficient spare time to get through that many! Of the several stories he did relate, one important one explained the original name of the Clutha (Matau/Mata-au) [T13.31]:

“Right so the Clutha River – its name is Matau – and the name was made for that river, it meant –‘ Mata’ means ‘a headland’ and ‘au’ means a land place. And it’s where the great waka, Uruoa landed and that headland is at the mouth of the Clutha River, so that’s Matau – with a long thing, and some of them call the Mata-au, well that’s all right, that’s just different whanau, and they say it relates to the current of water that comes down, so there’s two stories straight away. So our story is that the great waka, Uruoa landed at the headland of the Clutha River and then they went up and explored the river and they lived at the mouth of that river, until they explored the area and then they moved south.”

Another story recalled the importance of the Clutha for annual hikoi or treks into the interior of the South Island [Extract T13.6]:

“And in those days – I’m talking about 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 hundred years ago – and they [the women] kept the trails open for the coming of the main group of people who after the last frost would go on a hikoi – hikoi really means a trek...So that was a huge organised trip, foray into the inner lands and the purpose was for recreation, yes but that was also for a change a diet, which if you call eating and feasting recreation, it would certainly be so.”

The recalling and passing on of such cultural stories, especially during his own family and whanau trips - which could be interpreted as modern recreational reproductions of hikoi – is significant for expanding present understandings of recreational meaning for the Clutha River by engaging such indigenous/cultural practices as recreation. This creation of meaning through the entwining of (past
and present) cultural practices and knowledge with participants’ experiences of recreation on the Clutha River, is supported further by the extracts in T9.33 and T11.22 in Figure 6.4. These extracts provide alternative examples of how some of the non-Māori participants talked of the histories of the Clutha River that were intertwined with their own recreational and work-related experiences and meanings of the river. Extract T11.22 in particular weaves these different threads to produce meaning that embraces the physicality of the water that can be directly experienced, the history of the river experienced through being (re)told, and a coming together of the two through recalling the specific use of the river as a pathway by earlier Māori. Yet again such a simultaneity of recreational experiences, places and (multi-dimensional) meanings, as I see them, points to the need to reframe (river and outdoor) recreation in a much wider, place-based, socio-historical contextual and culturally inclusive understanding (Manzo 2008; Williams 2008; Williams and Carr 1993).

Such elements of cultural and historical meaning however are not without their issues and even within this theme, it was clear that other versions of cultural knowledges and histories for places and events existed, even within Māori culture. Extract T13.39 in Figure 6.4 hints at and acknowledges the different understandings and meanings held by different whanau of the Clutha River. Although only one participant expressed the idea that there were tensions amongst different whanau interpretations, and I was unable to obtain an alternative perspective (for example, from a Kāi Tahu iwi participant) to explore this more deeply, it was an issue that I had been made aware of. My position is expressed in the extract below [T13.38] along with the response from one of the participants, that forms part of the conversation featured in Extract T13.39.

“AF: They’ve become a representative view, and it’s very easy for councils, for whoever, to consult with Kāi Tahu because it is easy in that sense. Whereas actually, appreciating the different interpretations, the different other views of people’s history with their land and their rivers and their people, that’s actually very important and that stands to be lost by having this blanket kind of...what Māori means...and it’s important to recognise.

P: Well that is good because that’s a view, that’s an innocent view, it’s an independent view. Someone who’s not embroiled in the politics etc, and that’s how you’ve viewed it. And strangely enough that’s how we view it as well, yes we do, exactly the same so why is that; and the reason must be that we’re looking at what is actually taking place, and using that as data we come to a common conclusion. And I think many people in Kāi Tahu are, come to us in preference to going elsewhere because um, although Kāi Tahu know the people and places,
we also know the people and the places, but there’s a different, there’s a different edge put to the sword, you might say, and those histories are not written..."

That different places, events and their associated meanings have different interpretations and representations which are subject to ongoing change and re-presentation is not a new concept at all (Smith 2004). Add in not just ‘traditional’ colonialism but ‘indigenous’ colonialism as well (i.e. tribes/regional groups dominating and colonising other tribes/regional groups even in the present) and the picture starts to become blurred indeed. How often this tension is acknowledged in research or regulatory decision-making processes is also a different matter that requires attention (Kidman 2007). As a theme this could (and perhaps should) form a thesis in itself, but in the pragmatic confines of this research, it will simply remain an important point of reflection that needs to be acknowledged when considering the issue of whose history and places are being (re)presented and re-created beyond any Māori-Pākehā divide (ibid.).

The idea of change is the link to the next and final theme of the thematic network Recreation Meanings and leads into ideas of how participants’ recreation meanings have changed for them and why.

Changing Recreation Meanings

The diverse recreation meanings of the Clutha River explored so far have engaged with ideas of water as sensory pleasure, socialising, wilderness, family time, continuity of cultural meanings and shared meaningful places and histories. The final theme in Recreation Meanings explores the changing meanings of recreation on the Clutha River for some of the participants, specifically focusing upon two themes that were interpreted as the key drivers in this change: increasing pressure on recreation places and the changing patterns of participants’ recreation. Figure 6.5 illustrates some of the participant expressions of these two themes. Changes in the broader, non-recreational meanings of the Clutha River (addressed previously in Chapters Four and Five) are addressed as a separate thematic network in Chapter Seven, Changing Meanings, as they engage with expressions of change beyond specifically recreational meanings to encapsulate much broader concepts of environmental, social and political change described by participants.

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170 For example, the European colonisation of New Zealand for instance.
As discussed so far in this analysis, *change* is viewed as an inevitable part of the recreation meaning generation process. As a theme, it was expressed in a number of ways by participants, but was interpreted largely through their varied comments on how recreational activities and practices in general had changed along sections of the Clutha River and lakes (for example, Extracts T5.9-.11 and T8.47 in Figure 6.5) and how their own personal recreational activities on the Clutha had changed over time (Extracts T5.19 and T7.24). The perceived increase in recreational activity along the Clutha River and lakes was expressed by over half of the participant group and reflected both positive and negative viewpoints. For example, one participant talking positively about the current development of the walking and bike trails along the Clutha River, expressed the following [T4.38]:

“Yeah well there’s more and more effort going into recreational facilities – walkways and tracks and things – it’s opening up our country more and more accessible. And mountain bikes have been a great invention I think [laughs] although y’know, they’re competing with walking people as well which I can see that as being an issue going down it – going down the track. You know you’re zooming along on a track on a bike and someone’s walking and someone’s gonna – sometimes there’s not a lot of space for everyone and bikes are going faster than walkers and I can see it from both sides – I am a walker as well as a biker and you’ve just got to be careful I suppose.” [T8.47]
“...it’s possible that we’ll have a trail running right below us and that’s a good thing. People’s attitudes need to, need to change a bit about [sic] one person's picnic is another person’s bike ride or walk or whatever.”

Extract T5.9-.11 in Figure 6.5 provided an alternative and more negative viewpoint on the expansion of the trails for walking and biking access that was also partly echoed in Extract T8.47, although the latter also provided a middle ground perspective which welcomed the expansion, whilst recognising the impacts they were creating at the same time. The wider changing recreation patterns focused presently in the Upper Clutha were seen by some participants as reflecting even broader changes in New Zealand society in terms of leisure and work patterns, as the participants in Extract T7.12 note:

“P1:...But it wasn’t – now when you drive around and you see cars with lots and lots of kayaks in New Zealand – it wasn’t so common then [referring to families kayaking together in the 1970s].
P2: And it’s not – well I get the impression of course - there’s not so many families, or I get the impression from [P1] that it’s not, it’s [kayaking] not a family thing anymore...So the nature of its changed, but then you know New Zealand society’s changed, y’know, in so far as people don’t have weekends off.”

This consciousness of the changes in recreation along the Clutha River, although not directly expressed as changing their own meanings (other than in Extract T5.9-.11), was something that had influenced participants’ meanings of recreating on the river and lakes. However, as a driver of change it was not alone in re-shaping participants’ recreation meanings for the Clutha, as their personal recreational activities also appeared to have a role. During many of the interviews participants referred to their changing recreational interests as a natural element of their own changing needs and life circumstances. Extracts T5.19 and T7.24 in Figure 6.5 support this observation and highlight respectively, the importance that factors such as a sense of place and (dis)continued participation played in both maintaining and altering participant’s meanings of their recreation. For example, Extract T7.24 was interesting for the multi-dimensional perspective that the participant provided when he commented that if he had continued kayaking on the Clutha River it would have been *more meaningful* for him in the present than it was, and yet at the same time he retained good memories of his past recreational experiences (and this was therefore meaningful in my view). Add to this his own diminishing recreational activities and meanings for the river,
contrary to his wife's continued involvement in kayaking the river, and a (partial) understanding of the complex, nuanced and interconnected strands of his changing meanings is reached.

In summarising the theme Changing Recreation Meanings it is suggested that, as observed in other parts of this analysis, meanings are rarely static and are subject to influence from external factors such as the changing recreation activities of others and physical changes to recreation places, and internal factors such as participants' own changing recreational needs and desires. When grounded in the wider context of participant's lives and meanings of places, as Figure 6.5 illustrates, these changing recreation meanings were seen as having the potential to also change the meanings held for places, suggesting in turn, that they will continue to change as participants progress with their lives.

6.3 Recreation Meanings: Summary of Findings

This final section of Chapter Six summarises the findings from each theme discussion of Recreation Meanings, synthesising and linking their key conclusions and contribution to the broader research contexts discussed in Chapter One.

6.3.1 Themes

Recreation experiences making meanings

This theme built on the place-experience-meaning construct developed in Chapters Four and Five, by showing the multi-dimensionality and multiplicity of recreation experience meanings and practices that were expressed by participants. These recreational meanings were interpreted as combining or coalescing many different, simultaneous meanings (such as socialising, pleasure, wilderness, relaxation, significant river places and cultural heritage) through both the emotional and distinctive qualities of participants’ diverse recreational experiences and the situated, place-based qualities that they embodied/engendered. Recreation practices were seen as culturally diverse and interwoven with broader familial, cultural and life practices/meanings. Many participants expressed their recreational meanings via stories that were interpreted as creating and sustaining meaning by their simultaneous recalling of personal experiences and the re-creation of their river places of experience, both of the past and present. Overall, the Clutha River was demonstrated as a co-constitutor of participants’ recreational meanings which contributed to the construction of their
place relationships, lending further support to the proposed co-constituting nature of people/experience and river/place relationships developed in Chapters Four and Five.

The findings engage with the broader literature addressing concepts of recreational experience and meanings (Brooks et al. 2006; Riese and Vorkinn 2002) through demonstrating the multi-dimensional, place-based and culturally interwoven nature of meaning in the context of recreation and the Clutha River (Hammitt 2004; Stephenson 2008; Williams 2008). In particular, and specific to the context of the Clutha, the cultural (Māori) meanings of recreation through the re-telling and re-creation of place-based stories was interpreted as providing support for the broader indigenous understandings of place and landscape meanings as elucidated by Smith (2004) and Stephenson (2008). These point to the significance of understanding the interwoven nature of the diverse cultural framings of recreation and place relationships beyond the currently accepted (and limited) ideas of recreation as framed by the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum and other, comparable recreational management tools (Brooks et al. 2008; Williams et al. 2008). The findings also provided a clear illustration of the multi-dimensional and multiple nature of recreational place-experience meanings that were situated within the broader canvas of participants’ life-course meanings. Through this illustration the findings gave further support and provided contextually specific insights for the idea of recreation (and leisure) being understood within the context of people’s whole life-course experiences and meanings (Freysinger 1999; Harahousou 2006; Kelly 1999).

**Family meanings of CR recreation**

The *Family meanings of CR recreation* identified repeated expressions of meaning as family time, reflected both as present recreational meaning (expressing qualities of family cohesiveness, bonding and shared memory making), but this was equally reflected in intergenerational concepts of family time such as sharing cultural recreational visits with grandparents and grandchildren. All of the family recreation meanings were interpreted as being situated and formed within diverse place-experience relationships with the Clutha River (e.g. intergenerational cultural/recreational relationships), a perspective that appears to have received little attention in the academic literature. The importance of family meanings in recreation and leisure have been widely addressed (Freeman and Zabriskie 2002; Harrington 2006; cf. Stephenson 2008) but mainly from a psychological perspective. The Clutha River example shows the strongly place-based and co-constituting nature of

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171 See Chapter Two, Section 2.3.5.
family meanings of recreation by illustrating the (multi-dimensional) place meanings and place-experiences that participants’ family recreation generated and vice-versa - the family meanings generated through place-experiences of recreating on the Clutha. This contrasts with the dominant psychological view that mainly frames meaning creation in terms of inter-personal relationships and not place relationships. The theme concluded that family recreational practice meanings were integral and often simultaneous with Clutha place-experience meanings.

Recreation continuing long-term cultural practices

This theme identified a slightly different aspect of the preceding two recreational themes by suggesting the importance of recreational practices on the Clutha River as a way to sustain (and recreate) predominantly Māori/cultural identities, knowledges and practices. In doing so it intertwined ideas of employing traditional cultural practices such as raft making as modern recreational practices, storytelling as a means of cultural knowledge/recreational practice transmission, and intergenerational relationships fostered through places, stories and recreation. This much broader and contextually grounded conception of recreation and recreational meaning was interpreted as significant for expanding current conceptions of recreation (specifically outdoor recreation) found in current literature (for example, Broadhurst 2001; Ibrahim and Cordes 2008) and for illustrating how a more culturally sensitive, place-based and socio-historical approach to understanding recreation could be attained (Manzo 2008; Smith 2004; Williams and Carr 1993).

Changing recreation meanings

The final theme in Recreation Meanings – Changing recreation meanings – focused on two recurring interpretations of participants’ meanings: observed changes in recreation practices along the Clutha River and changes over time in participants’ own recreational practices. The changes that were observed were expressed as both positive and negative meanings (and occasionally in dual or ambiguous terms) which encompassed ideas of the increasing use of the river trails for walking and biking, issues of competition between different users, and shifting patterns in recreational activities over the years. For some participants, these changes in activity influenced their meanings for particular places on the river (for example the Upper Clutha), but for others, their meanings had not changed significantly. Some participants also reflected on their own changing recreational involvement and activities with the river, which were interpreted as being part of the ‘natural’, broader pattern of change in interests and activities that occurred through the life-course of
participants. As such these observations and interpretations reflected aspects of the broader recreational literature noted in the other recreation themes (e.g. Freysinger 1999; Harahousou 2006; Kelly 1999) regarding the changes in people’s recreation and leisure interests and participation over time. The findings also contributed some specific insights into the changing and dynamic nature of recreation and place meanings over time through identifying the complex and intersecting relationships between external physical and social changes to river places that influence meaning change, and the internal, personal changes which similarly influence both recreation experience and place meanings (cf. Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005).

6.3.2 Findings: Recreation Meanings

Bringing together the themes summarised above, Recreation Meanings characterised a diverse range of participant meanings for their recreation on the Clutha River that showed them as multidimensional, often concurrent with other meanings, dynamic, subject to change from both external and internal factors, and strongly place-based in nature (cf. Brooks et al. 2006; Manzo 2008; Riese and Vorkinn 2002). In doing so, it has addressed the first two of the three research questions that frame this study, which sought to identify and understand what participants’ recreational experience and place meanings for the Clutha River were, how they created them, and described them. It has also shown that these diverse and interconnecting meanings for recreational experiences and places on the river are fluid, occasionally ambiguous, and open to change and even dissolution over time and the participant’s life-course.

Recreation Meanings also demonstrated the significance of the geographic and cultural contextual elements in meaning creation by identifying and interpreting specific Māori perspectives in conceptions and meanings for recreation on the Clutha (cf. Smith 2004). These included a strongly place-based focus which was demonstrated by the interweaving of visitation to, and storytelling of/in places of cultural and ancestral significance along the river as part of current recreational practices, with intergenerational, familial and Māori cultural practice perspectives that connected both past, present and future traditional knowledges. In this chapter, current conceptions of recreation, and specifically outdoor recreation, have been argued as limited and lacking grounded, contextually sensitive and socio-culturally inclusive understanding of the significance of recreation meanings and place relationships. It has also illustrated and provided further support for the overlapping nature of recreational/place meanings with broader, life-course meanings through themes.
of family time, social connectivity, and relaxation (Freysinger 1999; Hammitt 2004). In arguing for, and demonstrating empirically the presence and importance of such meanings, so the findings support and inform the calls for place-based and meanings-based understandings of outdoor recreation that lie at the heart of this study and which have been raised in recreation and leisure literature in recent years (in particular Brooks et al. 2006; Godbey et al. 2005; Manzo 2008; Riese and Vorkinn 2002; Williams 2008; Williams and Carr 1993).

Finally, **Recreational Meanings** has developed further the broader argument constructed across Chapters Four and Five of the co-constituting and integral role that the Clutha River itself has played in generating recreational meanings for participants. It has illustrated the fundamental position in meaning creation that the river (as a place and multiple places simultaneously) has taken in stimulating, generating, encapsulating and ultimately facilitating the diverse and complex range of recreational and other life experiences that have combined to create meaning for participants in this study. In doing so, the study has once again demonstrated the primacy of place over experience as posited previously in the conceptual works of Relph (1876; 2008), Tuan (1977; 1079, Casey (1987; 1997) and Malpas (1999) (see Chapter Two, Section 2.2.3).

### 6.3.3 Looking ahead to Chapter Seven: Changing Meanings

Chapter Six **Recreation Meanings** has focused on the specific meanings that recreating on the Clutha River held for participants, what their recreation experiences were conceived as, and how these were constructed, expressed and ultimately changed over time. The findings of the chapter connected with the ideas of meaning construction, particularly place meanings that were developed in Chapter Four **Knowing the Clutha**, through illustrating the multi-dimensional and simultaneous nature of recreational meanings expressed by participants. It also connected strongly with the broader meanings of the river discussed in Chapter Five **Clutha River Meanings**, by showing the interconnecting and often over-lapping nature of recreational meanings of participants with their broader life and diverse socio-cultural meanings. The observed dynamic and fluid element in participants’ meanings for the Clutha, whether recreational or wider, is the subject that carries this study into its final findings analysis and discussion – Chapter Seven **Changing Meanings** – through exploring the multiple ways and influences that the diverse meanings already discussed and engaged with, are subject to change. In doing so, Chapter Seven explicitly addresses the third research question of this study regarding making places on the Clutha River and the river itself. It
achieves this by reflecting on the key themes identified in the preceding findings chapters, and placing them within the thematic context of time, place change and meaning change for the river.
CHAPTER SEVEN: THEMATIC NETWORK - CHANGING MEANINGS

7.1 Introducing Chapter Seven

The theme of change has been discussed within the thematic contexts of each of the preceding networks and has provided insights on the strongly dynamic nature of place-experience meaning creation and change, whether generated through participants’ everyday lives, specifically recreational place-experiences or through changes in the Clutha River itself (or all three). The networks so far have illustrated the interwoven, multidimensional and temporal nature of place-experience meanings and the diverse ways that these have been experienced, conceived and expressed by participants. The findings have analysed, interpreted, discussed and ultimately argued for a much more inclusive, culturally sensitive and place-based conception of recreation and specifically outdoor recreation, in which place and experience (vis-à-vis rivers and people) are re-framed in a relationship capable of generating diverse and often highly personal meanings and values which can be altered and lost over time. This has been argued as contrary to current Utilitarian paradigms in outdoor recreation (and recreation more broadly) and natural resource management that have reduced place to a ‘setting’, meanings to ‘satisfaction’, and in doing so have provided a limited and flawed basis upon which to understand significant aspects of people’s everyday lives (Brooks et al. 2006; Williams 2007; see also Chapter Two, Section 2.3.5).

Chapter Seven Changing Meanings completes the findings chapters of this study and draws together many of the themes analysed and discussed in the preceding chapters by analysing and interpreting what kinds of changes have affected these diverse place-experience meanings (or not in some cases) and how such broad changes have shaped and influenced the way the Clutha River has been conceived and expressed as meaningful by participants. Through this analysis the idea of place-making - of the Clutha River and its multiple places – is explored within the study contexts of time, place change and meaning change, and within the socio-historical discourses of the Clutha outlined in Chapter One.

7.1.1 Chapter structure

Chapter Seven follows the structure established in the preceding findings chapters, and comprises one main section that describes and analyses the thematic network Changing Meanings. The
chapter then develops the analysis of the data by reflecting upon and connecting the findings beyond their specific context of the Clutha River to engage with relevant elements of the conceptual literature discussed in Chapter Two. The chapter finishes with a summary of the findings of the network, their contribution to existing literature and the research questions, and a concluding statement that reflects upon the findings of all four findings chapters (Chapters Four to Seven). This statement is then taken into the final chapter of this study and expanded to summarise its contribution, limitations and areas for further study.

7.2 Clutha River Thematic Networks: Changing Meanings

This section describes, analyses and discusses each of the organising themes within the global theme of Changing Meanings: Changing place meanings from CR changes; Damming the Clutha’s meanings; and Managing the Clutha River (Figure 7.1). Through this analytical process the study gains insights into what has been argued in the preceding chapters as multidimensional, temporal, fluid and strongly cultural people-place relationships for the Clutha River, and how they have been influenced by changes to the river, its physical and social environments, and how the river has been and continues to be managed.

7.2.1 Thematic Network: Changing Meanings

Changing Meanings explores the multitude of ways that the many meanings held for the Clutha River and lakes generated from the recreational and broader relationships of participants have been subject to change and alteration.
Figure 7.1: Changing Meanings Thematic Network

Figure 7.1 characterises the structure of the network which comprises three organising themes and fourteen basic themes. As with the preceding networks, each organising theme will now be explored and discussed to gain a better understanding of how participants understood their notions of changing meanings in the context of the study.

Changing place meanings from CR changes

The focus of this theme was the physical changes the Clutha River and its hinterland have undergone over the course of the participants’ lives and how and if these changes influenced their meanings for the river and its places. Figure 7.2 illustrates some of the ways participants expressed their reflections of the physical changes that the river and its associated meanings had undergone, including natural changes generated by the river itself and anthropogenic changes from growing development interventions.
Figure 7.2:  **Changing Meanings: Changing place meanings from CR changes**

In analysing the theme of *Changing place meanings*, the effect that the Clutha River itself has had on participants’ perceptions of it and how it subsequently shaped their diverse place meanings, was interpreted as a significant element within their broader expressions of change. Extracts T4.15 and T5.51 in Figure 7.2 provide two illustrations of this element, the participants expressing how their individual river and lake experiences and meanings were shaped and transformed by the changeable nature of the water itself. These expressions were very much focused on the changing conditions, which the river created through its daily flows and micro-climates, and which are particularly evident on the expanse of water on Lakes Dunstan and Roxburgh. The interaction between
different recreation experiences on the river/lakes, the different physical conditions of the Clutha/lakes which influenced those experiences, and the different and changing meanings that arose from these place-experiences are well illustrated in Extract T4.15 in Figure 7.2. Interestingly this participant had also expressed her sense of the river/lake as being a favourite place with which she had a very personal and emotional relationship (for example, see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 A personal relationship). In contrast to the other themes within Changing place meanings, it was the changeable character and conditions intrinsic to the Clutha River/lakes that were interpreted as directly influencing participants’ meanings for their river experiences unlike extrinsic changes such as vineyard and housing development along the river corridor. One participant summed up the changeable nature of the Clutha River quite poetically as follows [T.9.35]:

“You can sit there and watch the river all day – it’s like watching a fire burn. It never actually bores you...Every minute, every moment there’s constant change in the river.”

In this thematic context the river can again be held as a co-constituent in the recreation experience-place meaning relationship alongside its human participants, rather than as just a passive facilitator or setting for the creation of participants’ recreation experiences and place meanings. Consequently it also contributes to the fluidity of those meanings through its own volatile and active nature, as illustrated in the examples above. This idea interconnects with the conceptual example made in Chapter Six, Section 6.2.1 Recreation experiences making meanings, where the Clutha was conceptualised within both an ontological and Actor-Network theory framing. In both cases, the river is seen as a fundamental co-generator or actor in recreational place-experience meanings that directly and reciprocally generate, sustain and change participants’ river recreational meanings in a dynamic and temporal relationship. This contrasts with the rather ‘thin’ conceptualisation of rivers as recreational settings in current literature by placing a greater emphasis on both the river’s role and influence on meaning creation and change for participants. This argument is supported by Williams (2007: p.31), who noted:

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For example, although much earlier, see Manning and Ciali’s (1981) study of patterns of recreation use and river type on the Vermont river system, USA which (in my opinion) reduced recreation use and river type to a statistical relationship with little or no insight into the place relationship between users and rivers. A different approach was provided by Backlund’s (2005) paper on the importance of place in the substitutability of river recreation resources in which he found a positive statistical relationship between increased place attachment and lower substitutability. Both of these papers situated their findings within a recreational management context but provided little insight into the complex, socio-cultural and meanings-based aspects of recreating on rivers.
‘The significance of specific places, which people come to know through experience, is not easily captured in resource and social assessments such as ROS [Recreation Opportunity Spectrum] and Scenery Management System (SMS) that focus on their general attributes (e.g. remoteness, scenic beauty). Rather for people who know and use an area, its significance is more likely captured in narrative form (histories) as meanings, practices, and rituals. The challenge for recreational managers is to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the link between setting and experience.’

In placing greater emphasis on the Clutha’s role and influence on co-creating participants’ place-experience meanings, the question of how does the river similarly contribute to the concept of place making arises. In Chapter Two, Sections 2.1.2 and 2.2, place making was conceptualised in a very broad but interlinked framework of ‘place’ concepts that was summarised in Anderson’s (2012: p.574; my emphasis) observation:

‘…place has become a moment and a location, concurrently shot through with lines of movement that constantly (re)combine to change its form and substance. Our ‘stories’, activities, and practices are not outside place or played out on place; rather, they meet and move together to form place, however provisionally.’

This forming of place through ‘stories’, activities, and practices’ finds many parallels within this study as discussed in the analyses of the recreation and broader place-experience meanings of participants for the Clutha River in Chapters Four to Six. Within the specific context of Changing Meanings, the idea of the Clutha River as actively contributing to this idea of place-making may appear circular (how can the river make itself as a place?). However, through the co-constituting nature of the river as argued for here and in Chapter Six, by placing the river within the broader place-experience relationship construct developed in this study, it becomes a ‘relationship partner’ in both the construction of meaning and place (Brooks et al. 2006). Interestingly in Brooks et al.’s (2006) study, they did not emphasise the role of Rocky Mountain National Park as an active relationship partner, focusing instead on its role as a setting in which place relationships could form and place meanings develop. In my view the relegation of the Rocky Mountains National Park to a

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173 See also Figure 2.2 in Chapter Two, Section 2.1.1.
174 To be clear, I am not advocating an environmental determinism position in this statement but simply the acknowledgement that the material world can and does interact with our socially constructed worlds in multiple ways; see Chapter Two, Section 2.4.3 for a discussion of this, and Farnum et al. (2005) and Stedman (2003a).
‘setting’ albeit within a place-relationship metaphor was, in my opinion, the one serious fault in their study.

Acknowledging that such ‘settings’ are dynamic, temporal, socio-culturally constructed and fluid places which have agency in place relationships, as argued for in this study, is critical to gaining a deeper understanding - one that reflects the present focus on ‘exploring and understanding the nuanced natural and cultural histories of particular places’ in recreational management (Cheng et al. 2003: p.101). This position connects with the work of Cloke and Jones (2001), discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.2, who identified the ‘interconnection of nature and place’ in their study of an orchard in Somerset, UK (2001: p.650) and argued for the ‘creative agency’ of material entities (such as trees in their study or rivers in mine) in the ‘construction and reconstruction’ of the orchard landscape (2001: p.654). The relevance of their work to the current discussion is their suggestion (2001: p.654; my emphasis) that the orchard reveals:

‘...a deep hybridity of people, nature, and technology which is embedded in a complex of networks, but which also has a time-thickened, place-forming dimension.’

Through this statement, the creative agency of the study participants, the Clutha River, and the multiple technologies in play (for example, recreational boats, water skis, kayaks and the dams) are acknowledged for both their connected relationships and place-making capacities.

Further analysis of participants’ expressions of changing recreation and place meanings and their drivers of change identified three additional themes, illustrated in Figure 7.2: changes to the environment along the river corridor, changes to individual river places and changing levels of access to places along the river and lakes. These three themes reflected the variations in the scale of participants’ conceptions of place and change – so temporal and spatial changes (often simultaneous) – which ranged from the macro-scale of the upper, middle and lower river corridors and extended periods of time, to the micro-scale of individual and specific meaningful places (for instance, favourite spots) and short periods of change. Taken together the themes suggested that over time, the alterations to the physical and social environs of the Clutha River in regard to rural and urban development and access had modified or transformed some of the meanings participants’ held for the river, whether specifically recreational or the more broader meanings.\(^{175}\)

\(^{175}\) Comments on the direct alterations to the Clutha River in the past were considered such a major theme that they are addressed separately in the next organising theme - Damming the CR’s Meanings.
Both Gustafson (2001) and Manzo (2005) identified a comparable relationship between time and continuity in place meanings, although both focused on the human-change perspective rather than on the effects of place-changes on meaning.

Some participants, reflecting on the changing landscape of the Clutha River corridor, recalled their earliest encounters, memories and associated meanings for those areas that appeared to have altered with the passage of time and change. Extracts T5.20 and T3.23 in Figure 7.2 support this observation through their reflections on the changes the Upper Clutha region had undergone over the past thirty years or more, transforming from a relatively barren, undeveloped area spanning either side of the river (for which some participants had originally expressed outright dislike e.g. T3.23), to an area perceived as being much greener and more productive, for example as expressed in T5.20. Some of these changes or drivers of change were attributed to the opening up of the Upper Clutha valley by the development of the Lindis Pass highway [T1.20] and the development of Lake Dunstan in the Upper Clutha in the 1980s [T3.23]. It is worth noting that no similar comments were made by participants about the effects of the development of Lake Roxburgh in the 1950s most likely due to the very different morphology of the landform and river (being set down in a steep valley) in that location and the much longer time span the change had encompassed. This idea of transformation of the Clutha environment by the developments in the Upper Clutha region were echoed by another participant who explained in detail how his experiences and meanings for the Clutha River had changed [T8.46]:

“P: It was when I was a kid myself really, there was a windy road that I probably got sick on [laughs] – there was the gorge and it was pretty narrow and um, there were big drops down the side and things like that into the river itself, and I can remember the river and the fruit trees – um stalls and that sort of thing on the side of the road and that’s all been lost but there’s other orchards around there I suppose but er, there was certainly a change.

AF: Do you have any recollections when the dam was being put it...?

P: I, once again I’m reasonably happy with what’s there now, because there’s a huge resource, a lake, and it’s changed that whole landscape there really as far as activity and, y’know there’s vineyards and all sorts of things happening there now. It was a pretty barren sort of area, um, and you drove through it – you didn’t stay around – you just were on your way to Queenstown or Wanaka. That was really just to get there, yeah. And the trip through now is a lot better because the roading’s better and all those sorts of things because there’s a brand
new road put in, y’know up the gorge further. So I suppose when I try to get from A to B that’s shortened the trip up and it’s a lot more safer to there I suppose, yeah.”

Interestingly, within this context almost all of the participants saw the developments in the Upper Clutha valley as a positive factor which had brought growth and prosperity to a previously rural and quite isolated region. This in turn, as the extracts in Figure 7.2 demonstrate, often affected a change in participants’ meanings for their places as a result.

In contrast, one participant perceived the Clutha changes more negatively, which are reflected in her comment in T7.42 in Figure 7.2. For her, the development of Lake Dunstan materially changed the recreational and personal meanings she had previously held for the Upper Clutha section (and possibly the whole Clutha River itself) particularly with regard to her recreational kayaking experiences (discussed in Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1, Knowing the Clutha and CR as natural threat). This appears to have left her in the present with meanings that reflected a sense of loss for how the river was before Lake Dunstan and its road alterations, an experience and meaning that she described in more detail when recalling her last kayak down the Cromwell Gorge prior to its inundation [T7.41176]:

“I remember looking at my son and thinking, ‘ahh, well this is it Bob177- this is the last time we’ll paddle that section of river’. We came through the concrete...and then we arrived at the other end [in Clyde] and got out and I can remember there was still talk about could we protest and could we argue, and I suppose the meaning for me was, well it was just a phase, I guess – just like, this is a different phase in life now that’s going to be behind us, and really pleased my son and I have paddled it, but you won’t get to paddle that again. Bob might not remember it at all, but y’know there was that Mum-son thing going on for me. So that was sort of like a watershed for that river [and now] when I drive into Central Otago and see the lakes there’s just a sterility, a flatness, there’s an awful lot of concrete y’know, there’s a lot of road...”

The physical change of the Cromwell Gorge into Lake Dunstan and its effects have already been touched upon in Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 Meaningful memories in the context of place-

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176 Please note part of this extract was previously used in Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1, as part of Meaningful memories. Within the hermeneutic and thematic analysis methodologies of this thesis, such alternative interpretations are considered generally acceptable; refer to Chapter Three, Section 3.3.5.

177 Pseudonym.
experiences creating meaningful memories for participants. Within the present theme of *Changing place meanings* the preceding extract illustrates the sense of loss or change brought about by the flooding of the Gorge that not only brought to an end the participant’s ability to kayak the Gorge at the time, but also altered her place meanings for the both the experience (“Mum-son thing”; “a phase”) and the place itself (“a watershed for that river”; now a “a sterility, a flatness”). As noted previously178, the participant recalled this memory and its meanings at the time very clearly, along with other meanings of family time and challenging experiences, but when asked about her relationship with the river, no longer felt she had any kind of relationship. Pulling together the different meanings in this way, suggests that the fundamental and terminal change brought about by the destruction of the Cromwell Gorge could be interpreted as having had an equally transformational effect on the participant’s place-experience meanings and more specifically, her place relationship with the Clutha (Brooks *et al.* 2006).

In another example, a participant noted the effects of more recent changes in Lake Dunstan, largely from the gradual silting of the Kawarau Arm in the top of the lake which had begun to impact upon his positive meanings for that section of the lake [T3.17]:

“P: Whereas when we first moved here ten years ago it was lake right up- there was no flow at all. Yeah, so the silt build-up has been quite a detraction in that you can’t actually get a boat down there without risking ruining the motor y’know. Yeah and there was quite a bad accident here at Christmas this year; someone drove flat out into the sandbar, Mum was standing up and fell over and smacked her head and done serious damage. Yeah, that’s certainly been a detraction for us living on this part of the river I suppose, yeah.

AF: And obviously that sort of reduced your, certainly some elements of your enjoyment a bit. And can you think of any other changes...?

P: Ah significantly, yeah.

AF: I was thinking especially in the last ten years?

P: Yeah and we’ve certainly seen some significant growth and I guess we see a lot of the orchards and the vineyards and things have all sprung up and they’re only because of water. They take the water out of the lake- yeah and [there’s]significantly more people and houses around I guess aren’t there. Can be a good thing or a bad thing, depends.”

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178 Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 *A personal relationship* theme; Chapter Six, Section 6.2.1 *Family meanings of CR recreation* theme.
As well as the changing physical environmental conditions along the Clutha valley such as the example above, changes in the nature and levels of both physical and social access to the Clutha River were also a theme that some participants reflected on from both negative and positive standpoints. Extracts T9.12 and T4.9 in Figure 7.2 illustrate this interpretation, providing two different examples of how access conditions and meanings have altered for both the participants and how they perceive other users along the Clutha River. Again this pertained largely to the Upper and Mid-Clutha regions which had seen access for recreation change significantly since the construction of the Clyde Dam and Lake Dunstan and the recent and continuing construction of the walk/cycle tracks along the banks of the river. The Lower Clutha, which has seen relatively little comparable development, appears to have remained largely static in terms of the more limited level of access for recreation to the river and therefore featured less in participants’ comments. It is evident from Extract T9.12 that the participant believed the increasing development along the banks of the Clutha had been concurrent with the increasing restrictions placed on access by new landowners. Their quasi-dichotomous attitude to river access was also demonstrated in his reflection on their keenness to take advantage of other people’s (for example, his) access routes and yet frequently stop public access to the river across their own land. The effect of these changing attitudes to public access on the participant’s own meanings for the Clutha was illustrated in his growing frustration, expressed in Extract T9.12, with the decrease in the ethos of care for the Clutha that he held as meaningful.

In Davenport and Anderson’s (2005) study of the Niobrara River, they identified similar issues in land ownership, access and social change as having a range of positive and negative meaning effects for their participants. Increasing development was seen as both a threat and a positive change for the Niobrara River community with participants’ positions highly dependent on their personal perspectives and sense of place. As such, using the place relationship concept and interpretations of change from the Clutha River study, provide further support for the importance of understanding the impacts of development and change on individuals and communities, particularly along river corridors.

Continuing this thread, another participant expressed his thoughts on the changes the development of the walking tracks had brought to the Outlet section of the river [T5.9]:

“And so yeah, it wasn’t as populated as it is now, it was quiet, I could go and fish the river-some may call it selfish in a lot ways, I don’t see it that way it was just the timing and you
could have the section of river to yourself. It was peaceful, it was passive, and it was sort of also a bit more wild in those days...I mean there’s a lot of development, that’s gone on around the boundaries and that sort of thing, so it was a bit more secluded probably to what it is now. In all honesty, the river hasn’t changed much – there’s no change to the river – just the surroundings and probably just the depth in which the track has been upgraded and allowing more recreation, in terms of there’s more use for walkers…”

In terms of the impact of these changes on his meanings for the Clutha, the same participant, a staunch angler, commented later on in our conversation [T5.12]:

“I just see rivers as being areas where people can go and enjoy without having other forms of recreation coming, intruding on the peacefulness of the river…”

Although not directly acknowledging a change in his personal recreational place-experience meanings for the Clutha, the participant was interpreted as clearly implying that such access changes can and have impacted upon them. These wider impacts of changing and increasing recreational access on participants’ recreational place-experiences and broader river meanings have been analysed and discussed in Chapter Six, Section 6.2.1 Changing recreation meanings. Rounding up the theme of Changing place meanings from CR changes, the impacts and outcomes of the combined physical transformation and social/recreational changes that the Clutha River has experienced through the creation of Lake Dunstan is reflected upon in Extract T4.9 in Figure 7.2. The participant’s recognition of the widespread recreational and social changes that the construction of the Clyde Dam and Lake Dunstan brought to the Upper Clutha region links the discussion to the next organising theme Damming the CRs meanings. Such direct changes to the Clutha River contrast with the largely indirect and incremental changes that the current theme has analysed and discussed, and leads us into what is probably the most controversial and debated theme of this thesis – dams.

_Damming the Clutha’s meanings_

The Clutha River was subject to two hydroelectric power generation schemes completed in 1956 (the Roxburgh Dam) and 1993 (the Clyde Dam) which materially altered the flow and morphology of the river (discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.4). Within the participant group, one member recalled being at the opening of the Roxburgh Dam as a small child in the 1950s, and nearly all of the
participants recalled the construction and/or completion of the Clyde Dam in some way. It is apparent from the description and analysis of the previous three thematic networks that many of the themes created in this research are intertwined not only with recreation, place-making and Clutha River meanings, but also the significant changes the dams brought to the river. These are illustrated in Figure 7.3.

“I know there was a lot of angst, heartburn and concern when Lake Dunstan was being formed and I mean people were displaced... and I can remember saying to Bill Young who was the Minister of Works when we were discussing all these plans, I said history will be the final arbiter whether we have got this right or not ... and I've been brave enough to continue to live here and most people know I had a very significant part in it...”[T1.27]

“Creation of Lake Dunstan considered as positive for recreation and growth in the CR valley

“Creation of Clyde Dam/LD considered as negative

“I think myself, that it is a wonderful thing – it's created all that recreational area... I think it’s an amazing area, we’ve been there many times, utilized it. It’s a bringing together of all the community, you know- and aesthetically as far as our family’s lore goes, it complements the other lakes in the area.”[T13.54]

“...and the Clyde Dam, if you’ve done any research you’ll know it’s the biggest environmental disaster in the whole country.”[T10.15]

“...so there are still good places on the river and you know you wish they wouldn't and just completely stuff up something that's completely stuffed up anyway you know. So I think...there's still loss to be made on the Clutha.”[T7.62]

“Whether it would be the end of the Clutha really wouldn’t it, the Lower Clutha anyway really, cause, yeah, they're probably damming the best part of it really as far as recreation is concerned anyway.”[T11.36]

“‘That’s the way it is, change, yeah we just have to take the change and embrace it...I’ve travelled on a train up the Cromwell Gorge, I’ve travelled in a jet boat up the Cromwell Gorge. If it hadn’t been for the dam we’d still be going up the Gorge on a little windy road that you can’t pass cars on.”[T9.22]

“...so there are still good places on the river and you know you wish they wouldn’t and just completely stuff up something that’s completely stuffed up anyway you know. So I think...there’s still loss to be made on the Clutha.”[T7.62]

“...so there are still good places on the river and you know you wish they wouldn’t and just completely stuff up something that’s completely stuffed up anyway you know. So I think...there’s still loss to be made on the Clutha.”[T7.62]
One theme that was interpreted early on was the nature and extent of participants’ involvement with the Clyde Dam development in the 1970s and 1980s - whether from a construction, mitigation or political perspective. In Figure 7.3, Extract T1.27 highlights one participant’s open acknowledgement of his direct involvement in the decision-making and political implementation processes for the Clyde Dam development through his first-hand and high-level association with Cromwell Borough Council. In the extract the participant acknowledged his role in the development, and throughout our conversation he referred back to that involvement in relation to his meanings for the Clutha River alongside frequent comments that I interpreted as expressing a sense of disconnection with the river (see Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1 CR as natural threat theme). Extract T1.27 supports the idea that the participant’s direct support for, and involvement in the implementation of the dam project, the creation of Lake Dunstan and reshaping of Cromwell, had clearly remained a factor which shaped his meanings and expressions for the project long after it had been completed. It could be argued (somewhat cynically) that due to his close and very public involvement he felt he had to maintain a positive opinion of the development regardless of its perceived success or failure. However, whatever his own personal justification, it was clear through our conversation that his direct involvement with the Clyde Dam project had influenced his present meanings for Cromwell, Lake Dunstan and the Clutha River, as demonstrated by his further comment [T1.27 continued]:

“...the question is, is it [the Cromwell area] better post-dam than it was pre-dam and I don’t think there’s any question, it’s infinitely better post-dam.”

In another example, a participant was involved in the Clyde Dam development from a mitigation perspective, through his role as an officer for Fish & Game in the late 1980s-early 1990s. He described his role and feelings on his involvement with the project as follows [T5.23]:

“One is the formation of the lake which I was involved in and rearing fish for the lake; we put the first ones in. There was a hundred [thousand?] in little over two years from our Wanaka hatchery and the formation of the lake – yes, certainly there was always fears and concerns from my point of view about the impacts the dam was having on the river – but the formation of the lake has, I feel it’s been good, it’s been good for the community.”

This short extract highlights some of tensions and complexities present between personal involvement in the development, strongly expressed emotional and relationship meanings for the
and recognition of the broader social outcomes/benefits of the development, from the participant’s perspective. Reflecting on our whole conversation, I would have expected from his passionate statements of meaning for his recreational fishing experiences on the Clutha River, for him to have expressed negative feelings for the development of Lake Dunstan and particularly its impact on the river at Cromwell, but this was not the case as the extract above shows. Whilst impossible to know if his professional involvement in the lake development influenced his river meanings (as suggested in the preceding participant example), it is possible to suggest through the participant’s own comments, that there is a significant link between his personal involvement in the dam project twenty-five years ago, and how it has shaped his subsequent meanings. These earlier meanings could also be interpreted as continuing to co-construct his present-day meanings for the river simultaneously with the many meanings generated through his recreational, work and lived experiences. To highlight the complexities of how fluid these meanings can be, the same participant went on to say in the context of a potential future dam on the river [T5.28]:

“P: I wouldn’t like to see it at all. I would be really disappointed if another dam went in this top section.
AF: Can you explain why?
P: It would just destroy the natural remaining section of the river that we’ve got in the top section and I just believe it deserves more respect than that. And I don’t think the young generation should be coming through and just see dams just plonked here and there all over the place. Yeah, and I’d be really sad to see another dam go in the section above Lake Dunstan.”

This example of the fluidity (ebb and flow) of participant meanings over time for the Clutha River and its development may be as much an indicator of the changing nature of people’s circumstances and therefore meaning-creation at the time, as it may be of any influence the changes to the river itself may have had. As such, it becomes difficult to argue the idea of personal involvement in the development of the river as having a single or static meaning without acknowledging the natural ambiguity that personal experience appears to entail. This suggestion lends further support to the idea of ambiguous or ambivalent feelings and meanings for places that was discussed in Chapter Four Knowing the Clutha, Section 4.3.1 CR as natural threat and reiterates Manzo’s (2005)

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179 For example, the participant featured prominently in the themes Meaningful memories in Chapter Four and A personal relationship and People-environment relationships in Chapter Five, expressing very positive, personal and emotional meanings for the Clutha River.
observation on her participants’ ambivalent attitude to certain places. As Manzo (2005: p.75) noted, ‘...feelings about places cannot be divorced from one’s experiences of them’ and although as I have already stated, she privileged experience over place in her conceptualisation of place meanings, I would argue that the above examples illustrate the powerful interconnectivity of both differing/changing participant experiences and changes in their meaningful places that coalesce to create and re-create place meanings over time. In doing so this both supports and widens Manzo (2005) and similarly Gustafson’s (2001) conceptualisations of the dynamics of people-place relationships through providing additional grounded examples of the temporal dimension of place meaning creation and the idea of place ‘as an ongoing process’ (Gustafson 2001: p.13). However it also expands on their observations by showing how different and particularly changing participant experiences with the same place (for instance, the Upper Clutha/Clyde Dam) strongly influences their place meanings not just due to time, but through changes in their involvement, their perceptions of their involvement (at the time and on subsequent reflection), and the changes the place itself underwent through their participation. Through this (symbiotic?) process of place meaning creation and re-creation, more of the complexities, multiplicities and simultaneities of human experience, place and meanings are exposed (Malpas 1999).

Both of the previous examples were firmly positioned from the individual standpoint of the participants themselves. However one participant’s comments reflected an alternative perspective - that of others in her community on her involvement. Whilst participating on a walk along the Clutha River for a local charity a few years ago she befriended a group of local women [T4.10]:

“I’d said I’d been away from Central Otago for a number of years and that- and made the mistake of mentioning that I’d worked for the Ministry of Works\footnote{Government agency responsible for the Clyde Dam development. Hereafter referred to as MoW. The participant had work for the MoW on a landscape survey project in the Upper Clutha during the 1970s.}, and their faces all dropped and one woman said “She worked for [MoW]” and they just sort of backed-up. And after they’d been all friendly and la-da-da-da-da suddenly they were not friendly at all so [pauses] I was kind of shocked...”

Although not materially changing the participant’s meanings for the river itself, the opinions of her co-walkers do appear to have had an effect on her meanings for her involvement in the dam development in the 1970s by raising a rather self-consciousness awareness of her own association. Even though the project had been completed almost twenty years previously, her recalling of this
experience seemed to demonstrate that some local hostilities engendered by aspects of the development at the time had not completely dissipated. The rather hostile reaction from her co-walkers to her association with the project noted in the extract — even though she had been involved in a mitigating role surveying the Clutha’s historic landscape prior to its destruction — appeared sufficient to raise her consciousness of their meanings for the project which contrasted with her own. In this way Damming the Clutha’s Meanings becomes a metaphor for more than just the meanings directly associated with the physical damming of the river itself, but also illustrates the social meaning perspective that involvement in the development presented.

Focusing on the direct expressions of participants’ meanings for the Clyde Dam development, two themes were identified which were interpreted as representing the main standpoints on the outcome of the development for the Clutha river and valley. In Figure 7.3 Extracts T9.22 and T13.54 provide examples of some of the participants’ positive expressions, seeing the creation of Lake Dunstan as positive for recreation and growth in the Clutha valley, especially the Upper Clutha region, which was most affected. For example, they considered the infrastructure improvements (e.g. the re-alignment of the Cromwell Gorge Road and the sealing of the Lindis Pass Road) as opening up access to the Upper Clutha and Queenstown/Wanaka region as well as bringing wider benefits to the region from increased tourism and economic development. As one participant commented [T1.21]:

“The other changes that have had a major effect have been um, the upgrade of the road across the Lindis Pass. When we first came here it was a bit of a goat track and...you didn’t sort of go across it with much enthusiasm, cause you rattled and banged for about y’know, twenty or thirty Ks...Suddenly the opening of the Lindis with a good highway suddenly opened it right up for people to come to Queenstown and Wanaka.”

In terms of the recreational benefits that the creation of Lake Dunstan delivered, both Extract T13.54 and the following extract from another participant [T1.11], emphasised the importance of the lake to Cromwell and its neighbouring communities.

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181 The Clyde Dam Development raised a furore of protest from local and non-local parties over most of its entire construction period and led to many divisions that split families, businesses, communities and even New Zealand itself; Paul Powell’s book Who killed the Clutha? (1978) is a ‘classic’ account of the politics and protests against the development. See also Pitches (1984) for an insightful overview of the politics and wider issues of the Clyde Dam Development.
“...there are recreational opportunities now, particularly round the lake that just weren’t there before. So, yeah I think it’s um, I think the lake has changed or the river has changed from limited recreational opportunities to actually quite extensive, um, opportunities. I mean you could never have sailed, you couldn’t sail on the lake and you couldn’t jet ski or do any of those things. And those who seem to fish don’t seem to think that it’s um, the change has been detrimental. I think it’s really been quite positive.”

In contrast to these positive views of the development, Extracts T5.30/.31 and T10.15 express opposing views, that considered the development to have had a major (detrimental) impact on the river. As T5.30/.31 stated, in his view the construction of the Clyde Dam had the effect of “splitting” or disconnecting the Clutha into different parts, which he expanded by saying that this was similar to the effect the construction of the Roxburgh Dam had had on the river in the 1950s. For one participant the Clyde Dam development represented a more extreme meaning (Extract T10.15) as one of “environmental disaster” and he spoke at length about (in his view) the larger role of dams in the untenable “grow-and-build business model” of the New Zealand economy. He also spoke passionately about why he saw dams in general as being so detrimental to the environment [T10.12]:

“I can tell you a hundred reasons why that’s not going to work, why dams are stupid; large dams I’m talking about that block the main arteries of rivers. They literally like clamps on your veins – they kill part of the living – and the more you kill it the more you damage yourself, it’s like suicide.”

A more tempered view was expressed, in my opinion, by one participant who had kayaked the Clutha River both pre- and post-Clyde Dam; when I asked her about her meanings for the river since the Clyde Dam construction she stated [T7.47]:

“No [feelings], not for the Clutha at all, it’s only as I’ve already said, when I go away there’s other rivers I paddle and I think - they could do the same [as the CR] to this and that would be a huge loss - yeah, so that just motivates me to be involved in [the] conservation of other rivers just so I wouldn’t like to see the others go the same way.”

It is interesting to reflect that these two themes - apparently diametrically opposed when taken at face value – are actually capable of a more subtle interpretation in which both positive and negative
meanings can be held at the same time. For example, one of the participants expressed the following sentiment [Extract T9.19/.20]:

“...I don’t know, it’s inevitable that we may lose some of our natural [rivers] - however, the dams, the lakes and that, that form behind become an asset and there’s no area that I know of that is actually worse off in the long-term as a result of hydro development...Yes, the lake [Dunstan] is an asset just as the river [Clutha] was. We’re probably of the lucky generation who have seen both. Our children will never be able to recall what the river was like...but um, so what you don’t know doesn’t hurt you does it really.”

This acknowledgment of the loss of the Clutha as a natural asset or resource as one meaning, whilst recognising the value that the creation of Lake Dunstan brought and continues to bring to the Cromwell area as another, illustrates an element of a nuanced and complex place/meaning relationship between the participant, the river and its change to a lake. As Brooks et al. (2006: p.333) noted, commenting on the studies by Manzo (2005) and Gustafson (2001), ‘Place relationships were also characterized as a process in which meanings developed incrementally. In a relationship metaphor, the concept of place integrates the self, the physical setting, other people, the interactions amongst these, and the subsequent meanings that accumulate at various stages in the relationship’. Both the above and preceding examples of participants’ changing relationship with the river/lakes reflect this dynamic place relationship, underscoring the ways and reasons why their meanings have changed since their various relationships began.

Further insight was gained on participants’ views of the effects of damming the Clutha River and some of the meanings associated with them, by extending this idea of a dynamic and nuanced meanings relationship to the proposals for a future dam and lake to be constructed on the Clutha River (see Chapter One, Section 1.4.1). The remaining three themes within Damming the Clutha’s Meanings address this scenario and Figure 7.3 provides some examples of participants’ views.

As the themes in Figure 7.3 illustrate, the comments were interpreted and grouped across a spectrum of positions; from negative to positive and with several participants expressing ambivalence towards a third dam. For example, Extract T4.35 reveals the internal dilemma that the participant faced in trying to both understand and reconcile her strong feelings of attachment to the river whilst acknowledging her own position on producing green energy. She appeared to rationalise a future dam by conceding that a low dam would be “much more palatable” than a high
dam such as the one built in Clyde, but overall there is an unmistakable undertone of loss in her statement. A different perspective on ambivalence was provided by another participant who took an economic view of the pros and cons of a new dam as follows [T1.49]:

“P: ...that would be the other thing that if there were to be hydro development, would the District Councils be strong enough?  
AF: To negotiate, to actually recognise that they needed to negotiate separately you might say or independently for their own representation and not just rely on one package, however it’s funded.  
P: Well, they get seduced by this cry that, you know, going to create employment opportunities. Well it does, but for a very limited time y’know. When you actually do something like that [a dam] to a river you’re doing it for a couple of hundred years, at least. What are the employment opportunities for 36 months? I mean, y’know, big deal.”

The participant, who had been very prominent in the Clyde Dam project in the 1970s, had stated elsewhere in our conversation that he wouldn’t like to see another dam in the Upper Clutha section for aesthetic and ‘natural’ reasons (although one in Beaumont might have been acceptable as he felt he had less association with it). Despite this he appeared to conceptualise the potential effects of another dam in terms of its largely economic and social values which, from his previous experience, he felt strongly should deliver “multipurpose” benefits other than just hydropower, as he saw the future dam doing182. Indeed he saw the Clyde Dam project as having delivered precisely that – a range of benefits that have continued to benefit the communities of Cromwell, Bannockburn and Clyde – and in using this as a measure of the future dam proposals, appeared to rationalise his contrasting meanings for both the past, present and future developments.

Examining further the positive and negative views of participants, Figure 7.3 highlights some of their responses when I asked each of them directly how they felt about the prospect of another dam and lake on the Clutha River. Extracts T7.62 and T11.36 both reflect a common meaning of loss – that damming the river would still have a negative impact in spite of the two existing dams - and that recreation on the river would also suffer especially on the Lower Clutha section above and below the Beaumont Gorge. For both these participants maintaining this section of the river in a semi-‘natural’ state was important to them and this was seen as contributing to their place meanings for

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182 T1.44 in the interview transcript.
the river. As one of the participants reflected earlier in our conversation when I asked him about the Clutha’s past and present meanings to him [T7.45]:

“…it was unfettered, y’know as [wife] said, you could go from one end to the other with the exception of the Roxburgh Dam. It had a connotation of freedom with it, which is now, it’s slightly manacled.”

His comment suggested that the creation of the Clyde Dam and Lake Dunstan changed his meanings for the Clutha River (from “unfettered” to “manacled”) which, as Extract T7.62 in Figure 7.3 implies, would be compounded further, diluting his meanings for the Clutha River both in recreational and place meaning terms. This idea of the dilution or thinning of place meanings is a concept that is difficult to demonstrate positively within my participant sample as only one pair of participants (Transcript 7) were able to discuss this in any depth (see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 A personal relationship theme that analysed their changing relationship with the Clutha River). The thinning of place meanings through change and increasing modernity/mobility is an issue that has been widely discussed by many authors from differing place perspectives such as wilderness, landscape, globalisation and authenticity (Augé 1995; Cresswell 2004; Relph 1993; Sack 1997; Williams 2000b).

In my view the idea of ‘thinning’ or loss of place meanings may be illusory as other meanings can be/are generated that (re)place183 established or long-held meanings for participants (such as illustrated in Extract T7.62); therefore I see the concept as more of a fluidity of meaning rather than loss per sé. Seeing it this way, it could be argued that despite the inundation of the Roxburgh and Cromwell Gorges, there was actually little loss of physical landscape compared to the scale of the lakes as such (they actually became submerged landscapes). Rather it was the personal and community (and economic) meanings, represented through social-historical, place-markers (Manzo 2005) such as the orchards, rapids and old road and rail tracks that were considered lost. However, I would argue that using the preceding participant examples and discussion, the loss of such place-markers did not necessarily result in a similar loss or thinning of place meanings but were, in fact, added to or overlaid with other meanings or re-created into different meanings for participants. Therefore these findings suggest that through this process of place-meaning change (and related place-change), places such as the Cromwell Gorge effectively had their place meanings fossilised –

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183 On a reflective note: of the many uses of (re)-* noted during writing, this was the first time I became conscious of the ‘root’ of replace as ‘place’!
for example, in records, photos, and people’s memories\textsuperscript{184} – but also added to with new meanings: as Lake Dunstan, a popular recreation area, a community benefit, an environmental disaster, etc. Both Gustafson (2001) and Manzo (2005) acknowledged the significance of the ‘ongoing process’ of place and place meanings (Gustafson 2001: p.13) but neither developed this in detail, or in terms of how and what such processes could be. I suggest that Damming the Clutha’s meanings as a theme provides an example of the ‘ongoing process’ of place meaning and as a consequence, place making.

As a final example, this idea of the gaining or even exchanging of place meaning is illustrated in Extract T8.43 in Figure 7.3 which demonstrates a positive response from a participant to the idea of a future dam. In the extract the participant acknowledged both the potential losses and gains from another dam/lake, but based his view on the need to balance these impacts so the final outcome was an improvement for the “environment”. The same participant further reflected on the potential for a third dam in the Lower Clutha and what it would mean to him [T8.39]:

“\begin{quote}
I know the Clutha River’s been dammed but there’s- look at what you’ve got there now at Lake Dunstan – the recreation thing that can happen around that and I’m into that sort of thing as well – so I see the benefits of that sort of thing happening and it would be marvellous to have another lake at this end of the river.
\end{quote}"

Another participant made a similar response [T3.26]:

“\begin{quote}
I wouldn’t have any negative feelings at all I don’t think, I’ve seen the benefit that the lake has given to our small district here [in Bannockburn]…"
\end{quote}"

As discussed within in this theme, some of the meanings that participants expressed regarding the damming of the Clutha River related to recreational, environmental, social, economic and place meanings. It has been suggested that they are susceptible to change in different ways, whether lost, thinned or, as mainly argued here, replaced by other meanings in response to changing personal, environmental, social and economic conditions. As such this process reflects a fluidity of meaning that interweaves place and experience into meaningful places and events that contribute to the continuing and dynamic place making of the Clutha River. It is also argued that that these meanings have changed with time, as shown by the long-term, diverse influences that the construction of the Clyde Dam and Lake Dunstan have held (whether positively, negatively or both) on participants’

\textsuperscript{184} As discussed in Chapter Four, Section 5.2.1 \textit{Meaningful memories} theme.
place-experience meanings, and which continue to frame and shape participants’ meanings for the Clutha River into the future.

Moving on to the final theme of the thematic network **Changing Meanings**, this management theme gathers together various issues relating to river and recreational management of the river and lakes that participants highlighted in response to my questions. These were raised in our discussions as management of the Clutha system was considered potentially to be an act of place and meaning making, from a planning and political perspective, and therefore a significant aspect of this study (Williams 2000b).

**Managing the Clutha River**

An aspect of the global theme **Changing Meanings** is the concept of change as a deliberate act rather than the un-planned, largely temporal and as some may see it, inevitable changes that both places and place meanings undergo (Gustafson 2001; Relph 2008). Therefore the themes encompassed by **Managing the Clutha River** address various aspects of past and current perceived impacts of the river’s management; these include perceptions of risk associated with the hydro-electric high dams and river system issues such as invasive weed growth, silting and changes in water quality. Figure 7.4 illustrates some of the participants’ expressions and comments regarding these issues, and the following discussion interprets these as both creating new meanings for participants as management issues for the river and lakes have arisen, and demonstrates how some of their prior meanings have been influenced.

A more general theme of how the Clutha River was/is managed by the various district and regional authorities185, statutory bodies such as the Department of Conservation (responsible for the river margins) and commercial interests such as Contact Energy (who have water flow management and consent responsibilities), was derived from a range of participant responses addressing an equally diverse mixture of issues and meanings. For example, in Figure 7.4 within the theme of management practices affecting recreation and place meanings [Extract T3.38], it can be interpreted that concern with a lack of management of the Lake Dunstan shoreline had, from the participant’s view, impacted both the appearance of the shore areas around Cromwell and Bannockburn and had

185 To recap: Otago Regional Council; Queenstown Lakes District Council; Central Otago District Council; Clutha District Council (Fish and Game have no direct management responsibilities and Contact Energy only have management responsibilities under their Consents for operating the hydroelectric power stations at Roxburgh and Clyde).
begun to jeopardize his sense of place for these locations. His comment “We want to show our town in the best possible way” at the end of the extract suggested his sense of pride in, and hence meaning, for his home town that was vulnerable to erosion, in his view, through ineffective lake management.

Figure 7.4: Changing Meanings: Managing the Clutha River

Other aspects of this general theme are illustrated in Extracts T5.63 and T9.37/.38 in Figure 7.4, in which participants spoke about their concerns for what they perceived as shortcomings in the management and control of the growth of built and commercial development along the Clutha River, and growing restrictions on farmers who owned and grazed their stock adjacent to the banks
of the river. This latter perspective was particularly significant to the participant in Extract T9.37/.38, as throughout our conversation he had expressed very strong sentiments regarding his attachment and sense of guardianship, as he saw it, to both the land he owned along the Clutha and the Upper Clutha region in general (for example, see Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1 Valuing the CR). Therefore this perceived threat to his strongly expressed place meanings in addition to the economic impacts that increased regulation on his stock grazing would have on his livelihood, was in danger, in my view, of affecting those meanings through disconnecting him physically (and perhaps emotionally) with places that he literally loved and called home. Similar impacts on meanings were interpreted in Davenport and Anderson’s (2005) study of the Niobrara River community, where they identified a range of impacts on participants’ meanings for the river created by increasing commercial and residential development along the scenic river. In general they noted (2005: p.635) that ‘river development enhances some of the meanings participants attribute to the river and interferes with others, depending on the development’. Relevant to my participant in Extract T9.37/.38, Davenport and Anderson (2005: p.636) noted that ‘new subdivisions and elevated property values were said to contribute to the economic woes of some local landowners, especially ranchers and farmers’ which impacted on their meanings for the river and the local community.

The impacts from increasing development along the Clutha valley were largely discussed in the earlier theme Changing Place Meanings from CR Changes, but the participant in Extract T5.63 placed a slightly different emphasis on them - that of poorly controlled development impacting on people within the area, especially from a recreation perspective. In his view it seemed that these were impacts or effects that the district councils had not really taken into consideration, concentrating more on the physical impacts of development than the social/recreational ones. Although general social impacts of development are accounted for in the various district plans and resource consent procedures that span the Clutha River corridor186, understanding these impacts from the perspective of how they potentially affect recreational-place meanings for individuals - not just in terms of material/physical place changes but also in terms of emotional/meaning changes as well - is not adequately addressed in my view. As Davenport and Anderson (2005: p.639) similarly noted ‘…the most powerful message…for managers, planners, and community leaders is that contentious issues like development can be better understood by identifying and examining place meanings’.

Therefore understanding the potential range of impacts of development (a direct form of place making itself) on the types of place and recreational meanings illustrated in this study, and, importantly, how these are managed along the Clutha corridor, is a fundamental requirement for good management practice and wider social and environmental sustainability (cf. Williams 2008).

Returning to the theme of management practices, additional views were expressed by certain participants on the efficacy of how management responsibilities were split across the various agencies. For example one participant who lived in Cromwell viewed the existing management arrangements for Lake Dunstan as follows [T1.48]:

“Well the- all parties that have an interest such as the District Council, LINZ, Contact, they’re extremely good at professing care and none of them are any good at accepting responsibility. They all want to duck-shove and say, well yes, but this isn’t really our responsibility, it’s someone else’s.”

Another aspect of river management that one participant specifically identified, primarily from a commercial perspective, was the issue of watercraft regulation on the river and lakes and concurrently safety regulation. The participant raised this whilst expressing his concerns over increased use of the river and lakes by recreationists and also recent incidents amongst commercial operators that were beginning to impact upon his business [Extract T6.53]:

“How is that also because there’s a conservation order on the top section, does that have any impact?

P: Nothing to do with this – it’s about that English guy’s daughter who died here in the Kawarau; it’s created- the guy just won’t let it go and I- alright he’s lost his daughter and I feel very sad for him but he will not let it go- um, it’s really starting to effect [us], well it is, it’s impacting very hard. I mean, I’ve watched his [case] with interest...I pretty much know most of the guys involved and it’s a shame though; as I said, I’d like to see regulation as in Day Skippers licenses, but what’s going on up there [in Queenstown] is now getting to the point that it’s ludicrous.”

The participant expressed frustration with the extreme swing in attitude, as he saw it, from no regulation of recreational watercraft users to a level that could result in the near-prohibition of commercial operations on the river system. His meanings for the Clutha River, previously expressed
as both his home and his business\textsuperscript{187}, had the potential to be jeopardized quite literally if his tourism business based at Clyde and Alexandra were to close due to a massive increase in costly regulation requirements. In these examples, it was not just physical management issues which had given rise to changes that in turn impacted upon participants’ Clutha place meanings, but regulatory/planning (indeed political) management issues that had also created change and would continue to do so into the future. This interpretation ties in with Williams’ (2000b: p.81) broader conclusion that:

‘Planning creates meaning rather than merely representing meanings “as they really are”.
Exercises in mapping meanings are, by definition then, necessarily political acts in which meanings are being created and contested, with certain meanings gained and lost in the process.’

As with Williams’ broader idea of planning as a ‘political act’ so changes in river regulation and management act in a analogous way – acknowledging, creating and denying certain meanings over others – in a dynamic and temporally-driven process. By placing restrictions on how and what (or even when) certain types of recreation can be carried out on the Clutha, so in turn certain recreation and place meanings become privileged over others now and in the future. For the participant in the above extracts, this was already impacting his current place meanings focused on Clyde and Alexandra through the hanging threat of further restrictions, and had, as noted, the potential to severe them completely if he went out of business.

A less frequent but interesting theme which addressed participants’ current concerns regarding management of the dams is highlighted in Extract T6.30 in Figure 7.4. When discussing the significance of the dams on participants’ recreation-place meanings this concern was raised by several participants in the wider context of future management issues threatening both the river itself and participants’ place meanings. Extract T6.30 summarised succinctly the common sentiment expressed by these participants which had clearly been stimulated by the recent earthquakes in Christchurch in 2010 and 2011. The participant commented further [Extract T6.32]:

“But it’s going to take an issue, an incident like Christchurch to not have one of these small hydro dams around here [collapse]…and to kill people, for them to say, well hang on a sec, maybe we’d better really look at these bigger dams, um because [they] run down a major fault line. I mean having all this seismic activity in and around Christchurch that’s nothing

\textsuperscript{187} For example, see Chapter Four, Section 4.3.1 \textit{Valuing the CR}. 
compared to what’s gonna happen when it, this hits the Alpine fault. This thing [fault] runs off the Alpine fault, it leaves it at Makarora, the Clutha follows it all the way down, and then turns around below Foveaux Straight and rejoins the Alpine Fault so- it’s a big fault line.”

Another participant related her concerns to her own neighbourhood of Balclutha and the impact a dam failure might have for her place meanings with the potentially greater division of the town by the river [Extract T12.33]:

“...but that fault really worries me and CDC [Clutha District Council] have been told that it’s not if it goes [but when]. Now if that should happen the whole of Balclutha is going to be split in two and you’re going to have the Rosebank side and the north side and there’s just going to be one big gap between. It may never happen but CDC have been told by the scientists that it’s not if, it’s when, so that’s a concern too because if you put another dam down lower, which is where it will go...And if that Cromwell dam goes you’ve wasted all that money.”

She ended on an interesting and different note; that if one of the existing upstream dams failed after a new dam was built lower down on the Clutha, then the latter would likely be destroyed as a result and with it, all the investment that such a project demanded. Although being the only participant who linked the failure of an existing dam to the destruction of a potential future dam on the river, this perspective opened up both a fascinating and worrying window on the very concept of constructing another dam on the Clutha River. It also provided insight on the whole-river approach\textsuperscript{188} that the (Māori New Zealander) participant brought to her response on this question, making quite sobering ‘food for thought’ in regard to the potential consequences of a dam failure on the Clutha River and how people in general would be affected by such a disaster. From another perspective, the whole issue of earthquakes and dam collapse was seen as highly specific to both the Clutha River and New Zealand, emphasising the importance again of place-based and highly situated/contextual understandings of place relationships and meanings (Brooks et al. 2006).

Moving on to the final theme interpreted within *Managing the Clutha River*, participants raised three key system issues concerning the spread of Didymo\textsuperscript{189}, silting and water quality in the river and lakes. Figure 7.4 illustrates a selection of extracts that emphasised the range of effects that changes

\textsuperscript{188} Such a ‘whole-river’ approach has been termed *ki uta ki tai* – from the mountains to the sea (KTKO 2005; Tipa 2009).

in the river system were considered to have generated. Extract T11.50 encapsulated one response that was echoed by other participants, such as in the following [Extract T3.20]:

“I think the Didymo, everybody’s been a bit upset when the Didymo’s come into the [top] of the lake and things, and yeah, I guess we all feel a bit affected by it, so we’ve obviously got a relationship that way.”

The participant’s mention of “relationship” was in part a response to my question about whether he considered he had a relationship with the river and lakes (see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 A personal relationship for the main discussion of this theme). It also partly referenced how he felt the arrival of Didymo in the river system had raised his awareness of his relationship and how it had affected that relationship as a consequence. Whilst discussing the river at Beaumont, another participant noted that even while we were talking [Extract T9.5]:

“You can see the Didymo on the rocks there; they used to be clean and pure.”

Another participant reflected on how not only had the algae infected the Upper Clutha section and then spread down the river, but had begun to impact on the appearance and quality of the river itself [Extract T11.51]:

“It hasn’t hurt the fishing surprisingly…I would have thought it would of, but no, the fish done all right within the year. But it’s helped collect all the other um, pollutants that are in there; it grabs all the silt that comes down and anything – it’ll hold it all – before it just used to wash over all that, the rock, but now it’s holding that, which gives the appearance of the river being a lot dirtier – yellow on the rocks.”

The issue of silting, perceived as both naturally occurring and exacerbated by the construction of the Roxburgh and Clyde dams, was a topic mentioned at some stage of our conversations by the majority of the participants. Extract T5.61 in Figure 7.4 encapsulated both the general surprise at the increased rate of silt deposition, particularly in the Kawarau Arm of Lake Dunstan, and its noticeable effects on recreational users within the river system. Another participant expanded on this further, explaining in more detail that not only had the silting become a detraction for some of his recreational activities on Lake Dunstan but that it had begun to visibly alter the character of the Kawarau Arm [Extract T3.16]:
“P: I think, um, well I think it’s had quite a bit of detraction to certain parts of the river...seeing the silt build up...it’s not in the [Bannockburn] inlet, it’s in the river itself. When we first moved here it [the water] was like way up but now it’s actually a real river, the silt’s built up so much that it’s actually a river right down to Cromwell now.

AF: And when you say river do you mean-

P: It’s flowing.”

From these extracts, it is apparent that both the arrival of the Didymo algae into the Clutha’s system and the observed rapid increase in silting in Lake Dunstan appear to have had some influence upon participants’ meanings for the Clutha. The extracts suggest that this had largely taken the form of impacts upon the aesthetic qualities or meanings that the river and lakes held for the participants but it had also clearly influenced some of their recreational place-experience meanings regarding access and safety and therefore potentially their recreational enjoyment as well.

A final strand of the theme, focused on water quality, is illustrated in Extract T10.25/.26 in Figure 7.4 and provided one example of the noticeable change in water character\textsuperscript{190} that the participant perceived as the river flowed towards its mouth east of Balclutha. Another participant provided a different perspective on how she viewed the issue of water quality, taking a managerial perspective on what she thought of as being a more appropriate framework for improving water quality along the whole length of the Clutha [T12.20/.23]:

“...we’re wanting our water fixed from the top right down and if they were going to do it in chunks well they start at the top, get that clean and then come down like that. But instead of that they’re [the councils] doing a little bit here..., a little bit there, and the other thing is that the, one of the \textit{kaumatua}\textsuperscript{191} a few years ago, she said well we, um, want our water clean because we eat what comes out of the water and we drink the water and the only way to stay healthy is to have clean water and food that comes out of clean water. And of course the ORC, they were quite amazed, I mean they were very – it was just two different ways of looking at a thing...”

\textsuperscript{190} I deliberately use the more neutral word ‘character’ here as opposed to water ‘quality’ which my participants tended to use (hence the theme name) to distinguish between scientifically-based metrics of water quality and participants’ own perceptions of water quality. By employing ‘water character’ I am therefore not implying that the visible change in colour of the Lower Clutha automatically equates to a deterioration in water quality.

\textsuperscript{191} Māori elder.
The importance of clean water reflected in this extract, and especially as expressed by participants with Māori cultural affiliations, has been discussed in Chapter Five, Section 5.2.1 People-environment relationship within the thematic network Clutha River Meanings. Expanding on the cultural significance that clean water held for participants, it is clear that changes in water quality in the river and lakes - whether measured or implied - certainly also influenced participants’ recreation-place meanings. As one participant commented [Extracts T5.22 and T5.36]:

“...it’s still got a special place because it is a river, it’s water. I’m very concerned about the river itself, I’m concerned with what I’m seeing with water quality, water abstraction; the downstream effects of that.”

“Because the more water that’s taken out the more growth, the more agriculture...more dairy cows, it’s been talked about, and I have real fears that in time more and more pumping of water that we’ve seen, more water going onto paddocks there by, that there’s going to be a greater effect – pollution levels will climb – I suspect that’s already happening...So it worries me, it really does worry me. In time, when I’ve gone, I’d like to think that there’s still a river that people can enjoy.”

Addressing the themes of river management practices, dam management and river system issues separately, as above, does not allow the greater significance of the theme Managing the Clutha River to be appreciated. Brought together these diverse and focused examples of how and why participants’ recreation and river-place meanings had been impacted and variably changed through management practices, provide insight into a different and yet interrelated perspective of change and place making in the Clutha River system. Other themes within Changing Meanings (Figure 7.1) were interpreted predominantly by participants and as a consequence myself, from the perspective of physical changes to the Clutha River corridor, whether from increasing urban development, agriculture, hydroelectric power generation or simply changes in access and increasing recreational use. The majority of these types of change were also recognised as having social effects – particularly with respect to the recreational context of the research – but neither of these perspectives specifically captured the over-arching and structuring effects that river management and the regulation of activities along the Clutha corridor created and sustained.

The theme Managing the Clutha provides this perspective, grounded in the participants’ experiences and meanings of change, but differentiated by my proposition of the powerful influence
(or discourse) that river management exerts to continuously create and shape these experiences and meanings. Therefore I suggest that interwoven within all of the thematic networks discussed in this and the previous three chapters is the theme of how the river has been managed (and therefore constructed) – both formally and informally – at least since the mid-19th Century as European settlers began to have a direct and substantial impact upon the physical, economic and socio-cultural environments of the Clutha River 192.

Chapter Two, Sections 2.3.4 and 2.3.5 discussed and critiqued current international and New Zealand examples of river regulatory frameworks and in Section 2.3.6, the frameworks relating specifically to river regulation. Together these discussions broadly concluded that the dominant resource-driven and instrumental paradigms of water management, top-down approaches to reaching more inclusive socio-cultural understandings of water, and recreation ‘as a shadow measure of symbolic value’ (McCool et al. 2008: p.239) were inadequate for achieving a truly integrated, collaborative, socio-cultural, and catchment/place-based framework for assessing and managing rivers (Hillman 2009; Steenstra 2009; Stokowski 2008; Tipa 2009; Williams 2000b). Through this analysis of the Clutha River and how participants’ viewed different management aspects of the river in the context of their recreational and place meanings, it can be seen that changes brought about by management practices (e.g. regulation and monitoring), development (e.g. the dams) and anthropogenic influences on natural processes (e.g. silting at least in part due to the dams, and Didymo) have all interacted over time, to create, shape and interact with participants’ recreation and river-place meanings. In doing so they have also played a part in making the Clutha River and its places by their constructive aspect, as expressed through participants’ diverse and dynamic meanings (or collective discourses of place) which have coalesced and dispersed in their own fluid relationships to continuously (re)create places of meaning in a wider web of social practices and discourse (Massey 2005; Stewart 2008; Stokowski 2008).

7.3 Changing Meanings: Summary of Findings

The final section of Chapter Seven summarises the findings, key conclusions and their contribution to the broader research contexts of the study from the themes discussed in Changing Meanings and

192 This does not imply that Māori living along and using the Clutha River did not have an impact on these same contexts but simply that their impact is probably far less discernible that those of the European settlers, for example the dramatic late 19th Century gold and mineral dredging of the Upper and mid-Clutha reaches.
looks ahead to the last chapter of this study, **Chapter Eight: Fluid Relationships of Place, Meaning and Recreation on the Clutha River**, which brings together the findings of all four thematic networks and provides a succinct statement of the study’s contribution to the contexts framing this research.

### 7.3.1 Themes

*Changing place meanings from CR changes*

This theme focused largely on the physical changes to the Clutha perceive by participants and my interpretation of their effects on some of the place-experience meanings discussed in Chapter Four to Six. A range of physical changes were identified and interpreted from a number of perspectives. These included the agency of the river/lakes themselves to affect a change in meanings for participants; increasing housing and commercial development along the lake and river margins which impeded access in general and increased social impacts for recreation; and anthropogenically enhanced ‘natural’ changes. Different scales of change were also identified, both temporal and spatial, in a predominantly incremental process. The consequences of these changes on participants’ place meanings were seen as varied, with both positive and negative effects in evidence in their comments, and often both. Such ambiguity was noted as a thread weaving through all three themes of the network and was also posited as an example of the (intrinsic) fluidity of participants’ place relationships as both their places and meanings changed over time.

The findings engaged with the broader literature on a number of aspects. By identifying the role and agency of the Clutha River itself to change participants’ meanings for it through their experiences, the theme provided further illustration of the co-constituting nature of place and meaning, argued in the previous findings chapters (and see Casey 1997; Malpas 1998), and the river’s key role as a ‘relationship partner’ in creating place meanings (Brooks *et al.* 2006). However the findings went further to suggest that through the agency shown by the Clutha, the role of place as a relationship partner was insufficiently addressed in Brooks *et al.* (2001) study, being relegated to a ‘setting’ without full acknowledgement of the active agency that place holds (Williams 2008). Through this argument the findings were linked to the work of Cloke and Jones (2000) as a grounded example of the agency of non-humans (the river) in the ‘construction and reconstruction’ of the Clutha River as a place/places. The findings of *Changing place meanings from CR changes* relating to the types, scale and nature of change along the Clutha valley and their effects on participants’ meanings engaged with and were supported by the comparable findings noted in Davenport and
Anderson’s (2005) study of the Niobrara River, USA. Together, both studies illustrate the significant effects that physical, social and economic changes have had on people’s place meanings (both positive and negative) and consequently place relationships, and highlight the need for planning and outdoor recreation management frameworks to recognise and engage more fully with change and its effects on place meanings (Williams 2000b).

*Damming the Clutha’s meanings*

The theme of *Damming the Clutha’s meanings* was focused around the effects the changes the Roxburgh and predominantly Clyde Dam developments brought to the Clutha River and what meanings were associated with the developments for participants. As a number of participants had had a direct association with the Clyde Dam development, the level and nature of their involvement was interpreted to have shaped some of their perspectives and place meanings (and continued to do so) for the river and lakes. These were often expressed in rather ambiguous ways, so stating both the negative impacts the dam had on the river (flooding the Cromwell Gorge), but also the positive benefits, especially for recreation, that it had brought with the creation of Lake Dunstan. The dam developments were seen as illustrating the powerful interconnectivity between physical place changes and place-experience meanings that affected participants’ Clutha place relationships, through the fluidity (or ambiguity) in the meanings they created. This was demonstrated by many of the participants holding multiple meanings for both the river and the lakes which suggested that rather than thinning or erasing certain place meanings for the river through its development, the lakes both added to and altered these meanings, resulting in a complex, interwoven and continuing process of meaning and place making.

Aspects of the findings of *Damming the Clutha’s meanings* were very specific to the context of the Clutha River and its history of hydroelectric power development, but broader ideas such as the effects of physical place changes on place meanings, the ambiguity of meanings (often ‘grey’ perspectives), and the importance of recognising both continuity and change in place meanings, were identified in the broader literature. In particular the place meaning studies of Gustafson (2001) and Manzo (2005) were found to have overlapping themes with this finding, both stressing the significance of continuity and change in place meanings, but without the detailed and situated examples provided in this study. Similarly both Gustafson’s (2001) and Manzo’s (2005) research placed less emphasis on the effects of physical changes to places and consequently place meanings.
over time, and only Gustafson (2001) gave attention to the idea of place as an ongoing process of meaning making. The findings of Damming the Clutha’s meanings provided greater insight into these diverse processes of change and their complex relationships to the (re)creation of place meanings through the example of the dam developments. They aligned more closely with Gustafson’s (2001) conception of place change as an ongoing process through my metaphor of ‘fluidity’, in opposition to Manzo’s (2005: p,81) concept of ‘adding layers of meanings to places’ which lacked a deeper recognition of the dynamic and fluctuating effects of change on place meanings. In doing so the findings gave both a grounded and insightful example of the concept of place as a process, or intersections of meaning (Anderson 2010; Massey 2005) that form part of the conceptual framework for this study, presented in Chapter Two.

Managing the Clutha River

The theme Managing the Clutha River addressed some of the issues the Clutha River is facing in terms of lake management practices; silting; Didymo; water quality; farming restrictions; and management of the two dams. Participants raised issues regarding the increasing development and numbers of people along the river and lakes that were interpreted as having social and recreational impacts on their place-experience meanings, for example through restricting access to the water, which were being overlooked in the planning process (Davenport and Anderson 2005). Issues such as inconsistencies in watercraft regulation currently in play were identified as having a potentially significant impact on place meanings through their threat to restrict both recreational and also commercial boating activities. One issue specific to the Clutha River was the perceived risk posed by the Roxburgh and Clyde Dams to the populations and areas below them in the event of a major earthquake that would have a catastrophic impact on participants’ places and place meanings. Finally, issues such as the spread of Didymo and increased silting in the lower Kawarau River and lakes were interpreted as effecting place meanings through their negative aesthetic impacts, and risks posed to water safety and access. These particular issues were also interpreted as having raised participants’ awareness of their diverse relationships with the river and lakes through the perceived threats to their favourite places.

Overall, the findings of Managing the Clutha River engaged strongly with the literature addressing freshwater management by identifying the significant role of river management and planning in (re)creating, shaping and ultimately controlling (to a degree) both the development of river places and as a consequence, certain place meanings (Hillman 2009; Steenstra 2009; Tipa 2009; Williams
Through examining the issues raised by participants for the Clutha and how these had affected some of their personal place meanings, these provided insight into the underlying power that current river management and planning practices have to shape place meanings (Davenport and Anderson 2005). This was effected by controlling development, providing (in)adequate management practices such as weed control and silt management, and ultimately framing the river and lakes in a discourse of management regulation that defined what the water of the Clutha can or cannot be used for. In this way, the management and planning practices of the Clutha River were interpreted as acting in a place making capacity which had (re)created the Clutha repeatedly over time (Williams 2000b).

7.3.2 Findings: Changing Meanings

As a thematic network, Changing Meanings brought together the three themes summarised above as well as interlinking with the various discussions on ‘change’ addressed in Chapters Four to Six, through characterising the types of changes and the issues surrounding them that participants expressed as having an effect on their place and experience meanings. As such the network findings specifically address the second research question of this study in terms of what and how place meanings have changed for the Clutha River. The network described these changes and issues that ranged from physical and environmental changes in the Clutha corridor such as increasing built development, altering access to the water, and system issues of silting and Didymo, to social issues such as increasing numbers of people, recreational conflicts, and changing attitudes to river margin and water use and regulation. A number of these themes were found to overlap with existing place meaning research (Brooks et al. 2006; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Schroeder 1996), demonstrating their significance for river communities and, therefore, the continuing need for greater understanding of the diversity, scale and place-based nature of their significance (Williams 2008). However some very specific and Clutha-focused issues were raised such as the environmental effects of the Roxburgh and Clyde dam developments, their social effects such as stigmatising involvement with the developments, and their future risk to communities in the Clutha corridor from an earthquake event. Such place-specific issues again highlight the importance of understanding place meanings and the effects of change on places from a contextual and situated standpoint (Stewart 2008).
The findings of *Changing Meanings* also analysed and interpreted the effects of these changes on participants’ diverse place-experience meanings for the Clutha and argued for the powerful interconnectivity of both differing/changing participant experiences and changes in their meaningful places that coalesced to create and re-create place meanings over time (cf. Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005). In doing so it addressed the third research question of this study which asked how places and the river itself had been made through participants’ place-experience meanings. It suggested that through the dynamic, temporal and fluid process of place meaning creation (as proposed in Chapter Four Knowing the Clutha), so *Changing Meanings* highlighted some of the ways that these meanings could be altered or replaced (or even lost) through physical and social changes, arguing against the idea of a ‘thinning’ of place meanings (cf Sack 1997; Williams 2000b) and instead advocating a fluidity of meaning change. Through this process, places and their diverse, contested and ambiguous meanings were (delicately) sustained through a dynamic, interconnected and incremental process that coalesced (and dispersed) certain meanings for certain places at certain times (cf. Anderson 2010; Massey 2005). The catalysts of change, such as the Clutha River issues illustrated here, were argued as simultaneously halting the ongoing development of some of the participants’ place meanings (e.g. those held for the inundated Cromwell Gorge) but replaced them with new meanings (whether positive, negative or both) which, as a consequence, frequently altered participants’ continuing place relationships. Brought together, *Changing Meanings* provided a grounded and detailed example of the process and nature of place meaning change that makes a contribution to the broader place literature and develops further understanding of the complex, multi-faceted and strongly fluid relationships of people and place.

7.3.3 Looking ahead to Chapter Eight – Fluid relationships of Place, Meaning and Recreation on the Clutha

Chapter Seven *Changing Meanings* completed the interpretive analysis of this study by focusing on the nature, type and meaning of change for the Clutha and its ramifications for participants’ place and recreation meanings. In doing so it drew on the preceding findings chapters to illustrate and examine how and to what extent the diverse range of changes expressed by participants - physical, environmental, social and economic - had affected their multidimensional and overlapping place and recreation meanings. Having brought together these different themes of place and recreation, meaning creation, river change and meaning change in Chapter Seven, the study now takes these findings and those of Chapters Four to Six into *Chapter Eight: Fluid relationships of Place, Meaning*
and Recreation on the Clutha to summarise the argument constructed in this study, show its relationship to the conceptual framework advanced in Chapter Two and discuss the overall contribution of the study, its limitations and spaces for further research. In doing so, Chapter Eight draws together the diverse elements and findings of this study to fully address the research questions and research aims outlined in Chapter One.
CHAPTER EIGHT: FLUID RELATIONSHIPS OF PLACE, MEANING AND RECREATION ON THE CLUTHA RIVER

8.1 Introducing Chapter Eight

Chapters Four to Seven argued for a much more complex, dynamic, temporal and fluid understanding of people-place relationships and the construction of place meanings than is currently engaged with in recreation and river management knowledge literatures. By taking a broadly cultural geography approach to investigating these phenomenon through a conceptual framework built on pluralistic concepts of place, place meanings and sense of place (Chapter Two), the study has also illustrated the synergistic and multidimensional facets of place that constructed participants’ meanings of the Clutha River, their river places and recreational experiences. It highlighted the nature of participants’ tightly interwoven place, recreational and life experiences which often could not be clearly demarcated or separated, and which were also naturally imbued with personal emotion. This main finding suggests and supports my argument for the importance of studying such meanings and experiences together rather than in isolation, as currently undertaken in the majority of contemporary recreation management research.

Chapter Eight provides a succinct summing up of the thesis People, Rivers and Recreation by mapping the study, its findings and overall contribution to knowledge. It approaches this task by first presenting a ‘map’ of the study, before presenting the various study findings in précis form and outlining their contribution to knowledge. It then revisits the research questions and provides a statement of findings for each one. Finally, the chapter moves on to discuss the aspects of the findings that have potential for further investigation and research, closing with a brief personal reflection on my role as an interpretive researcher.

8.2 Mapping the Study and its Findings

In line with the frequent use of the network illustrations to present or ‘map’ different concepts and the empirical data in this study, Figure 8.1 provides a concise summation of the research process, the conceptual framework and the key analysis themes of this thesis.
Figure 8.1 illustrates the research process of the study and its reiterative cycles (marked in red) that were a key part of the overall research methodology and its hermeneutic cycle, previously discussed in Chapter Three, Section 3.3.1. As can be seen, the research contexts, identified gaps in knowledge (the need to reframe river values and place meanings from socio-cultural and place meaning perspectives), and the research questions derived from those gaps (in green) were the main drivers for the study and framed the research and its findings along with my own subject position (Chapter One). The conceptual framing of the study (in purple) and its theorising of place, rivers and recreation demonstrates the pluralistic approach adopted for conceiving how these areas of knowledge could and should be understood, in order to expand but also situate and contextualise such knowledges both currently and in future research (Chapter Two). The integrated research philosophy and methodology (in pink) of the study is shown as the anchor point of the research in terms of the reiterative/Hermeneutic cycles that created a looped process of thought and knowledge development (Chapter Three). This thinking loop cycled both backwards and forwards to develop and refine the study, its research questions and its findings. Finally the results of the thematic analysis are also shown (in blue) with the four global themes (or networks) supported and informed by their primary sub-themes (Chapters Four to Seven).
Figure 8.1 Mapping the Clutha River study (research contexts; conceptual framework; research methodologies; thematic analysis)

- River valuation & framing
- Recreation & Place

Gaps
Need to reframe river values through socio-cultural meanings; recreation through place meanings

RQ1: What are people’s recreation experiences and places meanings?

RQ2: How are meanings created and expressed; have they changed over time?

RQ3: How do place meanings make places on the Clutha River?

Research Contexts

- Place making
- Sense of place
- Being, meaning, dwelling, process & intersection
- Relationships

Research Philosophy
- Interpretive
- Social Constructivist
- Intersubjectivity
- Pluralism

Research Methodology
- Hermeneutic
- Co-constructing
- Interviews
- Thematic analysis

Meanings

- Rec experiences making meanings
- Family meanings of CR rec
- Rec continuing long-term cultural practices
- Changing recreation meanings

- Changing place meanings from CR changes
- Damming the Clutha’s meanings
- Managing the Clutha River

- Seeing the Clutha
- Valuing the CR
- The connecting Clutha
- CR as natural threat

- Meaningful memories
- A personal relationship
- People-environment relationship
- CR as diverse resource

- Rec experiences making meanings
- Family meanings of CR rec
- Rec continuing long-term cultural practices
- Changing recreation meanings

- Changing place meanings from CR changes
- Damming the Clutha’s meanings
- Managing the Clutha River
Through mapping this research process a number of points can be put forward. Making the process transparent has allowed both myself and the reader to recognise and appreciate the wholly interpretive and complex nature of qualitative research whilst enabling a methodical and robust research study to be undertaken. As a result, the thesis has been able to show not just the more subject or concrete opinions of the participants’ and literature sources, but also the contradicting, ambivalent and often ambiguous, intersubjective nature of those views and positions. In highlighting these, the critical pluralism advocated and embraced from the very beginning of this study, is both demonstrated and made visible (Patterson and Williams 2005). As a related point, the use of a hermeneutic philosophy and methodology, has proven to be an effective way to actualise this methodological transparency through its inherent reiterative cycles of knowledge gathering, analysis, critique and re-analysis, which has produced a theoretical and grounded piece of research that openly acknowledges its co-constructed nature. Finally, in using a thematic analysis methodology expressed through the thematic networks in this study, so an empirically-supported and visual tool was created to present and interrogate the thesis findings.

The conceptual framework shown in Figure 8.1 highlights several further points. The combination of place, river and recreation concepts enabled an argument to be constructed around the core research contexts of river valuation issues, and recreation and place issues that allowed these concerns to be explored and framed coherently and systematically. In addition, using a cultural geography ‘frame’ to link these diverse concepts together provided further coherence through which to keep the research focused and pragmatically bounded. The key argument proposed through the conceptual framework, that river recreation contributes to both the creation of peoples’ place meanings and broader life experiences through a multi-faceted, fluid, place-experience relationship which also plays a role in making peoples’ meaningful places, has been fundamental in re-interpreting the research questions and literature review of the study. Brought together with the study’s research philosophy and methodology, the argument for the need to reframe river valuation and recreation meanings in socio-cultural and place perspectives, embedded within the conceptual framework of place, rivers and recreation, has been demonstrated, through an empirically-led and interpretively-driven analysis, to be a valid one.

The key analysis themes summarised in Figure 8.1 were the core results of the thematic analysis, that interpreted four, interconnected and often overlapping global themes, each of which characterised a considerable network of diverse, sometimes opposed, and frequently interlinked
themes and interpretations. The primary significance of these four Clutha River global themes and their networks is twofold. Firstly, the global themes suggest that place, recreation experience and meaning on the Clutha River share a mutual and symbiotic relationship that is demonstrated through a considerable number of interwoven and time-dependent ways. These include participants’ personal relationships with places through recreation over their life-course; family meanings of recreation place-experiences; and broader and indigenous cultural meanings of recreation and river places. Secondly, they demonstrate that it is possible to collate, analyse and interpret a large and complex corpus of participant data to produce an intelligible and discursive analysis of a multi-conceptual study.

The global themes also demonstrate the strongly interlinked meanings of recreation place-experiences with participants’ much broader life experience and place meanings, that coalesce and change with time. Hence two of the global themes, Knowing the Clutha and Clutha River Meanings are far more focused upon non- or partial recreational meanings for the Clutha River, and one global theme, Changing Meanings, combines both recreational and non-recreational meanings equally.

Extending this mapping of the study further, the next section discusses in more detail the key findings of the thesis, its conceptual argument, and the main theoretical contributions to recreation and place knowledge and their research methods.

8.3 The Thesis and its Contribution to Recreation and Place Knowledge

Reflecting for a moment on the methodological approach of the thesis, the employment of the thematic networks method for the analysis of the interview data also proved highly useful for organising or theming the discussion of the findings and their place in the relevant conceptual literature. Therefore, this section continues to use the four thematic networks and their main organising themes to bring together the most significant findings, their relevance to the conceptual literature, and the overall theoretical contributions to knowledge made by this thesis before highlighting the methodological contribution of the thesis through its approach to researching people, rivers and recreation place meanings. Following these discussions, Section 8.4 re-examines the research questions originally stated in Chapter One, Section 1.3.1, and states how the thesis has met these questions.
The thematic network *Knowing the Clutha* examined the different ways that participants conceived, understood and therefore expressed the Clutha River, and how they came to know the river and its places through various types of experiences. The network found that the Clutha was largely conceived and expressed by participants in descriptive, spatial and meaning terms simultaneously, and as both one (e.g. ‘the Clutha River’) and many places (e.g. Upper Clutha, Cromwell Gap, a particular reach or individual, meaningful spot) at the same time. The key elements to the concept of ‘knowing’ itself, in relation to the river and its places, were primarily twofold. Firstly, ideas of *familiarity* with places - different degrees and levels of time and experience actually spent in places by participants (*place-experience*) – which were broadened by non-experiential knowledge (e.g. second-hand knowledge and broad socio-historical discourses creating imaginative geographies of the Clutha), and which culminated in varying degrees of familiarity. The second element interpreted how participants used complex valuations of the river, based on both their direct and indirect place-experiences, to both conceptualise and position it in relation to other rivers and types of places. The network also found that the Clutha acted as a spatial, temporal and symbolic *connector* of meanings for participants, whilst sometimes, in contrast, also acting as a source of their *disconnection*, for example, when perceived as a dangerous and threatening river. Finally, the types of experiences that allowed participants to know the river ranged from recreational encounters over their life course that sat alongside and often closely interlinked with work, family, broader social and even political life and place experiences of the Clutha.

The findings of *Knowing the Clutha* argue for supporting and informing various, largely accepted, sense of place concepts in the conceptual literature through analysing and presenting a place-based and therefore grounded example of how people come to know and describe their places/place meanings (e.g. Agnew 1987; Cresswell 2004; Relph 1976; Tuan 1977). The findings also suggest a need for expanding and contributing to current understandings of concepts specifically relating to...
place meanings (*cf.* Gustafson 2001) through recognising that valuations of place (and experiences) are integral to the wider multiplicities of how we know/conceive places and therefore create meaning for and from places (*cf.* Manzo 2005). Finally, the network demonstrated and illuminated that place, sense of place and place meanings are of a multifaceted and super complex construction in which place can be engaged with on many levels, and in different and highly subjective and interpersonal ways (Anderson 2010; Massey 2005). As such it engaged with multiple and pluralistic concepts of place as intersections (Massey 2005), ‘place-traces’ (Anderson 2010), and topophobia (Tuan 1979), signifying the power of places to generate complex, fluid and ambiguous meanings for participants both through place-experiences and experiences-in-place (Manzo 2005).

The overall contribution to knowledge from the thematic network *Knowing the Clutha* is the provision of a detailed, grounded and place-based empirical example which informs and expands the mainly theoretical concept of a co-constituting relationship between life experiences and place meanings (Malpas 1998; Relph 2008). It achieves this through closely analysing concepts of knowing and place meanings at the semantic level, but more significantly, at a latent or constructional level, identifying not only how participants conceived the Clutha in spatio-temporal and emotional terms, but how they constructed this knowing in language and thought (*cf.* Mugerauer 1985). Linking to this, the network has identified and drawn attention to the significance of familiarity as a complex geographic/experiential/temporal relationship between people and place that is integral to the co-constructional and relational nature of participants’ place meanings (*cf.* Anderson 2012; Ingold 1993; Stephenson 2008). Thus it has strengthened the argument for place as a truly pluralistic concept, one in which place is positioned as the primary generator or anchor of human experience ahead of experience itself (*cf.* Crang 1998; Manzo 2005).

**Clutha River Meanings**

- Meaningful memories
- A personal relationship
- People-environment relationship
- CR as diverse resource

*Clutha River Meanings* looked at the wider place-experience meanings of participants with the Clutha River in order to provide a contextual understanding for their more focused recreation meanings and also to reflect and examine the conceptual argument that proposes recreation
experiences and meanings as being interwoven with peoples’ broader life experiences (Godbey et al. 2005; Rojek 2005). The network identified that meaningful place-experiences for participants helped form memories which were capable of storing and re-creating both the places and experiences through recall later on in their lives. This was seen as particularly significant for those places on the river which were no longer accessible or ‘lost’ to later development (for example, the inundated Cromwell and Roxburgh Gorges) in that it allowed participants’ to retain their place meanings, which, as a consequence, could still have the potential to influence their opinions on current developments along the Clutha valley. Clutha River Meanings also found that participant-place relationships were often comparable to human interpersonal relationships (e.g. family/friends) through their emotional, familial and care-taking qualities. These participant-place relationships were also found to be open and subject to change over time, emphasising the inherent temporality of such relationships, and their changeability in terms of participant meanings. Another aspect highlighted through the network was the importance for participants of being near the river (and water in general) for their personal and cultural well-being and for maintaining a sense of connection to their environment. This theme was shown to be interconnected with a further idea, that of the plurality of resource meanings for the river, which taken together, underlined the position and significance of the Clutha in a spectrum of personal, social, recreational, economic and broadly environmental relationships.

The findings of Clutha River Meanings intersect with a number of interrelated areas of the conceptual literature that posit, in the first instance, the importance of place and place-meanings in creating stories/memories of lived experiences (Casey 1987; Glover 2003; Stewart 2008). Casey’s (1987) largely theoretical work on place memory was shown to be particularly relevant to the participant’s stories and memories of the Clutha conveyed through their interviews, as a means to analyse the significance of such place memories in place and meaning (re)creation. The importance of place memories was also seen as being associated with, and partly illustrating the many complexities of the multiple and diverse place relationship concepts (cf. Brooks et al. 2006; Williams 2008). Such intricate and perhaps neglected aspects of place relationships identified by this network, which were often connected through participants’ recreational experiences on the Clutha, supported, and were supported by, other river studies (Bricker and Kerstetter 2002; Davenport & Anderson 2005; McCool et al. 2008a). Specifically New Zealand cultural aspects of these relationships, such as Māori cultural traditions and pastoral care meanings for the river, were
proposed as being unique to the Clutha River context but significant for more widespread, river-place relationship understandings (cf. Goodall 2002; Steenstra 2009; Tipa 2009).

The findings of the thematic network **Clutha River Meanings** contribute to our theoretical knowledge and understandings of place meaning generation by the recognition and elucidation of the strongly reciprocal relationship that exists between places, diverse human experiences and memories (cf. Casey 1987). This has been argued as significant for the research contexts of river valuation and recreation management, through highlighting the value and importance of place-experience memories to everyday people, such as the participants, whose meanings/memories for the Clutha can become impacted by changes in the river’s environment, such as from housing and dam developments. On a broader level, the network has also raised awareness of the important role played by time or temporality in shaping - physically, symbolically and emotionally - the diversity of place relationships that exist for participants and the Clutha River. These (temporal) place relationships have been demonstrated as both strongly valued, often highly emotional and to differing degrees fluid for some participants; intangible qualities that have been argued as being challenging to capture and take account of in current recreation and particularly river management frameworks.

Therefore, the significance of this contribution lies in finding ways to recognise and widen our understanding of the multifaceted and fluid people-river-place relationships in terms of the effects of time, development, and meaning change for natural and environmental resources, such as those encapsulated by the Clutha. I argue that such meaning changes have the capacity to influence, and be influenced by, broader resource management and political changes, which Strang (2004) noted as being of world-wide significance in the fight for the control of water resources. This point also connects with some of the broader river management issues discussed in Chapter Two (Section 2.3) (Hillman 2009) and, by demonstrating the complexities of river place-relationships on the Clutha River, has argued for the need to make more visible some of the elements or processes through which people and places create meanings and change meanings before those places and memories are lost for good.
Recreation Meanings as a thematic network characterised the predominantly recreation place-experience meanings for participants and the Clutha River and therefore occupied the focal point of the thesis through which the developing concepts of recreation as creating place meanings and place making were explored. The network found that recreation place-experiences created a diverse spectrum of meanings for participants such as socialising, pleasure, family time, activity, challenges, quiet and wilderness meanings. It also suggested, in line with the place meaning-creation findings of the previous two networks, that recreational experiences similarly contributed to creating place meanings for participants through an equally diverse and comparable range of meanings. Within these varied meanings and conceptions of recreation and place meanings, it was argued that intergenerational ideas of family time from Clutha River recreation meanings were of particular significance, both in the context of the Clutha and also in the broader context of river recreation. Interlinking with this finding, recreation on the Clutha was also interpreted as a way to sustain specifically Māori cultural practices - recreational and non-recreational - for certain Māori participants that were tightly intertwined with ancestral and cultural places, and their place meanings. This blurring of the distinctions between recreational, cultural and indigenous place-experience meanings and practices is highly significant for understanding recreation meanings in the context of river recreation and the Clutha River, and equally for the potential to broaden current understandings of what are defined as ‘recreational’ practices and experiences more broadly, especially in the context of river recreation. Finally, Recreation Meanings suggested that physical and environmental changes along the Clutha Valley over time, alongside continuing social changes such as trends in recreational practices and work-family time balance, strongly influenced changes in participants’ recreation place-experience meanings both positively and negatively. These extrinsic changes in recreational meanings for the Clutha by participants were also seen as acting,
concurrently, with personal or intrinsic changes in meaning which taken together, in some cases resulted in gradual meaning change over the course of participants’ lives.

The findings of **Recreation Meanings** support and expand the multi-dimensional, place-based and culturally interwoven concepts of recreation as proposed by Hammitt (2004); Riese and Vorkinn (2002); Smith (2004); Stephenson (2008); and Williams (2008). The findings of the network also inform and expand existing (but primarily psychological) family meanings of outdoor recreation (Freeman and Zabriskie 2002; Harrington 2006), but from an alternative, place-experience perspective. In doing so, it challenges the dominantly psychological/experiential focus of contemporary familial recreational experience research and re-focuses it on a broader, place-based, and meanings perspective, which, it has been argued, provides a much richer and more insightful understanding of family recreational place-experiences. Further, **Recreation Meanings** provides a grounded example of culturally-specific, Māori understandings of outdoor and river recreation that inform the somewhat limited river recreation research currently available (Smith 1998; Williams & Carr 1993).

The contribution to knowledge of the thematic network **Recreation Meanings** is its positioning of the Clutha River as an active co-constuctor of recreation meanings and people-place relationships through river recreation. Through demonstrating the role of the river and its many physical changes over time in contributing to participants’ equally changeable river recreation meanings, so the broader thesis of the primacy of place before experience in creating meanings is supported (Malpas 1998). It provides empirical and place-based support for the premise of recreation meanings as being integrated within wider, culturally-specific, life-course place-experience meanings that are difficult to completely separate. This is seen as important for gaining a better understanding of the perceptions, needs and future role of outdoor recreation in peoples’ lives and how these needs are addressed in future recreation management frameworks. Finally **Recreation Meanings** makes a contribution through its recognition of the need to understand the many types and levels of change as crucial in continuing to manage changing recreation-place meanings in river and outdoor recreation more generally. It questions the capacity of current outdoor recreation management frameworks to fully account for, and respond to, such types of change, which, consequently, is seen as restricting their capacity to respond and adapt to peoples’ changing recreation and place meanings. This leads to the suggestion that current outdoor recreation management frameworks
should be altered to include more place-based, reiterative and consultative processes in their operation.

The thematic network **Changing Meanings** examined more closely the nature and role of change in shaping participants’ recreation and place-experience meanings for the Clutha River, and in doing so drew together a number of interlinking themes touched upon in the preceding thematic networks. The network identified a range of largely physical and environmental changes, such as built development; silting; increased population; and alterations to recreational and river access, which strongly influenced participants’ past and present place-experience meanings for the river. Of these significant physical changes, the Roxburgh and Clyde dams on the Clutha were interpreted to have impacted participants’ meanings for certain places (e.g. the Cromwell Gorge) and the river in general both in positive and negative ways, which had resulted in varying levels of ambiguity. The findings of the network also proposed that in some participants’ opinions current river and recreational management practices had, and continued, to affect their place meanings negatively through increased and sometimes conflicting recreational use along the river margins, the introduction of invasive weeds and algae into the catchment, and continued silting from the dams.

The overall findings of **Changing Meanings** were argued as supporting the idea of the Clutha River as a place or ‘relationship partner’ (Brooks *et al.* 2006) but in focusing upon the roles of place (e.g. the Clutha River) and change, they were seen as developing this relationship concept to show the active agency of the Clutha in that relationship (*cf.* Cloke & Jones 2000), a role not specifically addressed in Brooks *et al’s.* (2006) study. In my conceptualisation and supported by the network findings, the Clutha was positioned as an equal partner in people’s place-experience relationships with the result that the many changes it had undergone were, as a consequence, reflected back on participants’ place-experience meanings. This relationship was proposed as having important implications for the future management of the Clutha River corridor in terms of the kinds of current and future
developments that may potentially impact upon participants’ and other peoples’ significant place relationships and meanings. The findings also support (and are supported by) a number of comparable studies with regard to the observed effects of place changes and their impacts on place meanings (cf. Davenport and Anderson 2005; Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005); taken together, and placed in the research contexts of rivers and recreation, I have argued that this gives further credence to the need for current recreation management frameworks to engage with different types of change more actively and comprehensively (Williams 2000b).

Overall, Changing Meanings makes a contribution to recreation and place knowledge through its identification and analysis of diverse types and processes of change - physical, social, economic and cultural - that influence and (re)shape the recreational and broader life course, place-experience meanings of people. As such, these complex processes of change have been proposed as a crucial element in understanding broader place and meaning changes and within the context of rivers and recreation, providing further, compelling support for the argument that the processes of change are an element that have been poorly understood, and underplayed, in both research and management literatures (Manzo 2008; McCool et al. 2008a). The network findings have also demonstrated the powerful interconnectivity/symbiosis between changing participant experiences and place changes that result, often fluidly, in the ongoing (re)creation of certain place-experience meanings, both positively and negatively, during participants’ life courses. Recognising the significance of such interconnectivity in the first instance and, secondly, its pivotal position in altering people’s place meanings, both positively and negatively, over time is argued as expanding how both place and recreation are conceptualised in theory, and actualised in practice. In conclusion, Changing Meanings is seen as the key driver in creating (and sustaining) fluid people and place (recreation) relationships through the ongoing re-creation of river-place meanings. Its recognition and engagement with change, is proposed as crucial to more effective river and recreation valuation and the re-conceptualisation of people, river and recreation relationships.

Conclusion

Bringing the four global themes together, the overall contribution of this thesis to the river, recreation and place research contexts of this study, can be stated as follows. In the first instance, the thesis has provided a fine-grained, grounded and nuanced example of the myriad, complex, fluctuating and highly diverse types of place and experience relationships that exist in the context of
people-river-recreation relationships, and in doing so, has provided fresh and insightful perspectives into a valued part of many people’s ordinary life meanings. The significance of these fresh insights and grounded, or place-based, examples lies in their expansion and development of current understandings of how people both interact with their recreation places over their lives, and how they come to make meaning through recreation for their experiences and the places they frequent (Kruger et al. 2008; Williams 2008). This thesis has shown that, contrary to many contemporary recreation and river management frameworks, which retain a strongly utilitarian view of recreation places as fungible resources (Stokowski 2008; Williams 2000b), recreation experiences and their places are tightly interwoven in a mutual relationship of meaning creation, albeit one that changes fluidly for some people with time.

This finding also contributes to the broader, more theoretical realm of place concepts, through its grounded illustration and analysis of the highly pluralistic, and relational place-experience relationships that have been proposed by authors such as Cresswell (2004), Anderson (2010) and Massey (2005). In doing so it supports the argument for the multiplicity of place-experience relationship concepts proposed within the study’s conceptual framework - from Relph (1976) and Tuan’s (1977) more sedentary sense of place, to Stephenson’s (2008) place as a combination of practices, relationships and forms, and finally to Massey’s (2005) place as intersections of flows and movements, practice and knowledge. This has been born out through the diverse and sometimes ambiguous expressions of the study’s participants which have highlighted the far more complex, entangled and nuanced understandings they hold for their river and recreation relationships. This lends further support to my view that outdoor recreation and river recreation cannot be managed and assessed based on a simplified utilitarian view of peoples’ recreation activities and needs, but must take into account the complexities, changeability and meaning attributes of people’s recreation and place relationships.

Secondly, the thesis has shown that the conceptual framing of recreation place-experiences and the broader place-experience construct proposed in this study, strongly supports the ‘place before experience’ position expounded by Malpas (1998), Casey (1987; 1997) and from a linguistic perspective, Mugeraurer (1985). The concept of ‘place-experience’ argues for, and supports the study’s findings, and therefore challenges the ‘experience-in-place’ concept proposed by Manzo (2005) in her study of place meanings in New York. Although the Clutha study acknowledges the
significance of human experiences in creating meanings generally and place meanings specifically, I argue it has demonstrated that place - the Clutha River – has a far stronger role to play as an active ‘actant’ (Cloke and Jones 2000; Latour 2005) in creating place meanings for people than Manzo acknowledges. The Clutha River has not just been a setting for people’s recreation experiences and meaning creation, but has actively shaped those experiences and meanings through its own distinctive place character and the changes it has, and continues to undergo. In this way, it has also provided an example of what McIntyre and Roggenbuck (1998) proposed as a ‘transactional relationship’ between people’s recreation experiences and their environment. Drawing these findings together, I argue that they add further empirical data to support the argument against the dominance of utilitarian approaches in recreation management (cf. Stokowski 2008) through providing a well-grounded and inclusive example of the co-constituting and transactional relationship between people and (recreational) places that goes beyond framing such places as settings for human experiences, but has exposed the emotional, personal and highly temporal nature of people-place relationships.

The final contribution of this thesis is in expanding and informing the current knowledge base of specifically New Zealand river recreation research, which is widely considered as lacking in detailed and contemporary recreation studies (Booth and Farminer 2011). Through situating the study on the Clutha River, it has engaged with New Zealand’s largest river, and one that has been subject to diverse and ongoing change since the arrival of European settlers in the mid-19th century. In doing so, the thesis has benefitted from the cultural diversity present in New Zealand which has been reflected through the descriptions and analysis of the participant group’s recreational and broader life experiences and place meanings focused on the Clutha. Through this fine-grained exploration, the thesis has demonstrated the special significance of river places and experiences of Māori participants and beyond, and has highlighted the importance of the intergenerational and strongly culturally-based, traditional practice place-experience meanings of recreation for Māori, which are argued as extending current (mainly Western) concepts of recreational practice and meanings. Finally, the thesis is one of just a few studies that have examined the relationships of both Pākehā and Māori to their meaningful places, and at present, is the only study to consider specifically recreational place-experience meanings in New Zealand. From this contribution, I hope that further research will be undertaken to develop our knowledge of these highly socio-cultural and meanings-based perspectives of recreation in New Zealand.
8.3.2 Methodological contribution of the thesis

The methodological contributions of this thesis which have helped expand and reframe how recreation and river/place research is undertaken are considered to be threefold. In the first instance, Chapter Three provided a detailed, step-by-step approach to using thematic analysis in research and how to construct a thematic network based upon empirical, qualitative interview data. In doing so it allows other researchers to adopt a very robust, systematic and sensitive analysis methodology which is adaptable, and capable of handling smaller, focused quantities of data as well as larger data sets (Attride-Stirling 2001). Secondly, I propose that using thematic networks can facilitate both semantic and latent elements in analysis without necessarily blurring their distinctions or outcomes (Braun and Clark 2006). To some degree there will always be a mixing of these elements in any analysis. However, this study found that by deliberately focusing on the broader, latent level analysis in each network, whilst concurrently analysing the semantic level, it could be discussed effectively. This was undertaken by creating an organising theme that analysed the construction of how participants’ expressed their meanings of recreating on the Clutha River (so latent level) and not just what those meanings were (which were discussed in separate organising themes - the semantic level). Through this approach, each network was capable of being discussed both in terms of its (linguistic) construction and its meaning content, so enriching the insights gained from the research.

In the third instance, the use of global themes that characterise the themes connected with it, rather than necessarily functioning strictly as a metaphor (cf. Braun and Clark 2006), has been very effective when working with a larger volume of qualitative data. By characterising the global themes, a more descriptive and encapsulating title was generated compared to that created by a metaphor, and which was well-fitted at summarising numerous, diverse and sometimes openly contradictory groups of themes contained within it.

Overall and in line with my personal world view that interprets peoples’ (and my own) lived worlds as complex, fluid, dynamic and always-becoming, thematic analysis/networks are a method of interpretation (and organised analysis) that can show these aspects of researched information in an intelligible, relational, and visually creative manner. It literally demonstrates how research is an act of creation/Construction through laying out the data, analysis and interpretation in a transparent and accessible way that is open to external critique and interpretation (and so is more robust for that). In addition, as previously noted in Chapter Three (Section 3.3.5), with the exception of one
identified study (Davenport and Anderson 2005) no other studies of river recreation and place meanings appear to have utilised a clearly thematic analysis/network method of analysis. Thus the interpretation and insights created in this thesis have provided new and different ways of seeing and interpreting, what I conclude are people’s fluid relationships with place, through their recreation with the Clutha River.

8.4 The Research Questions Revisited

Having laid out the main findings and contributions of this thesis in Section 8.3, it remains to reflect back on the original research questions posed in Chapter One (Section 1.3.1), and which shaped this thesis and its analysis, and see how they can be ‘answered’ through those findings and contributions.

Question one asked:

*What are people’s recreation experiences and places on the Clutha River and how do they describe and understand them?*

Recreation experiences and places on the Clutha River encompass a diverse and much broader range of experiences and places than often acknowledged in recreation research. Recreation activities ranged from conventional, water-based ones such as swimming, boating, kayaking, water skiing and fishing to land-based, river margin activities such as walking, cycling, running, dog walking and picnicking. However, participants also spoke about experiences that blurred the boundaries between recreation, leisure and everyday life experiences through stories they told that mingled activities and meanings. For example, one evocative story recreated a family barbeque with friends after a warm afternoon spent water skiing on Lake Dunstan, close to their home and in their favourite ‘spot’. This intertwining of conventional recreation understandings (the water skiing) with the social, pleasure, and familial meanings – all coalescing in certain (emotionally attached) places – goes beyond such convention recreational understandings to reframe recreation on the Clutha as more complex, multifaceted, emotional and intrinsically place-based.

Broader understandings of recreational experience and place meanings were interpreted in alternative and very culturally-specific understandings of recreation, which were attributed to the bi-cultural New Zealand context of the research. Exploring and interpreting Māori expressions and understandings of recreation on the Clutha River opened up existing conceptualisations of outdoor
recreation (and leisure) to engage with ideas of recreation as sustaining traditional cultural practices, as bridging (extended) intergenerational cultural recreation practices, and as a co-generator of cultural stories which both sustained and (re)created places and experiences on the Clutha River. Some overlap was seen with Pākehā New Zealanders’ recreation meanings in terms of the intergenerational and shared, family meanings of river recreation place-experiences.

Finally, participants often spoke about or described their recreation as stories and memories of place-experiences, which at times were highly emotional and evocative, personal and family focused, social and pleasure orientated, and on occasions fearful and threatening, all of which coalesced into a realisation of the Clutha River as both a meaningful place of connection and disconnection, as many personal and experienced places, and as a recreational place concurrently. Such Clutha places were conceptualised and described in three key, synchronous ways: spatially, temporally and experientially, supporting the pluralistic, complex and interdependent nature of place and experience concepts.

Question two asked:

*How and what meanings are created and expressed by people through their Clutha River recreational experiences/places and have these changed with time?*

The spectrum of meanings for participants’ Clutha River recreational place-experiences was, not unexpectedly, extremely wide. The most prevalent recreation place-experience meanings were those interrelating with emotional and sensory meanings; meanings of pleasure, socialising and wilderness; family and intergenerational meanings; and meanings of recreation as continuing long-term Māori cultural and traditional practices. Broader but equally interlinked Clutha River place-experience meanings related to the river as creating meaningful memories for participants; broader familial and cultural relationships established over participants’ lifetimes and further; meanings of a significant environmental relationship; and the meaning of the Clutha River as a diverse, often contested, but vital natural resource that sustained many kinds of economies (such as economic, social and recreational) and meanings for participants.

Such meanings were interpreted as being largely generated through the concept of a people-place (or participant-Clutha River) relationship. Participant relationships with, to and in recreation and more general places, were interpreted as multi-dimensional, complex, dynamic and ambiguous with
time/temporality crucially important in shaping the diversity of place relationships and place meanings. Another element of their place relationships was identified as familiarity, shown to be a complex geographic/experiential/temporal relationship between people and places which also shaped place-experience meanings in different ways and on different scales. Finally, empirical support was found for a reciprocal relationship between place, experience and memory in creating and holding meanings for recreation place-experiences that were strongly anchored to places in their construction, and which endured, albeit often altered, even after those places had cease to exist physically, such as in the example of the Cromwell Gorge.

Finally, the recognition of change and its drivers, whether (extrinsic) physical, social, economic, political changes and/or (intrinsic) personal change, was shown as crucial in continuing to understand and re-frame changing outdoor recreation-place meanings. Within this need for recognising how and why recreation place-experiences change, the temporality of change was interpreted as significant for understanding the fluidity of meaning change, whether of geographical or social places, or personal/social meanings and experiences concurrently.

And finally, question three asked:

*How have these recreational (and broader) experiences contributed to making places on the Clutha River and the concept of the river itself?*

The Clutha River is both a *place* of itself - through individual imagination, historical discourse and direct experience - and comprised of many places and experiences simultaneously. Participants spoke of land and watery places that they had experienced in diverse ways through their recreation, which had come to have meanings (positive, negative and ambiguous) for them through these experiences and through other, life experiences such as work, cultural traditions, socialising and simply being in place (or living) adjacent to the river. The concept (or making) of the Clutha as a place/places is tightly interwoven with participants’ broader life place-experiences and emotional meanings, within which recreation experiences occupied a role (for some). The often changing nature of these recreational place-experience meanings, interpreted from participants’ widely varying stories, memories and descriptions of the Clutha, suggests that the Clutha as place/places is changing concurrently in an ongoing process of re-creation, re-framing and re-telling. This process, in turn, requires close attention if people in the future are to experience, enjoy and appreciate the Clutha River as a place/places of recreation, but also, and in my view of perhaps greater significance,
as a place that carries with it a long and diverse history of place-experience meanings that remain of value and importance to a considerable number of people.

Overall, the ultimate contribution of the thesis is the expansion and enrichment of existing understandings of how recreation makes places and meanings, and in the context of the case study examined here, river place meanings. Through illustrating and analysing in detail the complexities of place making and place meanings on the Clutha River, and their continuing fluidity over time and across the participants, it has raised the issue of how can these fluid and often contested meanings be acknowledged and addressed in current and future decision-making frameworks. Recreation has been shown to be just one (occasional) element amongst a whole raft of meaningful life events and activities (such as work, travel, family, livelihood, community care, leisure and political involvement), which shape and influence participants’ understandings of the Clutha River, making them stakeholders in a broader canvas of meaning creation and, ultimately, place-making. As a result of these findings, the current methodologies of river and recreational assessment frameworks such as RiVAS, which have been shown to be underpinned by an approach predicated on pre-determined values, should be re-assessed and made accountable for representing a much broader and more complex range of values and meanings, as demonstrated here.

Further questions can therefore be raised as to how (or even if) a suitable framework or model can be developed to try to capture and represent both the findings of this thesis and the even broader range of other stakeholder interests and river place meanings, such as those of the Department of Conservation, Fish and Game, Otago Regional Council, Contact Energy and the district councils. Some existing frameworks, including those addressed in this thesis (e.g. IWRM, RiVAS and the Cultural Values Model), could be explored and developed to assess their capacity to represent and help manage the multiple, complex and above all fluid meanings and values different stakeholders hold for both the Clutha River and other rivers in New Zealand and beyond.

8.5 Areas for Future Research

In considering how and where the study has potentially identified opportunities for further research, a number of suggestions can be made which would both extend the scope of the study and explore further certain aspects of its findings. These are addressed as follows:
• **Cultural understandings of outdoor recreation practices:** there is great potential for the further exploration of differing cultural understandings and conceptions of outdoor recreational practices situated within a study area such as the Clutha River (cf. Lovelock et al. 2011). By investigating a broader range of cultural knowledges over different temporal and spatial scales, there is potential for further insights into how multi-cultural recreation place-experiences are understood, expressed and lived (Williams and Carr 1993).

• **Māori relationships with recreation and places:** Building on the specifically Māori findings of the study, there is considerable scope for expanding these by undertaking a Māori-centred study that engages with a wider range of Māori cultural perspectives (e.g. different iwi traditional knowledges) and experiences of outdoor recreation (cf. Smith 1998; Tipa 2009).

• **Management practices and frameworks:** how these engage (or not) with recreation-place relationships and broader people-place relationships as identified through this study through a comparison of management and recreationist perspectives (McCool et al. 2008a). The research could have a particular focus on how understandings are captured, framed and presented back to communities; and the extent that cultural understandings (e.g. Māori and other cultures) of recreation are engaged with and how successfully?

• **Incorporating heritage and landscape perspectives in people-place relationships:** moving beyond a purely recreation lens to consider and explore the significance of both tangible and intangible elements of heritage and landscape in people-place relationships, building on and integrating with the work of Stephenson (2008) and Cloke and Jones (2000). In this way the research stream would draw together an even broader array of place focused meanings to adopt a truly holistic approach in understanding human and place/landscape relationships as **meaningscapes**.

• **Methodological development:** on final reflection, it would have been more satisfying to have included a larger number of more diverse cultural views from participants, such as more recent foreign emigrants to the Clutha Valley, to extend further the different cultural understanding of recreation-place relationships. Likewise the geographic coverage of the study attempted a ‘mountains to sea’ approach in its participant sample (Tipa 2009), but in
reality it did not quite achieve the whole-catchment coverage it hoped for due to constraints inherent in PhD study (mainly resourcing). It would be interesting to further develop this in order to gain an even more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of people-river-place relationships and their differing and changing conceptions of outdoor recreation and leisure.

8.6 Concluding Thoughts on People, Rivers and Recreation – a personal reflection

As a social science researcher and author of this thesis, I had intended to write a profound and somewhat personal final reflection of this study which would highlight what I had gained from undertaking the research journey, the significance of its findings for me, and my hopes for the future of the research. However, on my office wall for the past two years no less, has been a quote that I came across in researching the Clutha River which upon its discovery immediately grabbed my attention and became something of an inspiration. The quote is an extract from the autobiographical writing of the New Zealand author, Janet Frame (1924-2004) who incidentally, famously changed her name by deed poll to Janet Clutha\(^\text{193}\). The extract summarises and personifies my feelings for my research centred along the Clutha River in far better words than I could ever hope to write.

Therefore, I leave it to Janet Frame to express my feelings of love and thanks for the people, places and rivers that have shared this study and research journey with me.

\(^{193}\) For an excellent biography of Janet Frame see [http://www.janetframe.org.nz/Biography.htm](http://www.janetframe.org.nz/Biography.htm)
‘From my first sight of the river I felt it to be a part of my life (how greedily I was claiming the features of the land as ‘part of my life’), from its beginning in the snow of the high country (we were almost in the high country), through all its stages of fury and, reputedly now and then, peace, to its outfall in the sea, with its natural burden of water and motion and its display of colour, snow-green, blue, mud-brown, and borrowing rainbows from light; and its added burden rising from its power, of the dead – withered or uprooted vegetation, the bodies and bones of cattle, sheep and deer, and, from time to time, of people who drowned.

After spending a year confined in the city, studying, writing, conscious always of boundaries of behaviour and feeling, in my new role as an adult, I now came face to face with the Clutha, a being that persisted through all the pressures of rock, stone, earth and sun, living as an element of freedom but not isolated, linked to heaven and light by the slender rainbow that shimmered above its waters. I felt the river was an ally that it would speak for me.

I fell in love with Central Otago and the river, with the naked hills covered only in their folds by their own shadow, with their changing shades of gold, and the sky born blue each morning with no trace of cloud, retiring in the evening to its depth of purple.’
Reference List


Holt 1991 ref into Refs – check with Tara on approach to double quoting


Appendix A: University of Otago Ethical Approval for the Study

ETHICAL APPROVAL AT DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL OF A PROPOSAL INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS (CATEGORY B)

NAME OF DEPARTMENT: Tourism

TITLE OF PROJECT:
A river runs through it: managing perceptions of value in river-based leisure, recreation and tourism in Southern New Zealand.

PROJECTED START DATE OF PROJECT: 1st September 2010

STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR PROJECT: Dr. Tara Duncan

NAMES OF OTHER INVESTIGATORS OR INSTRUCTORS: (Please specify whether staff or student. If student, please give the name of the qualification for which the student is enrolled):
Andrea Farminar, PhD Candidate
Associate Professor Etienne Nel (Supervisor, Dept. of Geography)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE AIMS: Please give a brief summary (approx. 200 words) of the nature of the proposal:

The starting point of the research project is that the conceptual framework for identifying and managing human perceptions of value in river-based leisure, recreation and tourism (LRT) in New Zealand is insufficiently developed to fully capture and make assessable wider value concepts. This has resulted in an under-representation of the non-economic values of these activities in LRT/planning assessment methodology in regional planning issues and government legislation. Therefore, there is a need for a more developed, holistic and eventually whole-system integrated approach to valuing LRT on New Zealand’s rivers (and internationally). The guiding aims of the research are:
• To identify differing perceptions/constructions of value in the context of LRT on South Island rivers, undertaking field-based research using a mixed-methods approach from a ground-up perspective, taking into account wider perspectives of value such as cultural, indigenous, aesthetic and social values;
• Examine the capacity of current New Zealand assessment methodologies for assessing river-based LRT values in light of the new values perceptions data generated from the fieldwork and historic data, identify the areas in which developments can be made to advance current New Zealand (and wider) LRT assessment methodologies.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD: Please include a description of who the participants are, how the participants will be recruited, and what they will be asked to do:-

This ethics application pertains solely to the undertaking of two pre-fieldwork elements:
• A pre-fieldwork river case study scoping exercise to be carried out in Spring 2010 which will involve travelling to and along potential case study rivers (currently identified as the Clutha, Waitaki, Waimakariri and Hurunui rivers) on the South Island for approximately one weeks duration. The trip will involve taking notes and photographs and, where the opportunity arises, talking informally to local residents and visitors on an ad hoc basis to note current, locally-based personal views relating to the rivers.
• Participation as an observer in an ongoing (independent) public consultation exercise being undertaken by Otago Regional Council (Wakatipu River Minimum Flow community workshops). I will be attending purely to observe the workshop process but anticipate a limited level of interaction with the workshop organisers and attendees in the form of informal questions about the process, queries on the information provided and spontaneous questions to attendees on their responses during the workshop process to better understand their participation. All notes taken will respect the participants' anonymity and any personal information noted will be treated in the strictest confidence.

DETAILS OF ETHICAL ISSUES INVOLVED: Please give details of any ethical issues which were identified during the consideration of the proposal and the way in which these issues were dealt with or resolved:-

With specific regard to the two pre-fieldwork activities identified above, the following ethical issues were considered:
• Project information provision and participation consent: All persons informally talked to during the fieldtrip and workshop activities will be provided with an information sheet to advise them of the nature of the project and what their participation will entail. Verbal consent for their participation in such informal conversations will be sought on an individual basis and their anonymity assured wherever possible.
• Personal information/anonymity: The non-identification of informal respondents in field notes – all field notes will include a basic identifier of date, location; local/visitor; area of interest only and no personal data will be solicited or held in this phase unless offered independently, and then, only names, addresses and contact details will be accepted. All responses will be held in accordance with the University's protocol for storing confidential data.
• The inclusion of un-identified (i.e. informal) respondent data in the research writing stage – this will be resolved by referring to the inclusion of any such acquired information as
'anecdotal' but providing a date/location/interest reference which can be referred back to the pre-fieldwork notes.

- Personal safety of the researcher and participants – The utmost care will be taken to ensure the safety of the researcher whilst undertaking the activities, especially when travelling in remote areas. A Department of Tourism Fieldwork Health and Safety form will be completed before all fieldwork and will include an analysis of potential risks as well as practical considerations such as communicating and notification of the researcher’s location on a regular basis to their Department.

**ACTION TAKEN**

- Approved by Head of Department
- Referred to University of Otago Human Ethics Committee
- Approved by Departmental Committee
- Referred to another Ethics Committee
- Please specify:

**DATE OF CONSIDERATION:** 25 August 2010

Signed (Head of Department):

Please attach copies of any Information Sheet, Consent Form, and advertisement for participants.
# Appendix B: Fieldwork Interview Guide

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</th>
<th>CORE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS</th>
<th>POTENTIAL FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are people’s river recreation experiences on/by the Clutha River/Lake Dunstan/Lake Roxburgh?</td>
<td>Can you tell me about your past experiences of recreation by or on the Clutha/LD/LR* and why they come to mind?</td>
<td>Why are these stories/experiences so memorable for you – what is it about them, positive or negative, that keeps them memorable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can you tell me about any more recent recreation experiences by or on the Clutha/LD/LR?</td>
<td>What particular parts of these experiences stand out for you (describe) and why is that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you think these recreation experiences stand out amongst any other types of recreation that you do – can you explain for what reasons and give an example?</td>
<td>Do you think that being on or near the Clutha/LD/LR contributes to these experiences and can you describe/explain how/why it makes a difference?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What and how are meanings and values created through river recreation experiences on the Clutha/LD/LR?</td>
<td>Do the recreation experiences you’ve described (and others in general) hold particular meanings for you and can you describe those meanings?</td>
<td>What is it about the experiences that have created these meanings for you do you think?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you place any value(S) on your river recreation experiences and what are they – what is their value to you personally?</td>
<td>What are these meanings based upon, e.g. personal remembrances, family and/or tribal links, spiritual meanings or do you see the river more as a resource for your recreational activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What does the Clutha/LD/LR itself mean to you as a location for you to recreate?</td>
<td>Can you explain/describe in a bit more detail these values and have they changed over time for you? Can you explain why...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | Would you do similar types of recreation elsewhere or is there something specific about the Clutha that attracts you? Have these meanings changed over time, for example, with the changes made to the Clutha (e.g. the formation of Lake Roxburgh and Lake Dunstan especially) and in what ways have they changed? | }
3. (How) do the meanings and values of people’s river recreation experiences on the Clutha/LD/LR contribute to making river-as-place/river places?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the Clutha/LD/LR hold any other meanings or values for you besides as a location for recreating?</td>
<td>Can you give some examples of these? Can you explain why the Clutha means this...to you? Or do you see it as made up of a number of places familiar and/or special to you? Can you describe the Clutha/ these places and how you feel about them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you think about the Clutha, do you see/think of it as a ‘fixed’ place in itself or something unfixed and more fluid that has changed over time for you?</td>
<td>Can you describe in what ways? If the Clutha was altered again (e.g. another section dammed) would this change the way you see/feel about the river or not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think your recreation experiences have shaped the way you think of the Clutha/LD/LR?</td>
<td>Can you describe in what ways? Do you think other people you know think of the Clutha in a similar way or not? What would concern you (both positively and/or negatively) about the Clutha in the future and can you explain why? What do you think might be lost (or gained) by changes to the Clutha for you, your community, and even New Zealand as a whole?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the concept of a ‘relationship’, how would you describe your relationship with the Clutha river?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. What are the potential implications for managing rivers/river recreation in New Zealand in light of people’s understandings and current management policies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you think about (if anything) of the ways in which recreation is managed on the Clutha/LD/LR at present?</td>
<td>Can you describe any management problems that you’ve encountered/seen while you have been recreating? Who do you think is responsible for these issues? Do you think that the way the Clutha/LD/LR is managed nowadays is different from your past experiences and can you describe how?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Appendix C: Fieldwork and Participant Map

**Clutha River Fieldwork Map – Research Trips**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip</th>
<th>Date 2011</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Early January</td>
<td>Whole CR length: Dunedin-Wanaka-Balclutha/Pacific Ocean</td>
<td><strong>Summer</strong> hols: Reconnaissance trip and informal contact gathering with local community members and visitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>22-25 April</td>
<td>Upper-Mid Clutha</td>
<td><strong>Autumn/Easter</strong> hols: River recreation observations; personal recreation experience (kayaking; biking &amp; camping); participant contact development with local community members and visitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19-20 May</td>
<td>Upper-Mid Clutha</td>
<td>Winter: Interviews T1 &amp; T2; river observations and informal data gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14-16 June</td>
<td>Mid-Lower Clutha</td>
<td>Winter: Interviews T3, T4, T5 &amp; T6; river observations and informal data gathering. Interview T7 in Dunedin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1-2 September</td>
<td>Upper Clutha</td>
<td>Spring: River observations and informal data gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15 September</td>
<td>Lower Clutha (Balclutha)</td>
<td>Spring: Interview T8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>18-22 September</td>
<td>Upper-Mid Clutha</td>
<td>Spring: Interviews T9, T10 &amp; T11; river observations and informal data gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>17-19 October</td>
<td>Mid-Lower Clutha</td>
<td>Spring: Interviews T14, 15 &amp; 16 (institutional representatives); river observations and informal data gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>22-24 October</td>
<td>Upper-Mid Clutha</td>
<td><strong>Spring/Labour</strong> hols: Interview T17; river recreation observations; personal recreation experience (kayaking; mountain biking; walking; camping).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1-2 November</td>
<td>Lower Clutha</td>
<td>Summer: Interview T12 &amp; T18; river observations and informal data gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20-22 November</td>
<td>Mid Clutha</td>
<td>Summer: Interview T19; river observations and informal data gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>24 November</td>
<td>Dunedin</td>
<td>Summer: Interview T13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>27-28 December</td>
<td>Upper-Mid Clutha</td>
<td><strong>Summer/Christmas</strong> hols: river recreation observations; personal recreation experience (kayaking; mountain biking; walking; camping); informal data gathering.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Clutha River Interview Participants – Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Clutha Recreation Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Cromwell</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>70+</td>
<td>Retired Accountant</td>
<td>Walking; cycling; family time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Cromwell/Dunedin</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>Sports Org</td>
<td>Multisport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Bannockburn</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>Station manager</td>
<td>Water skiing; boating; family time; camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Cromwell</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>Arts/vineyard</td>
<td>Walking; watching; kayaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>Cromwell</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>Fishing; cycling; walking; boating; hunting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>Clyde</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>River tourism operator</td>
<td>Fishing; hunting; boating; kayaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T7</td>
<td>Dunedin</td>
<td>F&amp;M</td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>Retired couple</td>
<td>Kayaking; walking; bird watching; family time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T8</td>
<td>Balclutha</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>Fishing; boating; family time; camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T9</td>
<td>Ardgour (U Clutha)</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>Boating; fishing; family time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T10</td>
<td>Luggate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>River tourism operator</td>
<td>Boating; rafting; fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T11</td>
<td>Beaumont</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>River tourism operator</td>
<td>Boating; fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T12</td>
<td>Balclutha</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>70+</td>
<td>Retired Teacher &amp; Runanga</td>
<td>Family (whanau); cultural traditions (mahinga kai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T13</td>
<td>Dunedin</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>70+</td>
<td>Educator &amp; Runanga</td>
<td>Driving; family (whanau) time; cultural traditions (mahinga kai); community service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Clutha River Photographic Montage

The Clutha River outlet from Lake Wanaka

Upper Clutha – below outlet section

Upper Clutha – above Albert Town

Upper Clutha – above Albert Town

Upper Clutha – above Albert Town

Nevis River joining the Clutha River
Upper Clutha – Luggate section

Upper Clutha – Luggate section

Upper Clutha – oxbow section

Upper Clutha – transition from Clutha River to head of Lake Dunstan

Looking down head of Lake Dunstan to Cromwell

Looking from Cromwell up Lake Dunstan to the Southern Alps
Lake Dunstan at Cromwell with bridge in background

Lake Dunstan at the former Cromwell Gorge entrance

The ‘Meeting of the Waters’ – Kawarau River joining the Clutha River (in foreground)

The Clutha River below the Clyde Dam at Clyde

The Clyde Bridge

The Clutha between Clyde and Alexandra (looking west)
The Clyde-Alexandra section
The Clutha River at Alexandra Bridge
The Clutha River below Alexandra near the head of Lake Roxburgh
Lake Roxburgh looking south-east
The Clutha River flowing from the Roxburgh Dam
The Roxburgh section of the Clutha
The Clutha at Millers Flat Bridge looking south-east

The Beaumont Gorge section of the Lower Clutha River

The (upper) Rongahere Gorge section of the Lower Clutha River

The (lower) Rongahere Gorge section of the Lower Clutha River

The ferry at Tuapeka Mouth, Lower Clutha

The Lower Clutha above Clydevale
The Lower Clutha River at Clydevale Bridge

The Clutha River at Balclutha

Balclutha Bridge

The Matau branch of the Clutha River SE of Balclutha

The Clutha River near Kaitangata

The outlets of the Clutha River at the Pacific Ocean (Matau and Koau branches)
Map 1 Field Research Area