

THE IMPACT OF HOMELESS MEN'S USE OF CITY SPACES ON THEIR WELLBEING

WARREN NAIRN



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Abstract

Homelessness is a broad and somewhat blunt term to describe a complex concept. Beneath the concept and many varied definitions are people who are living with inadequate, insecure or no housing at all; these are often among the most marginalised and vulnerable in society. Although there are an increasing number of studies on homelessness using a qualitative methodology and a small number using a participatory approach of some kind, there has typically been more of a focus on the concept and causes of homelessness rather than studies that give an opportunity for those impacted by homelessness to present their perspective. In response to a call for a more participatory approach to public health research this study has employed Participatory Video (PV), a visual method that fits within a participatory or advocacy worldview with links to critical theory. PV has been used predominately in the community development setting but is increasingly being adopted as a research method in other social sciences.

The purpose of this study is to increase understanding of how homeless men in Christchurch use city spaces and how they understand that this might impact their wellbeing. Alongside this is an exploration of the use of PV as a method for Public Health research. The video resulting from the PV sessions was shown to the participants at each stage of the process giving them control over what was included in the final edit and the opportunity for comment which was included in the data for analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse these data along with a transcript of the video and field notes. This analysis resulted in three main themes, 'place', 'nourishment' and 'daily activity'. The theme of place raised questions about the attribution of meaning and construction of purpose in and through place. The participants' quest for nourishment was addressed in relation to several aspects of emotional and nutritional nourishment. Exploration of the theme of daily activity highlighted the considerable effort required to be nourished and maintain quality and consistency of activity in the environment of the predominantly outdoor city spaces; challenges that are amplified for these men by a lack of options or control over their environment.

Chapter 1: Introduction

'Homeless ain't just a word' (Vince).

Homelessness is a broad term that attempts to define a complex concept. Beneath the concept are people with diverse life experiences and backgrounds who are living without housing or with what would be considered by society as insecure or inadequate housing (Radley, Hodgetts, & Cullen, 2005). My interest in the relationship between urban spaces and wellbeing for homeless people was initially prompted by my observations as a housed person who often walks or cycles through central Christchurch. This incidental reflection raised questions about what it must be like to live in the predominantly outdoor spaces of the city. What impact does it have on those that do? Do the spaces and places of the city become to a homelessness person anything like a home is to a housed person?

Christchurch, as with any other city, has always had residents who are homeless. Even prior to the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 the 'Housing pressures in Christchurch' report (MBIE, 2013, p. 28) estimated 270 homeless people and a further 3,480 living in severely crowded housing. Although not the focus of this study it must be acknowledged that the picture of homelessness in Christchurch cannot be observed completely independently of the earthquakes. As well as impacting people with secure housing situations, these very significant natural disasters are likely to have had a major impact on the day-to-day life of those people already experiencing homelessness in Christchurch as well as those with existing insecure housing situations. Following the 2011 earthquakes there was an estimated 11,500 reduction in the number of dwellings available in Christchurch which contributed to higher than normal property prices and rents (MBIE, 2013, p. 4 & 8). This contributed to an increased total estimate of 505-675 homeless people and 7000 in severely crowded accommodation.

There are several agencies in Christchurch offering support to people who are homeless or have insecure housing. The services offered range from supporting

those who live on the street, emergency shelter-type housing to assistance securing longer term housing (Community Support Unit, 2013). The Christchurch City Mission and the Salvation Army are the main agencies offering emergency or short-term night shelter type accommodation for men. The Christchurch City Mission Night Shelter is operated by Anglican Care the social services arm of the Anglican Church. This service offers short-term accommodation for homeless men along with social work support, medical attention and assistance finding more long-term accommodation. The impacts of homelessness on the individuals that live with it are considerable and broad ranging with well-accepted links to health disparities and social inequity (CSDH, 2008; Daiski, 2007; Daly, 1989; Hodgetts, Radley, Chamberlain, & Hodgetts, 2007). Although concentrating on negative aspects of homelessness such as poor health outcomes can be unhelpful by adding to negative societal perceptions and marginalisation, it is also important to have an understanding of the impact of homelessness on health and wellbeing (Thomas, Gray, & McGinty, 2012).

The main purpose of this study was to explore how homeless men in Christchurch use urban spaces and the impact this may have on their wellbeing. The dynamics involved in the relationship between people living with homelessness, city spaces and wellbeing indicate that it is a subject that warrants attention from a public health perspective. Wellbeing was chosen as the term to depict health in this study as it is a broad and inclusive concept compared to others such as health outcomes, which is often used when discussing the impact of homelessness on health. The understanding of wellbeing as it applies in this study will be explored in more detail in a subsequent chapter.

An exploration of relevant literature revealed the tendency for research to focus on homelessness at a conceptual level. Much of this took an almost positivist approach which focussed on determining the causes of and risk factors associated with homelessness such as those described by Caton, Dominguez, Schanzer, Hasin, and et al. (2005) and Gelberg and Linn (1992). This approach implies that homelessness is a problem that would be solved once the cause was truly understood, much like the medical approach to disease. This can lead to a

construction of homelessness that avoids reference to the human experience of homelessness and focuses attention on the negative aspects of homeless people and their lives. This has been found to further increase social isolation and marginalisation by ignoring similarities, instead concentrating on their difference to housed people (Parsell, 2010).

Contrasting with this approach are studies that give an opportunity for those impacted by homelessness to present their experiences and perspectives; there is an increasing trend towards studies on homelessness with a qualitative methodology and a smaller number employing a visual method of some kind, as in the examples of Johnsen, May, and Cloke (2008) and Hodgetts, Hodgetts, and Radley (2006). These approaches aim to acknowledge and describe the human side of homelessness, responding to the need for an approach that takes account of the complexity involved (Creswell, 2007; Kyle, 2005). These factors were considered in the decision-making process leading to the use of Participatory Video (PV) as the method for this study.

PV is a visual method using video in a group setting that fits within a participatory or advocacy worldview. It is often used in the community development setting but is increasingly being adopted as a research method in other social sciences. The choice of PV was also prompted by my own experience of using it as a community development tool in various settings, including with young people and their families in Romania and with staff in a Palestinian hospital in Jerusalem. This prior experience along with relevant literature encouraged me that this method, although offering challenges, may be useful in research with a group such as the homeless men that were the focus of this study. It is important to acknowledge that although the ideal for PV is that it be a fully participatory process, this study adopted a modified participatory approach. This was partly related to the limitations of the timeframe of a dissertation and the need to adapt the recruitment strategy and to some extent predetermine the focus of the PV sessions. Consideration of the utilisation of PV as the research method in this study was addressed through one of the research questions. This was approached from the point of view of how the participants

engaged with the PV process. This examination in chapter 5 also extended to whether the process met some of the goals of PV such as empowerment and power sharing.

This dissertation is divided into nine chapters beginning with this introduction. Chapter 2 sets the scene for the dissertation, beginning by considering the definition of homelessness then presenting some of the background to homelessness in general. Literature regarding homelessness is explored with reference to the focus of existing research and recommendations for future direction. Chapter 3 describes the thinking behind the choice of methodological approach and research method. This includes a critique of PV highlighting the potential challenges with such an innovative method. Chapter 4 is a collection of brief selective biographies of each of the participants, which serves as introduction to the participants leading into chapter 5. This chapter adds to the examination of the use of PV in chapter 3 by considering its application to this study in particular. This is followed by a discussion of Goffman's concept of Presentation of Self as it relates to the findings (Goffman, 1971).

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 introduce and discuss the findings, particularly as they relate to the themes identified from the analysis. Chapter 6 explores and discusses the findings related to the theme of 'Place', employing the concepts of place and meaning (Atkinson, Fuller, & Painter, 2012), place and purpose (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983) and introducing the concept of therapeutic landscapes (Gesler, 2005). This concept also has some relevance in chapter 7, which considers the theme of 'Nourishment'; discussion of which is broadly divided into physical and emotional nourishment. Chapter 8 introduces and discusses the theme of 'Daily Activity' with reference to the concept of 'the Daily Path through Time and Space' (Rowe & Wolch, 1990), which considers the impact of the quality and consistency of a homeless persons activity on their life. The dissertation concludes with chapter 9 which proceeds to further highlight the significance of the ideas and concepts introduced in the findings and

discussions chapters. This chapter concludes by highlighting the challenges for homeless people living in the city spaces and places as well as the positive aspects of the participants' relationship with the city environment that emerged from this study.

Chapter 2: Background and Review of the Literature

This chapter will serve to lay a foundation for the dissertation by exploring some of the available literature regarding the experience of homelessness. It begins with a discussion of the definition of homelessness; this is necessary for clarifying the understanding of the term as it is used in the current study and to raise the issues associated with the act of definition. The background to homelessness in general is then introduced; this provides a foundation for the consideration of some of the available body of research that focuses on highlighting the experience of those living with homelessness. This background and exploration of literature highlights some of the thinking that guided the focus of study and the choice of research method.

Defining Homelessness

Statistics New Zealand defines homelessness as:

Living situations where people with no other options to acquire safe and secure housing: are without shelter, in temporary accommodation, sharing accommodation with a household or living in uninhabitable housing (Statistics New Zealand, 2009, p. 6)

The motivation and benefits in defining and classifying homelessness are as varied as the perspective of those seeking to define. Definitions are often used to guide, or are in response to policy on the homeless (Burrows, Pleace, & Quilgars, 2013; Lee, Tyler, & Wright, 2010; McAllister, Lennon, & Kuang, 2011; Statistics New Zealand, 2009). Others seek to define the characteristics of individuals who are homeless in the hope that this will help increase 'the understanding of the dynamics of homelessness' (Shlay & Rossi, 1992, p. 133). The hope is that this understanding will enable development of strategies to reduce homelessness and also determine the best ways to offer support to those that are living with homelessness (Shlay & Rossi, 1992). While these motivations for defining homelessness may be valid, it must be recognised that the act of definition itself can be problematic, because of the potential to further particular agendas. Also

defining homelessness as a distinct entity risks creating an unhelpful, if not incorrect 'homeless identity' (Parsell, 2010, p. 185). This can further marginalise those impacted and remove the possibility of recognising similarities with 'housed people' rather than differences (Parsell, 2010, p. 185).

Attitudes, definitions and the conceptualisation of homelessness have altered significantly over time, changing from more primitive views that homelessness is 'an individual choice by scroungers' to acknowledging the impact of social and economic factors (Burrows et al., 2013, p. 19; Shlay & Rossi, 1992). Kyle (2005) highlights the risks of categorising homeless people into subgroups according to what are broadly considered to be risk factors for homelessness; such as mental health problems and alcohol and drug addiction. This approach encourages blaming of the individual or their circumstances for their homelessness rather than looking at the structural causes. Kyle stresses that attempting to address homelessness requires 'an intense multi-layered, or "thick" contextualization of homelessness' (2005, p. 15).

The definition of homelessness from Statistics NZ (2009), quoted at the beginning of this section, is relatively comprehensive, acknowledging that homelessness is more complex than lack of shelter by including those in insecure and uninhabitable housing. It was adapted from the European Typology of Homelessness (ETHOS), which proposes seven conceptual categories of homelessness based on different combinations of three domains. These are the physical domain - suitability of dwelling; the legal domain - security of tenure and the social domain - level of privacy and space for social relations (Edgar & Meert, 2005, p. 15). These concepts classify rooflessness and houselessness as classic homelessness, then go on to describe a continuum of housing exclusion related to various combinations of deficits in the physical, legal and social domains. Alterations were made by Statistics NZ to the ETHOS definition to account for New Zealand's social, economic and cultural context including those living in situations of 'concealed homelessness' with insecure and uninhabitable housing (Statistics New Zealand, 2009, p. 4).

Other efforts to develop definitions of homelessness include a temporal element; a 3-category typology described by Kuhn and Culhane (1998) categorises homelessness as either chronic, episodic or transitional; stressing the difference in the length and frequency of episodes of homelessness between these classifications. The authors consider these categorisations to be important because of what they describe as differing levels of mental and physical health issues experienced by the individuals in each of these categories. They highlight the benefits of this knowledge to enable better targeting of strategies to address homelessness and to identify the health needs of particular groupings of homeless people (Kuhn & Culhane, 1998). Another definition, “not having customary and regular access to a conventional dwelling” (Rossi, 1992, p. 10), also acknowledges the aspect of duration when considering how to outline homelessness; acknowledging as does the definition from Statistics New Zealand (2009), the negative impact of insecure housing. These approaches cover an important aspect of homelessness but seem narrow and not able to account for the many contributors to an individual living without a home (McAllister et al., 2011). This highlights that no one definition is likely to adequately describe all that is involved in a concept as broad as that referred to by the term homelessness.

Individual stories of the journey to homelessness are likely to be as diverse as the individuals who are homeless. Outward expressions of homelessness include living on-the-street, using night shelters and ‘concealed homelessness’ where people ‘have no other housing option but to share someone else’s accommodation on a temporary basis’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2009, p. 4). Within the diversity of journeys some common elements are acknowledged in the literature; these are often differentiated as individual and systemic factors (Chapleau, 2010; CSDH, 2008). Individual factors include economic disadvantage, alcohol and drug addiction, mental illness and other chronic health problems (Baum & Burnes, 1993; Clark & Rich, 2005). Systemic factors, the upstream elements of the socio-economic determinants of health, are factors that can mostly be attributed to ‘global, national and local economic and social

policy' (CSDH, 2008, p. 42). These policies have a broad impact, including on the availability of jobs with a living wage and affordable housing but they also influence societal values and attitudes towards housing and those who are homeless (Chapleau, 2010; Daly, 1989). An example of policies considered to have had a negative impact on housing equity in New Zealand are the changes in government housing policy, particularly through the 1990s with the swing towards 'market liberalism', resulting in a reduction in housing support and a more commercial approach to social housing (Thorns, 2000, p. 130). Changes in the Government's philosophical approach to their role in regard to social housing lead to the formation of a Crown owned housing enterprise that was to be operated on a commercial basis (Thorns, 2000). The results of this, which included the introduction of market-based rents and a reduction in the availability of social housing, led to increased pressure on those that were already experiencing marginalisation and difficulty achieving housing equity (Bukowski, 2009; Thorns, 2000). An increased potential for homelessness, in all its forms, is only one outcome of this type of approach to economic and housing policy but it is one that has a far-reaching impact on those that are affected by it.

One of the well-established and significant consequences of homelessness is its negative impact on health (Daiski, 2007; Hodgetts et al., 2007). This has even been shown to extend to an association between homelessness and increased mortality (Hwang, 2002). These health impacts result from some of the same individual and systemic factors already implicated in the journey to homelessness. Chapman (2010) identifies adequate housing as a human right essential in reducing health disparities and shelter is listed in the Ottawa Charter as one of the 'fundamental conditions for health' (WHO, 1986, p. 1). In recommending how to address growing health disparities, one of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health's main principles is to 'improve the conditions in which people are born, live, work and age'; highlighting the impact of 'where people live' on their health and wellness (CSDH, 2008, p. 49 & 60). Alongside this Daly (1989) and Seager (2011), acknowledging the many factors involved, remind us that providing housing will not magically correct all health disparities, as homelessness is rarely the primary problem.

The preceding discussion highlights the links between where people live, the conditions in which they live and their health. This accentuates the potential impact of the city spaces and places on the wellbeing of homeless people living in this environment. These considerations illustrate the suitability and importance of this as a subject for public health research. As stated in the introduction the concept of wellbeing was chosen for this study as it encompasses the broadest range of all aspects of health. The definition of wellbeing is the subject of ongoing debate, although related to health it has its foundations in psychology and philosophy with links to the concept of quality of life (Carlisle, Henderson, & Hanlon, 2009; Dunleavy, Kennedy, & Vaandrager, 2014).

There are two main perspectives regarding wellbeing, the hedonic and eudaimonic paradigms (Carlisle et al., 2009). The hedonic paradigm focuses on the presence or otherwise of happiness whereas eudaimonic wellbeing has a broad focus which is probably best illustrated by the translation of eudaimonia – ‘human flourishing’ (MacKian, 2009, p. 235). In simple terms – it is ‘spiritual, emotional and material wellbeing’ with an emphasis on ‘strength of character’ (MacKian, 2009, p. 235). The eudaimonic understanding of wellbeing has been chosen as being best suited for the purpose of this study. Human flourishing may seem a lofty aim for a group in society that has so many potential barriers to wellbeing but as has been revealed through the exploration of current literature and the subsequent study, it is a useful and evocative term to describe the almost universal desire for wellbeing whether homeless or not. The following section will explore research and literature related to the experience of homelessness, in particular as it relates to the focus of this study; the use of city spaces by homeless people and the subsequent impact on their wellbeing.

The Experience of Homelessness

There is an extensive range of literature addressing homelessness with emphases varying depending on the focus of attention that is often determined by the author’s area of interest, academic discipline and epistemological

approach. As alluded to in the introduction a considerable body of the literature and research on homelessness has been focussed on the concept of homelessness at a high level rather than on the experiences of the people concerned. Shlay and Rossi (1992) and Kearns et al. (1991) are examples of literature with this emphasis; they concentrate on exploring the factors involved in homelessness at a macro level. Kearns et al. (1991) have more of a focus on the health impacts of homelessness whereas Shlay and Rossi (1992) explore what social science literature has to say about the broader implications of homelessness.

As they were written in the 1990s, these examples are not necessarily reflective of more recent trends in approaches to homelessness but do contain elements that are common to much literature of this type. This often includes an examination of the historical background to and understanding of homelessness and some consideration of how it is defined. Shlay and Rossi (1992) and Kearns et al. (1991) both go on to emphasise the need to examine and understand the characteristics of homeless people including socioeconomic status and detailed demographic details such as age, gender and ethnicity. The rationale proposed by the authors is that identifying certain distinguishing characteristics common to homeless people will help to highlight vulnerabilities that may contribute to individuals becoming homeless. Literature of this type typically continues with a discussion of the relationship between the personal vulnerabilities of homeless people and high-level factors such as economic and social policy. Shlay and Rossi (1992) go on to state the benefits of ongoing inter-country comparisons of the factors implicated in homelessness, maintaining that these comparisons will help to better understand the structural causes.

Another study carried out by Shelton, Taylor, Bonner, and van den Bree (2009), although not as comprehensive in its scope and having a focus on the impact of adolescent mental health particularly, has a similar approach in stressing the importance of exploring structural, socioeconomic and individual risk factors for homelessness. The approach that these and many other studies have in common could be described as an almost epidemiological approach to homelessness. In

some cases this is demonstrated by the frequent use of tables containing detailed demographic data regarding homeless people (Caton et al., 2005; Kearns et al., 1991; Shelton et al., 2009). The aim of these analyses is to reinforce understanding of the relationship between risk factors and their contribution to the phenomenon of homelessness (Shelton et al., 2009). Even though research at this level must have some value in increasing understanding of the factors that contribute to homelessness it is unlikely to be considered to be beneficial by individuals living with homelessness. As a source to inform this study the literature represented by the preceding examples does little to describe the personal experience of homelessness people.

The individuals impacted by homelessness are potentially vulnerable and likely to experience social exclusion and therefore unlikely to have had an opportunity to share their experience or contribute to the pool of knowledge on this concept that is central to their everyday lives (Norman & Pauly, 2013; Thomas et al., 2012). Fortunately there is a growing body of research that aims to investigate what homeless people have to say about their experience of living with homelessness. An example of this approach is shown by Daiki (2007) who aimed to investigate homeless people's perspectives and what they consider would be most effective strategies to improve their health. Daiki (2007) highlighted that the views of those living with homelessness are not usually considered and she promotes the benefits of doing this. Her use of this approach enabled the identification of 'social exclusion and low self-esteem' as significant concerns to the homeless people studied; she also highlighted the importance of continuity of services as being necessary for their health to improve (Daiki, 2007, p. 279).

A similar approach is shown by Thomas et al. who intended to explore homeless people's experience of wellness in their context of 'poverty and marginalisation' (2012, p. 782). They employed a strengths-based approach aiming to counter commonly held negative perceptions of people experiencing homelessness and 'to understand their constructions of well-being through the reality of their life experience' (Thomas et al., 2012, p. 791). Their findings reinforced the benefits

of a strengths-based rather than a problem centred orientation. The authors promote this as a valid approach not only for other research but also for health professionals in their general interactions with homeless people, maintaining that this will help to counter the more pervasive deficit-focussed construction of people living with homelessness (Thomas et al., 2012). Much of what the findings from this study highlight in relation to wellbeing concerns self-image and a strong desire amongst homeless people to participate in society, to be included rather than excluded. This study also gives some insight into the often discussed scenario where homelessness people may be reluctant to pursue housing or other long-term goals, instead preferring the wellbeing they have created through their life on the streets (Thomas et al., 2012).

Homeless people's desire to participate in society is reinforced by Parsell (2010), who highlights the barriers to participation created by the construction of an identity based on housing status. The author stresses that neither identity or priorities are defined by whether a person is homeless or not (Parsell, 2010). The way homeless people are perceived is also addressed in a study by Hodgetts et al. (2011); the authors interviewed housed people to explore their perceptions of homeless people. Their findings indicated that social distancing increases when homeless people are portrayed or perceived as 'tarnished' or 'flawed' whereas 'social distance is diminished through accounts of similarity, common humanity, neighbourliness and affinity' (Hodgetts et al., 2011, p. 1746). These findings highlight some of the barriers to meaningful interaction between housed and homeless people. The significance of this is accentuated when considered in the light of the importance placed on social interaction and inclusion by homeless people (Daiski, 2007; Hodgetts et al., 2007; Marsh, 2006). These considerations reinforce that many of the significant consequences of homelessness are not directly related to the lack of warmth and shelter provided by a house but to the social aspects of homelessness (Marsh, 2006; Norman & Pauly, 2013; Seager, 2011).

Social distancing or exclusion creates barriers to homeless people participating in society and can lead to a 'loss of opportunity to achieve wellbeing' (Peace,

2001, p. 39; Thomas et al., 2012). While the factors discussed indicate that it may be difficult for homeless people to achieve wellbeing this cannot be presumed. Wellbeing is experienced subjectively and homeless people may have ways of maintaining this independent of secure housing (Thomas et al., 2012). It is possible that homeless people have a relationship with the outdoor spaces of the natural and built environment of the city spaces that is distinct from that of housed people and that may lead to the development of a sense of 'at-homeness' in the midst of their homelessness (Hodgetts et al., 2010, p. 288 & 300). This possibility of 'at homeness' without a house emphasises the importance of a homeless person's relationship with their environment; their interactions with outdoor spaces, the streets, public buildings; the urban landscape (Hodgetts et al., 2010; Veness, 1993). A relationship Sheehan asserts is not dependent on permanency of place rather on interactions and their 'lived experience' of the city spaces (2010, p. 546). Although this relationship with their environment is not only related to these factors; it is complicated somewhat as their use of these city spaces is often outside their control, leaving them 'subject to the power of domiciled groups' (Hodgetts et al., 2007, p. 717).

A report by Dooling (2009), combines discussion of the challenges of being homeless with consideration of the aspect of the city environment. This is very relevant to the current study as the city spaces are a significant part of the milieu in which homeless people live out their day-to-day lives. The author emphasises aspects of the green and built city environment and its intended and actual use and the challenges this presents to those living in various manifestations of homelessness (Dooling, 2009). Amin (2006), while not discussing homelessness in particular, also raises some issues that are valid in the context of the current study. The author introduces the concept of 'the good city', which he concedes is a work in progress, part of which is acknowledging that the city is a shared space where people of all backgrounds and circumstances co-exist. He defines this situation and the tension related to the potential for interaction at many different levels as 'being-togetherness' (Amin, 2006, p. 1012). The relationships referred to by this term are not intimate or family relationships, rather those of an incidental association. These dynamics of interactions in the city environment

whilst on the surface likely to offer shallow and therefore meaningless relationships, have been described as allowing homeless people to pass as 'ordinary people' and therefore able to relate outside of any homeless identity (Parsell, 2010; Radley et al., 2005, p. 292).

While the potential for interaction as an 'ordinary person' highlighted in the previous paragraph seems likely to appeal to many homeless people, the likelihood of marginalisation and social isolation still remains (Radley et al., 2005, p. 292; Seager, 2011). Along with the other factors already raised this tendency is exacerbated by the traditional emphasis placed by society on a 'home' being defined by the physical structure of a house and being associated with relationships and in particular the nuclear family (Passaro, 1996). This is problematic for those on the outside as the ideas of home and family have as much to do with exclusion as inclusion; a house has walls to include or exclude and family which is predominantly defined by blood relationships is intrinsically exclusive (Watson, 1986). Passaro (1996) emphasised the importance of both of these elements in the discussion and conceptualisation of homelessness and raised the idea that homeless people transgress two of societies almost sacred norms; living in a home and doing so within a family. It needs to be emphasised that these understandings of home and family have a cultural basis and therefore their impact will vary depending on the cultural background of those being considered.

The preceding discussion highlighted some of the existing literature regarding the experience of homeless people living in the city environment. While far from an all-inclusive analysis of all the aspects and concepts associated with homelessness, it has given a foundation for this study. The review has presented recurring themes regarding the way people living with homelessness are represented and therefore perceived by other members of their community. This persistence of inaccurate stereotypes regarding homelessness and homeless people highlights the need for a thoughtful approach to research (Hodgetts et al., 2006).

This study set out to answer the following research questions:

- How do homeless men in Christchurch use the city spaces?
- How do these men relate their use of the city spaces to their wellbeing?
- How do homeless men engage with the PV process?

The experience of homelessness remains underexplored and there is a need to utilise creative methods to gain deeper understanding of how space, place and people experiencing homelessness interact in relation to wellbeing. The purpose of this study is to contribute to a deeper understanding by the use of creative methods.

Chapter 3: Methods

The preceding chapter has highlighted many challenges for homeless people to achieve or maintain their wellbeing in the city environment. Homelessness has been shown to be a complex issue that is predominantly considered at a conceptual, macro level that neglects to recognise that those impacted are individuals. The men in the sample group for this study, men that accessed the services of the Christchurch City Mission Night Shelter, are likely to have an experience of the city that is different from 'housed' people; encompassing how they see and experience the urban spaces they live in, what they value and how they see it impacting their lives and particularly their wellbeing.

An examination of the literature regarding public health research reveals an increasing call for more participatory approaches, promoting a focus on empowerment and action to bring about positive change for participants (El Ansari, 2005; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Witten, Parkes, & Ramasubramanian, 2000; Woodward & Hetley, 2007). Among the various methodologies with a participatory approach to research are those employing a variety of visual media. One of these, PV, also known as community video, is a participatory group process in which a facilitator uses the medium of video in group exercises to encourage small group interaction, break down barriers, develop relationships and generate discussion about common interests (Lunch & Lunch, 2006). As the name suggests it is a participatory approach, it has links to Community-Based Participatory Research and Participatory Action Research which are often used with groups in society that are marginalised and vulnerable (Cresswell, 2009; Kindon, 2003; Lunch & Lunch, 2006; Stringer, 1996). These approaches are said to be 'participatory, cooperative and empowering; they intend to build capacity; involve co-learning between the researcher and the community and aim for a balance between research and action' (Minkler, 2004, p. 685).

PV fits within a participatory or advocacy worldview and critical theory; these promote the need for research to be carried out in collaboration with the

participants, to be linked with action, to emancipate and bring about change rather than maintaining the status quo (Cresswell, 2009). Critical theory encourages 'emancipatory practice' with the aim of ending or at least reducing oppression (Kyle, 2005, p. 23) and is based on a belief in the need for liberation through social action (Bronner, 2011). A participatory approach to research such as PV is said to provide the opportunity for the 'framing and voicing of knowledge' based on the reality of those impacted (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2008, p. 179). The discovery or bringing together of collective knowledge is seen as important because of the widely accepted idea that knowledge is 'potentially transformative' (Nygren, 2009, p. 16) and a vital part of the process of bringing about change (Adolf & Stehr, 2014). The use of words and video images as presented by the participants using PV offers the possibility of uncovering a different perspective, a new way of 'looking' and seeing the world from their expert perspective rather than the conventional discourse (Hernandez-Albujar, 2007; Kindon, 2003; Sitter, 2012). The benefit of a visual research method is reinforced by Radley et al. who highlight what they describe as 'the mundane truth of everyday life that we live in a world of words and pictures, of sensations and articulations' (2010, p. 44). This is referring to the use of photos rather than video; it could be said that video is even more well-suited given the extra dimension of sound and movement.

PV has been credited with offering the possibility of 'giving a voice ...to those that are not normally seen or heard' (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, p. 12). Although on the surface 'giving voice' appears to be a noble and valid aim, the assumptions behind this idea have attracted some criticism. Walsh maintains that the idea of giving voice supports the view that all that is needed to change an individual or group's situation is to give them a voice and to empower them. She considers that this is a misrepresentation of the dynamics of true empowerment based on the neoliberal concept that an 'individual is the site of social change', which she stresses minimises the impact of political, social and economic forces on the health of individuals and populations (Walsh, 2014, p. 2). While acknowledging that being heard and seen are important, Hernandez-Albujar also identifies the concept of researchers 'giving voice' as problematic, labelling this as

'paternalistic and disempowering' (2007, p. 299). The aim, the author maintains, is for the researcher to facilitate the environment for the voice to be heard (Hernandez-Albujar, 2007).

While empowerment at individual and community levels is a valid and worthwhile aim it is important not to generate unrealistic expectations (Laverack, 2004; Lunch & Lunch, 2006). It is also important to acknowledge the potential for a research method such as PV to appeal for the sake of its innovation alone (Wiles, Crow, & Pain, 2011). Honesty regarding the aims of the research and potential benefits for the participants is needed right from the beginning, with care to ensure 'a reflexive approach to power and agency within participatory video projects' to increase the chances of 'PV making good on its promise as an emancipatory tool' (Walsh, 2014, p. 2). Even Lunch and Lunch, who teach and promote the use of PV, caution that there are potential pitfalls with the use of PV if there is 'lack of transparency, lack of follow-up and unreasonable promises' (2006, p. 4). They end by reminding that 'PV is no miracle and can do little in isolation' (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, p. 4).

In response to the need for a reflexive approach it is important to acknowledge the impact of my part in this study, especially as the facilitator of the PV process. This impact would include some effect on the group dynamics and therefore the nature of the process, this in turn would have influenced what I observed and recorded in my field notes. This reflection reinforced that it was not possible to separate my 'self' from the process; this included my involvement in the process of creating meaning as described in the following paragraph. In addition to this my previous experience with PV, which could be considered to be an advantage given the skills required in facilitation, raises the possibility that my own expectations could overly influence the path of the process rather than this being guided by the participants. My influence in this study does not stop with the PV process but is also implicated in the analysis and interpretation of the data. A reflexive approach to qualitative research such as the current study is essential because of its interpretive nature (Cresswell, 2009). This requires a 'profound level of self-awareness and self-consciousness ... to begin to capture the

perspectives through which we view the world' (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003, p. 425).

My broad approach is grounded in critical theory, which informs my epistemological position that meaning is made rather than pre-existing and waiting to be uncovered. In the context of this study, my understanding is that this making of meaning happened through a dialogic process between the participants and myself. Critical theory emphasises that reality is ideological; that no realities are free of the influence of cultural, social and political manipulation and that uncovering this should be the goal of all research carried out within the realm of critical theory (Cresswell, 2009; Marshall, 1990). The aim of this uncovering is 'empowering people to see ways to control their own destinies' (Marshall, 1990, p. 192). Critical theory also acknowledges the complexity involved in attitudes and responses to complex issues such as homelessness (Kyle, 2005). The change potential of this approach was limited by the nature of the project. Because of the need to make this study achievable within the limits of a dissertation this project adopted a modified rather than full participatory approach. This involved some modification of the PV process, which was reflected in the prior choice of the focus, the research questions and the choice of sampling strategy. A pure participatory process would involve the participants from the beginning, including in determining the research questions and would not allow the researcher the level of control of the recruitment process required in the sampling strategy chosen (Balcazar et al., 2004).

Addressing the research questions using PV gives the possibility of gaining new insights into the relationship between the use of urban spaces by homeless men in Christchurch and their wellbeing. The PV process used was based on that described by Lunch and Lunch (2006). The details of the practical application of the method are addressed later in this chapter and an analysis of the process as employed in this project is provided in chapter 5.

Sampling and Recruitment

A purposive sampling strategy was adopted to recruit participants for this study. This approach is commonly employed in qualitative research that is not aiming for generalisability but to gain an understanding of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). The sample population for this study was men who access the City Mission Night Shelter; it was hoped that this group would provide suitable, information-rich participants (Cresswell, 2009). This sample was limited as it only included men and one expression of homelessness, those who use homeless shelters. One reason for concentrating on one gender for this study was logistics; both the emergency night shelters divide their clients by gender. Other reasons for not having a mixed gender group in the PV sessions was that this could make some participants feel unsafe and men and women may have different pathways to, and reasons for, homelessness (Morris, 1998).

Recruitment began with an initial contact with the Manager of Social Services at the Christchurch City Mission. I discussed the proposed study in general and asked his opinion as to the feasibility of carrying it out with men that access the Night Shelter. This initial enquiry received a positive response which led to a discussion with the Manager of Men's Services to determine the best way to proceed. She had a tentatively positive response to the idea of the study and as would be expected, wanted to know more detail to make sure there would be no harm to participants. Once the managers had seen a copy of the research proposal, the participant information and consent forms and ethical approval had been granted by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee they were satisfied that all possible care would be taken to avoid harm. It was vital to have the cooperation of these key people who served as gatekeepers to help facilitate the recruitment of suitable participants.

In a further planning meeting with these managers it was agreed that the best way to proceed was for me to attend a Monday night dinner at the City Mission. This dinner gave the opportunity to meet some of the men and to be part of their regular weekly meeting. At this meeting I was given the chance to give a brief introduction to the study and I asked men wanting to take part to approach me

after the meeting. There were only two men who indicated their willingness to take part in the study that evening. Even though this was not enough for the PV group process I decided to proceed with the plan for the first session two days later. I had hoped for 6-8 participants to ensure the sample size was manageable for a dissertation and to protect the ability to analyse the data in depth.

When I arrived on the Wednesday for the first session as planned, there was only one of the two that had expressed interest present but fortunately two other men had decided to take part in the study. This meant there were three participants for the first PV session. For the second session on the Friday one of the original three was not able to attend but fortunately there was another who wanted to take part, giving the fourth participant. During the follow-up sessions there were various combinations of these four present. This was less than ideal but the group sessions worked well in spite of this. There was always a risk that if anyone withdrew this would make the study unworkable given the small starting numbers; fortunately this was not the case. As part of the informed consent process I offered to read the participant information form out loud. This was to reduce the risk of embarrassment to those who may not be able to read.

The Participatory Video Process

The main body of the PV process consisted of two group sessions of about 3-4 hours each comprising a combination of exercises, discussion and videoing. As well as teaching basic video-making skills these activities aimed to develop the relationship between myself as the facilitator and the participants, encourage respectful group interaction and generate consideration and discussion of the research topic. The first session included activities designed to build group cohesion and teach basic video skills with an element of fun, the first was the 'Name Game' (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, p. 23). This exercise set the tone of the process with me sitting in the circle with the participants. Once this exercise was complete the video was played back to the group with the opportunity for them to comment on how it felt to use the camera and to be filmed. This viewing and

the resulting discussion can often be a levelling process where less confident participants feel encouraged by their participation (Lunch & Lunch, 2006).

The second part of the first session was a 'Community Mapping' exercise (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, pp. 34-35). This involved the group creating a visual portrayal of their environment and city spaces on large sheets of paper. There was much discussion during this activity, with the men identifying places that they used and spaces or buildings that were significant to them. During this process I encouraged reflection and discussion regarding these places and their use of them and how this impacted on their connectedness with the city and their wellbeing. The participants agreed that the mapping exercise could be videoed; the role of videoing alternated between each of the men. The video resulting from this exercise captured discussions and interactions that the participants wanted included in the final video as well as providing data for analysis.

The original plan was to continue with a light-hearted group exercise leaving filming around the city for the second session two days later. As there was a very bad weather report for the day of that session and the men seemed to still be enthusiastic, a joint decision was made to begin filming around the city. This involved the group visiting some of the places they identified on their community map as being significant. The men took turns filming these places and spaces and talking on-camera about their significance and how they use them. We began by walking from the City Mission down Hereford Street to the first place they had identified on their Community Map, the Cardboard Cathedral¹ then to Latimer Square, the Canterbury Television (CTV)² site and finally the 185 chairs memorial.³

¹ Also known as the Transitional Cathedral that was built as a medium term substitute for the Anglican Cathedral that was extensively damaged in the earthquakes.

² The site of the CTV building is now a memorial to the 115 people who died when it collapsed in the 22nd February 2011 earthquake.

³ A memorial created by Peter Majendie using different types of chairs. Each one representing a life that was lost in the 22nd February 2011 earthquake.

Session two, two days later, began with a brief viewing of some of the video taken on the first day then a review of the places that remained to be videoed. The places visited and filmed in this session were Latimer Square once again, Cathedral Square, the Canterbury Museum, the Botanic Gardens and we ended the day by having a cup of coffee at the Boat Shed Café by the river. Following these sessions the raw video was played back to the group, as is the norm for the PV process. This gave opportunity for comment and reflection on the video material produced so far and for the men to give me instructions regarding what they wanted included in the final video and what they wanted to be deleted. The level of their direct participation in the editing was limited because of time constraints. A final, shorter session gave the opportunity for the participants to view the edited video and to give their feedback. This included final editing and the men deciding on a title for their video. After a spirited discussion the title of 'Hope - Rising up from the Ashes' was chosen (See Figure 1). Following this process I asked the group if they wanted anything else to be done with the final video; they decided that they wanted it shown to the City Mission staff, which was done. This presentation to the staff is referred to in the final chapter.

After each of the PV sessions I recorded field notes to guide my reflection on the process and allow me to address the third research question which was concerned with how the men engaged with the participatory video process. I used brief notes taken during the PV sessions and the video from the exercises to guide the writing of these field notes. This is a process that involves the recording of observations 'to understand the relationships, customs, rituals and the sense-making practices within a community or group' (Brennen, 2013, p. 167).



Figure 1: The Title Shot -exported from the video

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this study was obtained through the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee and I undertook Māori consultation through the Māori Research Advisor at the University of Otago, Christchurch. My commitment to ethical, participatory values necessitated continuing preparedness to modify and adapt the process to maintained the integrity of the participants and cause no harm (Collie, Liu, Podsiadlowski, & Kindon, 2010). Reducing the potential for harm from this project required a variety of measures depending on the issue. Informed consent was an ongoing process not a one off event and included reminders of the participants' right of withdrawal at any stage. It was stressed that withdrawal would not lead to any negative actions, attitudes or outcomes. To address the risk of harm related to the group sessions I was careful to pay attention to this possibility through my facilitation of the sessions; ensuring as much as I was able that each participant was given an opportunity to be heard and that interactions were respectful. Regarding the potential for harm arising from the use of video I emphasised from the outset that the video material belonged to the group not to me; that the group must be in agreement with any

outside use of the video and if any member of the group did not agree it would not be shown more broadly or shots of that person would be edited out of any videos to be shown. I also highlighted the process for storage of the video media during and after the study.

The participants gave their permission for me to export still photos of places only from the video footage for use in the written dissertation. The privacy of the participants is protected by changing their names in any quotes from the transcript data used in the text of the dissertation. Throughout the study I gave reminders to the participants of the support services highlighted in the participant information form to help in dealing with any negative impacts from being part of this study. None of the participants expressed to me any negative consequences; hopefully if there were any unknown to me they had contacted the support services offered. In recognition of their participation and the time taken each participant was given a voucher to be used at the Warehouse.⁴

Analysis

Data analysis of participatory research presents additional challenges to that of other qualitative methods. How far can and should participation extend? Is it possible to involve participants in the formal analysis of data? This aspect of participatory research is given less attention in literature than the level of participation in data generation (Holland, Renold, Ross, & Hillman, 2008). The Participatory Video process has characteristics that fit within Creswell's description of the analysis of qualitative research – that it is 'an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data' (2009, p. 184). However, this statement applies predominantly to a researcher's role in the process of analysis and does not intend to account for a participatory approach such as PV.

The cyclical review process inherent in PV allows for comment and reflection from the participants; this offers the potential for a level of analysis to be an ongoing part of the process with the participants creating and revealing their

⁴ The Warehouse was chosen in consultation with the City Mission.

own themes (Lunch & Lunch, 2006). This was evident in each of the group sessions, from the initial exercises, the videoing sessions in the city and during and after the playback of the roughly edited video in the third session. The men spontaneously identified aspects of the video and themes that they noticed and were important to them. The ideal for a full participatory approach would be for the participants to be involved in every stage of analysis but in the context of the current study, with its modified participatory approach, participation in analysis was limited to the group sessions and did not extend to the more formal stages of thematic analysis. In spite of this, the participants' comments and reflections from the cyclical review process, which also guided the editing of the video, along with incidental audio (recorded during the sessions) gave a strong framework for the formal analysis.

The approach to thematic analysis adopted was that described by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87). This inductive approach enabled identification and analysis of recurrent themes from the data and examination of some of the relationships between these themes, without trying to force them into some preconceived framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is especially important given the participatory nature of the method utilised. Formal data analysis began with considering the feedback and reflections of the participants during the PV process. An example of this is the discussions during the drawing of the community map; in many ways these were planning discussions, group decision-making about what was important to include and to a lesser extent why. This community mapping process was helpful for guiding analysis as it provided a framework for the more detailed analysis of the data. The next stage involved becoming very familiar with the video, audio and field notes. This was followed by systematic coding of prominent features in the data; these codes led to the identification of themes which were reviewed, refined and then related back to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The main themes that were identified from the process of analysis as described were those of Place, Nourishment and Daily Activity. In addition to the chapters discussing the findings in relation to these themes, chapter 5 introduces and

discusses findings that relate to the use of PV. Each of these chapters combines the introduction, description and discussion of the findings, which allows for the development and analysis of the findings in situ rather than having them artificially separated. This includes consideration of the themes in the light of aspects of several social and psychological theories and concepts. The theories and concepts utilised include place and meaning (Atkinson et al., 2012), sense of place (Scannell & Gifford, 2010), therapeutic landscapes (Gesler, 2005), the daily path through time and space (Rowe & Wolch, 1990) and presentation of self (Goffman, 1971). These were utilised as they provide a valuable lens through which to understand and interpret the themes.

Chapter 4: Preface to Findings

In the following chapters the findings of this study will be presented and discussed. Preceding these, this chapter will present a brief selective biography of each participant based on their introduction of themselves through the PV process. It needs to be noted that there is a variation in the length and detail included in these; this is a reflection on the amount of material resulting from each participant's interactions with the process.

Roger

Roger initially identified himself as being from outside Christchurch but went on to emphasise that he has lived in Christchurch long enough to have moved from being '*a Blues⁵ supporter to considering himself a Cantabrian*'. Right from the beginning of the PV group process, in the 'Name Game', the first group exercise where participants were given the opportunity to introduce themselves and say something about their thoughts about Christchurch, Roger talked about the February 2011 Christchurch earthquakes. Much of what he talked about and referred to was related to the earthquakes, the impact they had and are still having on the city, himself and those that were close to him.

Roger spoke fondly of Christchurch, referring to memories as far back as 1973 when he was there to do his army basic training and met a woman he subsequently proposed to. In spite of being from outside Christchurch he had a long history of association with the city. It is not apparent how long he stayed in Christchurch after that first encounter and when he returned or at what stage or stages he was homeless. He was definitely in the city for the February 22nd 2011 earthquake and it seems that he had a house at the time because he talked, with strongly expressed emotion, about the death of his boarder in the CTV building collapse. He also referred to memories of buildings and events from his past experiences in the city. One building he referred to, the United Services Hotel, had been demolished and rebuilt in 1990, many years before the earthquakes. He also spoke with pride about other memories of Christchurch such as a time

⁵ The Blues are the Auckland rugby team.

when he and his fiancée where involved with a church group in giving out soup to people in Cathedral Square.

Roger was the most prominent of the participants in the front of camera role during the filming around the city. He seemed very keen to take on this role and was certainly encouraged to do so and affirmed in this by the other participants. Roger gave the impression that he enjoyed the PV process and relished the opportunity to share his perspective.

Brian

In the first PV session Brian announced that he was born in Wellington and that he had been transient for 15 years. He did not mention what precipitated the beginning of this period of homelessness but said in 2002 he began a journey lasting five years that included a few years in Australia. This period began with Brian working with his brother, where he managed to save several thousand dollars as well as having '*frequent run-ins*' with the police related to drunkenness. These events eventually led to him leaving Australia a '*wanted man*'.

On his return to New Zealand '*home became nowhere*' for Brian; this involved staying in friends' garages and sometimes couch-surfing. Brian's description of himself at this stage was '*drunk, stoned, beaten, friendless and sick of myself, a useless member of society*'. From this point he got on a bike, cycled over a month from Wellington to a small town near Greymouth and spent about 18 months camping in the bush. The next step in the journey for Brian was a move to Christchurch in 2009, camping out under the cliffs near Sumner and on the slopes of a hill near Lyttelton Harbour before eventually spending various periods of time staying at the City Mission.

Evan

Evan was a last minute recruit to the study. On the first day when only two of the expected four men arrived, Evan was at the City Mission for another reason, he asked what the project involved and after a discussion decided he wanted to take part. He was a very keen participant right from the beginning, being enthusiastic in his own contributions and encouraging of the other participants. Evan was very open during his turn to talk in the introductory 'Name Game' exercise, disclosing quite personal details about his recent history.

Evan said he is from Ruatoria on the East Coast of the North Island. He came to Christchurch to make the most of work opportunities with a job and accommodation organised in advance, but these did not come to fruition. In spite of this he expressed a confidence that he would get employment easily and that he just needed to get the foundations put in place then other things would work out. At the time of the study he was utilising the services of the City Mission and getting their assistance to help him *'get back on his feet'*.

Evan said he had come to learn that Christchurch is a very, very beautiful place and that the people of Christchurch are beautiful people that had *'treated him so lovely...I've hardly experienced that sort of hospitality where I come from'*. He went on to acknowledge that the people of Christchurch have obviously been through a lot and that seeing the damage had been very humbling for him. Evan, along with the other participants expressed that he would like to help the people of Christchurch in any way he could.

Vince

Vince was from Northland and had been homeless for 18 months on and off. He moved down to Christchurch on the 1st January 2014 with his partner and daughter to pursue work opportunities. Vince was present from the second day of the PV process; he had considered joining in from the first day but decided against it. He was at the City Mission when the group was gathering for the second day's sessions. Vince showed some interest, asked some questions and

with the permission of the others was shown some of the video taken in the first session. This was to give him a sense of how PV works and the tone of the project up to that point. This included him viewing the Community Mapping exercise, which allowed him to see which places were identified as being worthy of inclusion by the other participants. Vince identified strongly with Latimer Square and even though he had not had the initial introduction to using the camera and microphone he was very keen to be filmed talking about Latimer Square and what it meant to him. Following this he was eager to try his hand at filming and quickly became confident using the camera, tripod and microphone.

Vince was not able to be present for the final viewing and editing of the video so missed out on that opportunity to give his feedback. As it happened I saw him in the course of my workday, he seemed happy to say hello and stop for a chat. During this chat he said he was very happy with everything he said in the video and was pleased to have taken part. I took the opportunity to check with him again what his thoughts were regarding the video being shown more broadly. Vince said that he was happy for it to be shown to the City mission staff and other men at the Mission. He said he had been honest in what he said in the video and people knew that he was honest and therefore he was happy for it to be shown.

These short selective biographies lead to the presentation and discussion of findings as revealed through the analysis. As they describe some of the background and individual characteristics of each of the participants, they are particularly relevant to the next chapter which introduces the findings as they relate to the PV process and the concept of 'Presentation of Self'. This chapter considers aspects of how the participants engaged with the PV process and particularly the form that this engagement took.

Chapter 5: Participatory Video and Presentation of Self

There were several questions raised in the methods chapter related to the various claims made about the potential benefits of PV. This chapter will begin with an exploration of the findings as they relate to the use of PV, addressing the application of PV as a research method in this study. A main focus of this discussion will be related to the third research question regarding the participants' engagement with the PV process. This will be followed by a consideration of how the participants presented themselves; both in relation to the PV process and generally in their lives as homeless men in the city spaces. This exploration will be carried out in the light of Goffman's concept of Presentation of Self (Goffman, 1971).

The qualities and claims attributed to PV indicate it may be a useful participatory approach for public health research but could also create heightened expectations regarding potential outcomes. These and other potential pitfalls serve as a reminder that, as has been done in chapter 3, it is important to carefully consider the purpose behind the collation of such collective knowledge and that it be valued and used in a way that is respectful and of some benefit to the participants (Kindon, 2009; Walsh, 2014). This consideration along with the critique of PV in the methods chapter raises questions as to how the application of the PV process matched the potential highlighted by the literature that supports this method (Benest, 2012; Lunch & Lunch, 2006).

As the facilitator I was encouraged by the men's contributions even from the first exercise; they were more in-depth and personal than I had experienced in previous PV projects I had been involved with. The men expressed their own surprise at the outcome of the first exercise as captured in the following extract from my field notes:

One of the men commented that, holding the microphone when it was his turn to talk made him feel more confident than he had expected. He likened the microphone to the

Māori 'Talking Stick' [Tokotoko]. The men agreed that they all observed how they had said and shared more of their personal journey than they had expected to in the first group exercise – the Name Game. They agreed that hearing the first participant sharing personal thoughts and feelings set the scene for others to do the same (Field notes).

Following this exercise Evan commented to me *'You got us talking like men should talk'*. I was pleased that the exercises and group dynamics created an environment where the men felt able to share aspects of their lives with the group. The tone represented by these comments continued throughout the initial group sessions and the two sessions filming around the city. Their comments at the final viewing and editing session included the following from Evan:

We've all learnt from that experience ... I loved it eh.

No, that was mean brothers (Evan).

These and other comments gave a sense of the men being proud of the outcome of their efforts, individually and as a group. They indicated that what they had shown and said through the video was a good representation of their thoughts and experiences as homeless men in the city. This extended to them wanting the video to be shown to the staff at the city mission, which was done at a later date.

Engagement is central to the PV process and was a consideration from the beginning of this study, from the recruitment phase when men from the City Mission Night Shelter had the opportunity to take part, right through the PV process. For each stage of the group process to work well required some level of motivation and engagement. As already stated there were a total of four participants; all four were not together in any one of the sessions. Two participants, Roger and Brian, were constant through all of the sessions along with either one of Vince or Evan. When considering engagement from the perspective of numbers of participants recruited, it could be said that there was a low level of engagement. However it is not possible to compare what the level of recruitment would have been with other research methods such as individual interviews or focus groups. In regards to engagement from the men who did

participate, some of their comments and other findings showed that they considered that they had learnt some valuable skills and thought it was worthwhile, enjoyable and even affirming:

I thought it was very well done

It's great [the video] (Roger).

That's documentary material... hasn't been done before has it? [The video and the title - Hope-Rising from the Ashes] (Brian).

The variable attendance from two of the participants could be interpreted as a reflection on their engagement but it may also be related to the unpredictable nature of life for homeless people. These factors discussed in conjunction with my observations as the facilitator indicate to me that it may be more difficult to recruit participants for a study method such as PV but those that did take part developed a sense of what was involved and were generally well engaged and found some individual and group benefit.

Although engagement with the process is an important consideration especially as it relates to one of the research questions, participation and empowerment are also important aims of this type of research. My reflection on power dynamics during the process is based on my own observations, which as the instigator of the study and facilitator of the PV process are obviously subjective and unavoidably influenced by my own perspective and interests. The power relationship is unlikely to be equal for many reasons including that I am a housed, employed person and the researcher facilitating a process that only I have knowledge of, using equipment that I provided. The main safeguard to avoid reinforcing existing power imbalances was for me to be alert to this issue, maintaining a reflexive stance at every stage of the process. Alongside this the PV handbook (Lunch & Lunch, 2006) which was used to guide the process, contains guidelines intended to help overcome the issue of the potential power imbalance. As an example the instructions for the Name Game, the first exercise, state that once the whole group including the facilitator are sitting in a circle the facilitator

should 'hand over the camera in its bag and let the group unpack it. The facilitator must not take the camera back until it comes around for their turn to film' (Lunch & Lunch, 2006, p. 23). This means that each participant in turn, not the facilitator, is the one teaching the next person how to hold and use the camera and microphone. The aim is to reinforce that the facilitator is sharing the power not functioning as a teacher. Hopefully employing features such as this in the PV process and an attentive, reflexive stance helped to ensure the power dynamic was as equitable as possible under the circumstances.

As already highlighted in the methods chapter, real change and benefits for participants from this study were likely to have been limited by factors that reduced its participatory potential. In spite of this there was still potential offered by the PV process, one of which is the possibility raised by Kindon that 'the act of putting someone behind, instead of in front of, a camera momentarily detaches them from their immediate surroundings and effectively provides them with a different way of viewing and engaging their environment' (Kindon, 2009, p. 100). Although I am not able to confirm that this did occur, I observed signs that the act of being in control of the camera brought about a shift in attitude at some level. While walking around the city that is the men's day-to-day environment with a camera, tripod and microphone it seemed to me the men had an air of confidence and pride in their manner. They showed signs that they were motivated in undertaking the tasks involved in the process and appeared to actively grasp the opportunity of being part of a group focussing on issues that impact them all.

Although these could be considered to be examples of empowerment at a certain level and worthwhile in themselves, these benefits to the participants fall short of the aims of participatory action research which are targeting social and structural change rather than only impacting individuals (Balcazar et al., 2004; Nygreen, 2009). It was evident however that at least one of the participants engaged in an overt act of taking control through adopting a role through his part in the video. This dynamic is explored further in the following section.

Presentation of Self

Goffman's concept of 'Presentation of Self' proved to be useful in exploring how participants chose to present themselves in a particular way, individually or as a group (Goffman, 1971). This concept proposes that individuals and even groups may be viewed as performers, where 'performance is the activity of the individual or group whilst being observed' (Goffman, 1971, p. 22). These presentations may be associated with their everyday interactions with others in the city spaces as well as in this case the opportunities presented by the PV process (Goffman, 1971). The dynamics of the PV process, which include being watched by the other participants, other people in the city spaces during filming and those that watch the final video creates an environment that may encourage participants to respond in a way that Goffman describes as 'dramatic realisation' (1971, p. 30). This is when an individual 'infuses his activity with signs which dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts that otherwise might remain unapparent or obscure' (Goffman, 1971, p. 30). This is often done to increase the significance of an individual's activity in the eyes of the observer (Goffman, 1971).

As alluded to in chapter 4, Roger took on, or was given by the other participants, the role of the main 'front of camera person' in the video. In this role, when presenting to the camera, he had a particular manner that was notably different to his more casual way of interacting with myself and the other participants off-camera. Roger addressed the camera with a narrative style that was reminiscent of a television reporter, with physical mannerisms, language and a general style fitting this role. When considering 'dramatic realisation' in relation to Roger's narrative style, the suggestion is not that the activity he is describing is being dramatised but rather his style and activity as the narrator has elements of drama. The following extract is an example of this style although this transcription lacks the visual elements portrayed in the video images:

*Giddy everyone, come along with us, as we walk along
Hereford street towards what is now the Cardboard
Cathedral. It replaced the Cathedral in the centre of the*

*square that was severely damaged in the Feb 22nd quake.
This cathedral that stands here before me is made totally of
cardboard... it was completed in 2012 and came into service
later that year. If we pan across to the other side of the road
we can see Latimer Square...
...that is basically it for this area...when we come back to you
again later in the day or next time we film we will come to
you from outside what is still remaining of the Cathedral.
Thanks a lot people (Roger).*

To explore this concept in relation to Roger's presentation and that of the participants as a group is not implying that they are being deceptive or intentionally trying to give a false impression, in fact Goffman maintains that this is often done to 'put at ease' by simulating the kind of world that is thought to be taken for granted by those observing (Goffman, 1971, p. 80). Roger and the other participants wanting to present themselves in a particular way could also be motivated by them choosing to say and portray things that they presume the audience and I want to hear. In an interaction I had with Brian during the course of the PV process, I commented to him that I was surprised how positive much of what he had said about his life as a homeless person had been. He replied that there was no point talking about the negative things, as they were his own fault because he had made bad decisions in his life that led him to his current situation. So it seems that he chose to portray a more positive picture of his life to the audience, including myself, perhaps because of these feelings of self-condemnation.

Another aspect of this discussion is that the PV process offers the potential for the participants to decide how they present their day-to-day lives and activity. They can choose not only what they say and allow to be heard; but also the images they show of themselves and use to describe their experience of the city. This is likely to be appealing to a group who are often stigmatised, othered and portrayed one-dimensionally in conventional media (Hodgetts et al., 2006). In the following example Roger takes an opportunity to show a particular aspect of

his life that may not match society's expectation of what a sometimes homeless man might spend his time doing:

On a Friday night at 8 o'clock, people used to come and have a sausage and a cup of soup supplied by some of the local churches. We used to do the same sort of thing right here, next to the main entrance to the Cathedral. My fiancée and I used to come down on a Fri night, with a minimum of 2 or 3 pots of soup. The most popular was either cauliflower and cheese or tomato. They were made with real cauliflower and cheese. My favourite was pea and ham; I used to always make sure there was always a pot of pea and ham.

We'd have fellowship, we'd talk to people and we'd have a really good evening. On the last Friday before Christmas 2010, my fiancée and I were standing here talking with some people and 3 of them turned to Christ (Roger).

There was a strong impression from Roger's manner that he was proud of what he was recounting and also eager to foster an impression of himself that is different from any 'homeless identity' (Parsell, 2010, p. 185).

These examples, Roger in his narrator role and Brian presenting a positive impression could be said to be deliberate acts of taking control. They have taken control of the camera and the PV process for their own purposes; using the opportunity to present themselves in the way they choose, in an environment where they have little control of any aspect of their lives. These acts of taking control have some relationship to the theme of 'Place' as introduced in the next chapter. This illustrates how the nature and characteristics of the men's relationship with the place contributes to a lack of control also highlighted in the preceding discussion of presentation of self.

Chapter 6: Place

'Wellbeing, however defined, can have no form, expression or enhancement without consideration of place' (Atkinson et al., 2012, p. 23).

This chapter will explore the findings as they relate to the theme of place. The concept of spaces or place featured significantly in the data resulting from the PV sessions. This was not surprising, as the facilitation of the PV exercises guided towards their consideration, consistent with the research questions. A feature encompassed within the general theme of place that developed through the study was the significance of the impact of the Christchurch earthquakes, with an emphasis on the most devastating quake of February 22nd 2011. This aspect of place is addressed in its own section with reference to the participants' responses to this significant disruption to the function of the city places.

In the literature and other disciplines especially geography there is considerable discussion on the difference in meaning between place and space; for the purposes of this study the terms place and space will be used interchangeably. Conceptualisation of place is wide-ranging in its focus, from place as simply 'a portion of geographic space' (Gesler & Kearns, 2002, p. 4), to examination of the impact of inhabiting or making use of spaces at an individual or group level (Gesler & Kearns, 2002; Proshansky et al., 1983). This discussion of the data in relation to the theme of place will begin by endeavouring to highlight the meaning these men attribute to the spaces and places in which they live out their day-to-day lives. Atkinson et al. argue that places 'come into existence' because of the meaning given by those living in them (2012, p. 10). Milligan takes this further maintaining that the 'meaningfulness' of a place comes about because of 'experiences that have happened within it and activities that are perceived as able to happen within it' (1998, p. 8).

It is likely that urban spaces, especially those outdoors, have a different meaning for the participants than they do for homed people. As stated in chapter 2, a homeless person's lack of housing raises the possibility of them experiencing or

even creating a form of 'at homeness' amongst the natural and outdoor built environment of the city (Hall & Smith, 2011; Robinson, 2002; Veness, 1993). It has been suggested that living out much of their day-to-day lives in these spaces, that are not well suited to the purpose, requires considerable effort and resourcefulness to 'continuously negotiate and survive' (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001, p. 154). In fact this requirement for effort and resourcefulness may contribute to a sense of home, even in the context of not being able to own the spaces (Veness, 1993).

Meaning and purpose attributed to place can be personal and individual but as places and spaces such as those referred to in this study are mainly public, they will also have intended or commonly agreed purposes (Proshansky et al., 1983). These intended purposes are supported by their appearance and objects and fixtures they contain (Proshansky et al., 1983); in the case of Latimer Square there are wide expanses of grass, many trees and several park benches. The participants' accounts of Latimer Square (see Figure 2) that follow, demonstrate the meaning they attribute to it and define their particular purpose for this space. According to Atkinson et al. (2012) this in turn establishes and brings this place into existence for them. Another concept used when referring to the meaning and significance attributed to a particular place by an individual or group is 'sense of place' (Milligan, 1998; Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Williams & Stewart, 1998). Vince, as an example, clearly identifies his sense of place in regard to Latimer Square and its importance to him personally, '*This is the place that I love to come to*'. His understanding of its meaning is very focused and relates to his use of the space as an individual:

It reminds me of the bush.... I love the bush.

*This is where I come and lax out...when I'm angry, sad
(Vince).*

This seemed an interesting observation to me as one who has always seen Latimer Square as being a relatively open, almost English-style green space with Oak trees rather than the types of plantings that would be expected in the New Zealand bush. Vince's reference to this setting reminding him of the bush was

obviously significant for him and in some ways this space became a stand-in for the native plantings typical of the bush in Northland, the area he comes from.

Brian and Roger referred to the significance of Latimer Square for homeless men as a broader group. They described its role as a place to feel welcome, socialise and be fed:

Everyone in Christchurch who is homeless comes there at some stage...We all get to be made to feel really neat, we all get to meet each other and we all have something in our stomachs (Brian).

This is one of the homeless people's great hangouts in Christchurch. Many, many people come here on a Friday night for a sausage sizzle, on a Wed night for a sausage sizzle, and on a Monday night for. ...soup. We have a fantastic time... it is one of the main focus points of the Christchurch central city (Roger).



Figure 2: Latimer Square - photo exported from the video

The statement from Vince gives a strong sense of Latimer Square having a therapeutic role in his life. Brian and Roger also allude to this role but with more of a focus on the communal nature and benefits of this space; it is the setting for

companionship and being fed as part of their community. The idea of places or spaces having therapeutic or healing qualities, referred to as 'therapeutic landscapes' by Gesler (1996, p. 96), is one that is most commonly applied to places that have this reputation or commonly defined purpose. These can include spas, spiritual retreats and sites of religious significance, such as Lourdes (Gesler, 1996). Gesler's assertion that a 'therapeutic landscape arises when physical and built environments, social conditions and human perceptions combine to produce an atmosphere that is conducive to healing' allows this concept to be applied to any place that meets these criteria for an individual or group (Gesler, 1996, p. 96). The benefits described by Vince of spending time in a space that *'reminds him of the bush'* is also in keeping with the idea in many cultures and societies that being in natural settings is therapeutic (Gesler & Kearns, 2002). This potential therapeutic or beneficial effect of places and spaces and the broader concept of spaces as the setting for nourishment will be further explored in chapter 7.

The meaning and purpose ascribed to Latimer Square by the participants, related to its therapeutic benefits, is markedly different to that of the CTV memorial site (See Figure 3). In fact it has a meaning for the men that is quite distinct from any other places they highlighted. This site is a 'place of tragedy' as explained by Roger who was personally impacted by the events he describes:

'We're down here at the CTV building. All that's left now is what you can see before you. Prior to the quake in 2011 it was a 6-story building, it contained a radio station and CTV.

It is now nothing but rubble...115 lives were lost in this site. One is very personal to me as it is for a person who was up on the 6th floor of the CTV building at the time of the quake. Andrew, the boarder of my fiancée and I, a fantastic young

man came to New Zealand to try and improve his education and sadly lost his life (Roger).⁶

The CTV site is held in special reverence and as illustrated by the following comments this reverence is so strong that it is presumed to apply to all of the homeless community:

Even though it's a really nice, warm spot to sit and at night time too. There's power points down the end too, you can plug into ... they don't even hang out here. It's not really a place you'd really want to hang out at...' (Brian).

'You will not see anyone who comes from the streets come in here, cause damage to the plants, throw rubbish around the place (Roger).

Evan affirmed these sentiments explaining:

'For me it has the same respect you'd give going to a cemetery I guess...' (Evan).



Figure 3: The CTV Memorial Site - photo exported from the video.

⁶ This excerpt is another example of Roger's narrative style as already described in relation to Presentation of Self (Goffman, 1971) in Chapter 5 .

The CTV site is a place that all of the men identified, in the community mapping exercise, as being significant. During the sessions around the city they spent a considerable amount of time filming and discussing the significance of this place. The group attitude to place represented here shows a strong sense of respect, a clear agreement on meaning and purpose and a shared sense of this as an important place (Atkinson et al., 2012; Proshansky et al., 1983; Tuan, 1979). This meaning and purpose does not contribute to their wellbeing materially, but their understanding of and endorsement of its purpose appears to contribute something significant to their lives. It is likely that this place is more significant to them now, with its almost sacred post-earthquake status, compared to its pre-earthquake function as a building accommodating businesses and offices.

Place and the Impact of the Earthquakes

The CTV site is only one example of many where there has been change brought about in a traumatic manner by the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011. Evan highlights this with the following comments he made when the other men were talking about the respect they felt for the CTV site:

*'I think for me anyway bro ... I sort of treat the greater Christchurch in that respect ... that is a lot of loss
When I first came down here mate I...my relative took me out to a couple of the suburbs ... actually the whole bloody suburb's closed down.
It's something you'd think you'd get from a 3rd world country not NZ' (Evan).*

In his relatively short time in Christchurch he had observed the impact of this on the local people:

The people here have been through some, some kind of stuff I couldn't comprehend and just being here and seeing a lot of the damage has been ...very, very humbling for me (Evan).

Even though it seemed likely to me that the impact of the earthquakes would have some relevance to the participants' experience of the city I made no

intentional reference to the earthquakes in the study. This was partly related to the difficulty of knowing and controlling whether the participants recruited would have been in Christchurch before the earthquakes; as it eventuated only two of them (Roger and Brian) were living in Christchurch prior to the earthquakes. It also allowed the participants to raise this aspect of life in the city if it was important to them; it seems that it was.

Roger, who had the most prominent front of camera presence, focused a considerable proportion of his commentary on the impact of the earthquakes. The commentary and video images highlighted the large number of vacant areas, he made reference to the buildings that used to stand there and their function, often commenting on their significance to himself and the city in general as in this example:

As you look across the road towards Gloucester St, you can see the Gloucester St car park, next to that the beginning of a new office block which used to be a hotel. In front of me as we walk down Worcester St, you may be able to see the back end of the cathedral which is the icon of Christchurch. Everyone who comes to Christchurch comes to see the cathedral. It was a beautiful place and it attracted over two and a half thousand visitors a day in its heyday.

Now as we walk towards it, half is severely damaged and will need to be deconstructed so they can reconstruct (Roger).

As well as many more video scenes and comments related to the damage and loss caused by the earthquakes there were also many that were positive and complimentary about the city:

I came here because the place is really attractive, beautiful, that was 2009 (Brian).

What I've come to learn about Christchurch it is... it's a very, very beautiful place. ...I love the place (Evan).

This little herb garden [in the Curator's Garden - see Figure 4] is very special because it's beautifully laid out, it's got neat ideas for us to use in our own garden in Smith St. It's got neat little hothouses that are easy to build. It's got all the vegetables you need for a herb garden andit's just lovely (Brian).



Figure 4: Curator's House Garden - photo exported from the video

I have to admit that I was surprised at the number of and strength of feelings expressed in comments regarding the aesthetic characteristics of the city. Admitting this I have to concede to making assumptions based on popular discourse regarding what may be important to homeless people (Marsh, 2006). In fact many of the comments and video scenes presented places in relation to their aesthetic appeal alongside their function; the men seemed eager and proud to present aspects of the city that were attractive and appealing to them. This appreciation of the beauty of the city also extended to defending it when they thought it was being treated with disrespect, as shown in the following interaction that resulted from Brian noticing some tourists mocking the

earthquake-damaged Cathedral [the Anglican Cathedral in Cathedral Square]
(See Figure 5).

*One guy was taking the mickey out of the cathedral
[regarding the damaged state it was in] – he was going aww
aww [mimicking crying] then laughing. His friends were
filming him ... not appropriate (Brian).*

*Someone like me I'd like to go over and give him something
to cry about (Evan).*

Soon after this comment Brian went on to express his own thoughts at the current state of the Cathedral which illustrate the strength of his feelings and personal distress at the destruction brought about by the earthquakes:

*No, that's horrible- I hate the cathedral now. It's just like a
battered smashed.... They want to save it but it's ... not
worth saving...it's too gone, it's all cracked and smashed
(Brian).*



Figure 5: The Anglican Cathedral - photo exported from the video

On one hand he was upset and wanting to defend the damaged Cathedral, then he was expressing his own distress at the devastation. A new idea, 'Solastalgia', highlights a potential threat to self-identity related to a profound homesickness

suffered by people who even though they are still in the same place, it is unrecognisable, because of an event such as a natural disaster (Warsini, Mills, & Usher, 2014). Whilst walking around the city filming it was obvious to us all, even to Vince and Evan who only came to Christchurch since the earthquakes, that this city was almost unrecognisable compared to pre-earthquakes. The possibility of conflicting attitudes and emotions highlighted in the dynamics involved in Solastalgia has some relevance when considering Roger and Brian's comments about certain aspects of the city; reminiscing about what things were like and highlighting the changes and loss in the city from their perspective. In Roger's case this argument could be extended to his previously discussed narrative style; this style he constructed could be said to allow for some distancing of himself from the destruction and change. The following quote was one of many instances where he referred to the way the city was, not necessarily with much emotion but as a presentation of facts, more of a documentary style:

On the corner of Manchester Street and Worcester Street as we come down there. There used to be a restaurant called the Duke of Wellington which made one of its signature dishes a Beef Wellington. Yes it would cost you a couple of dollars to get it...but it was well worth it (Roger).

The conflict of attitudes and feelings about the current state of the city demonstrated by the possibility that Roger was distancing himself, coupled with thoughts expressed by the other participants, some surprisingly positive alongside expressions of grief and disenchantment, has some parallels with the situation in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. The respondents in a study by Chamlee-Wright and Storr (2009), although not homeless prior to the hurricane, have socio-economic vulnerability in common with homeless men in Christchurch. The overwhelming idea resulting from that study was a strong sense of place and belief that New Orleans was 'unlike any other place' (Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2009, p. 621). The respondents' willingness to return to their neighbourhood in spite of pre-existing issues related to poverty, racism, inequity and the high level of destruction from the hurricane was attributed to

this conviction that it could not be substituted, it was unique (Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2009; Milligan, 1998).

Is it possible that the participants in the current study would consider that their neighbourhood is 'unlike any other place' and therefore unable to be substituted? (Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2009, p. 621). The following comments from the men showed something of their thinking in regard to this:

We're outside the Curator's House⁷, I like to come here and reflect in the little Curator's garden. It's got a lovely little bench overlooking the Avon River. I get a chance to just sit down, think about things and watch everyone go by and have a neat time...I'm glad it survived the earthquake and it's a special little spot for me beside the gardens (Brian).

This is another area [The Botanic Gardens- see Figure 6] that certain members of the community come to reflect, reminisce, and just generally chill-out (Roger).

I mean that's where it all began for us [City Mission] (Evan).

I've been going to the City Mission, this is my 2nd time... ahh for shelter. If it wasn't for them... I don't know where I'd be...probably in jail (Vince).

These comments did not indicate that they consider their city spaces to be irreplaceable but they do express appreciation of certain places. They illustrated the value the men attributed to these places and hint at their contribution to their wellbeing. The reason for these places being important to them was likely to be associated with their individual situations and perspectives. Obviously New Orleans has unique characteristics that make it very different to Christchurch.

⁷ The Curator's House was originally the residence of the Curator of the Botanic Gardens. It is now a restaurant with a garden which serves the restaurant and provides education regarding growing vegetables.



Figure 6: The Botanic Gardens - photo exported from the video

In spite of this, the comparison may be valid from the perspective of the role sense of place and meaning may have in influencing the attitude of homeless people in Christchurch to the city post-earthquakes. It was not possible to explore responses of all of the men to the city from a pre and post-earthquake perspective, what could be explored was their reaction to the challenges and restraints imposed by the post-earthquake environment.

Although not related to natural disasters, Snow and Malcahys' revision of Hirschman's model (1970, as cited in Snow & Mulcahy, 2001) had some relevance to this study. Hirschman's model was developed to describe responses to decline at an organisational or state level. Snow and Malcahys' revision of this model was initially developed to highlight responses available to homeless people to efforts by the City Council of Tucson, Arizona City to 'curtail their mobility and subsistence activities' (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001, p. 161). The range of responses of homeless people described in this model are 'exit, voice, adaptation and persistence' (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001, p. 162). Exit means that 'behaviour or activity does not change' and the people impacted by a situation leave the area or city affected; voice, 'a collective expression of dissatisfaction', can take the form of social action or protest regarding their situation; adaptation involves modification of 'behaviour or subsistence repertoires'; and persistence involves no adaptation or change but a continuation of the status quo (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001, p. 162).

While the potential challenges to mobility and activities for the men in the current study were from natural rather than political causes this model reinforces that they do have options. They are able to exit, to move away completely; although this may not be an easy option, these men have already demonstrated that they are mobile. The participants were all from outside Christchurch originally and as previously stated two of them intentionally moved to Christchurch, pursuing perceived opportunities after the earthquakes. Evan highlighted their history of mobility in the comment he made after he and two of the other participants watched the final edit of the video:

Mate,...what I was sort of thinking mate...what I was thinking about adding people in there [in the video]was people that are actually from Christchurch. You know what I mean? And being that the three of us are actually ... you know we've all gone and said before that we're not actually from Christchurch (Evan).

Another possible response for these men and other homeless people in Christchurch is to give 'voice' to their situation, whether individually or collectively. As has previously been highlighted in the methods chapter, marginalised people such as those that are homeless are not usually perceived as a group that has a strong collective voice to express their situation (Norman & Pauly, 2013; Snow & Mulcahy, 2001; Veness, 1993). This is not to say that this is not possible for them to express their collective voice but it is more likely if they are supported and empowered to do so (Veness, 1993). This support may be through research or community development initiatives with a focus on empowerment and participation, or through community agencies such as the Christchurch City Mission, the Salvation Army or more recent efforts to raise the profile of the plight of homeless people in Christchurch such as 'Help for the Homeless'.⁸

⁸ www.homelessforchristchurch.co.nz

Persistence, 'neither leaving nor modifying behaviour' (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001, p. 162), is not really a feasible option for homeless people in Christchurch with the radical change in the central city built environment. Just one example of this change is the loss of 'Street 10' a facility for homeless people, which was mentioned by both Roger and Brian, which offered '*hot drinks and videos...lockers you could use* (Brian). Brian went on to say that a similar facility had been opened in Sydenham but this was some distance away compared to the handy central location of Street 10. This, and the endless number of changes on a larger scale require at least some level of adaptation. It appears to me based on my observations and the participants' comments, that the participants in this study have taken the path of adaptation; they have modified their 'routines and repertoires' in context of the constraints and challenges imposed by the changes to their spaces and places (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001, p. 162). Adaptation is far from a passive option, in fact it is an example of homeless people purposefully redefining their activity and use of spaces in response to the changes (Veness, 1993). The idea of routines and repertoires will be further explored in chapter 8, under the theme of 'daily activity'.

This chapter has explored the theme of place as it emerged from the findings. An examination of this theme led the discussion through many different aspects of the participants' interactions and relationship with their urban environment. The concepts introduced in this chapter gave a useful foundation on which to base this discussion, emphasising important aspects of the connection between homeless people's relationship with place and their wellbeing. The discussion highlighted how the meaning the participants attributed to places brought them into existence for them and in doing so gave these places their particular purpose. As previously stated I made no intentional reference to the Christchurch earthquakes in the study. In spite of this the impact of the earthquakes featured strongly in the findings and was addressed in this chapter. Consideration of the findings related to the impact of the earthquakes led to a discussion of their responses out of the options available to them. This highlighted their resourcefulness shown by how they adapted in spite of the

significant challenges posed by the broken-down nature of a post-disaster environment.

The outcomes of the discussion of place and all that it encompassed are especially significant given that the participants being homeless, spend a considerable portion of their daily lives in the outdoor urban spaces and are therefore significantly impacted by their understanding of and relationship with them. This relationship with the urban spaces is influenced by many factors including their physical and aesthetic attributes, and the meaning and purpose attributed as individuals or as a group. These factors seem to indicate that certain city spaces have some involvement in the wellbeing of the participants. This understanding highlights homeless peoples' vulnerability because of lack of opportunity, in this case, to have any control or influence over these spaces and places that have some impact on their wellbeing. The next chapter will build on this understanding by exploring and discussing how the participants seek to gain nourishment in these city spaces.

Chapter 7: Nourishment

The conventional definition of nourishment is 'sustenance, food' (*The New Zealand Pocket Oxford Dictionary*, 2005). This narrow definition concentrates on the physiological aspect of nourishment, although 'sustenance' gives a hint of a broader interpretation that suits its application to this study. Lazarus gives a more holistic definition of nourishment as involving nutrition at a physiological level but also rest, relaxation, recreation and love to nourish a person emotionally (2000, p. 93).

The term nourishment was chosen to encompass the ideas expressed by the participants regarding their endeavours to maintain physical and emotional wellbeing. Although broad in their scope, the items grouped together for this theme clearly presented as being associated with nourishment. These are loosely grouped as physical nourishment - mainly related to nutrition and emotional nourishment, which also included rest, rejuvenation and relational sustenance. Although there were no overt references to faith or religion there was a sense in which some of the contributions could be described as related to spirituality. These will be referred to in relation to emotional nourishment.

This chapter will look at the way the participants related their use of the city spaces to their nourishment and consequently their wellbeing. Not all of the representative comments and their context will show a direct relationship between nourishment and place but as already alluded to the city spaces are the setting where these men live out a considerable proportion of their everyday lives. The impact of this 'everyday life' on their wellbeing is sure to have some relationship to the quantity and quality of nourishment available to them in the challenging environment of the city spaces. These city spaces and places inhabited by homeless people were not designed to replicate the function of a home or even a house; this makes attaining this nourishment all the more challenging (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001). As already highlighted, a surprising number of the accounts of their lives in the city spaces from the participants had

a positive emphasis but there is no denying the underlying difficulty of life 'on the streets'. Vince alluded to some of the tensions involved:

Homelessness ain't just a word...when you live it man..it's..all sorts...stresses. It's not a nice feeling, it's not a nice life.' Since I been here I've seen young and old homeless ... sad man, sad.

Some homeless here are so used to it that it's become a life... for others you can see the stress and strain on their face (Vince).

Vince's comments seem to highlight two different responses to homelessness; with some people being '*so used to it that it's become a life*' with others, apparently including himself, showing, '*the stress and strain on their face.*' His implication is that some who are used to being homeless are not 'stressed and strained' by the way of life. There is nothing in the data from the current study that would indicate that any of the participants fit this category but Vince has obviously observed this in others. Vince went on to reinforce that he is one of those who experience homelessness as being '*not a nice life*', as in his example of his struggle with broken or at least distant relationships, '*I miss my partner, Yeah, I miss my kids. Haven't even seen my kid's kids.*' (Vince). This parting was brought about by a dream for a new life in Christchurch, '*which unfortunately wasn't the case*' (Vince). He showed obvious emotion when he expressed the following indication of what homeless men such as himself needed to 'pick them up *...you gotta give them a hello or some nice gesture like that* (Vince).

This desire for some kind of relational connectedness, some interaction with other members of the community is also highlighted in the literature (Hodgetts et al., 2006; Hodgetts et al., 2008; Hodgetts et al., 2011). Barriers to these interactions are exacerbated by the social distancing of homeless people resulting from them being considered as 'other' and aberrant by society (Hodgetts et al., 2011; Schneider, 2012). There is also a thought that homed people may avoid interaction and even eye contact with homeless people as they remind them society is not as 'fair and just' as they like to think (Hodgetts et al., 2006, p. 499). Vince's expression of the benefits of a '*hello or some nice gesture*' is

an indication of a desire for and the nourishing benefits of even a small amount of interaction and participation with other people in their neighbourhood (Hodgetts et al., 2006).

This idea was brought home to me in a most unexpected but very relevant fashion. I was starting my day, walking along a corridor in the hospital where I work. It was early so the corridor was mostly empty except for one person walking towards me. This man was in hospital pyjamas with some extra layers of warmth and had a slightly unkempt appearance. I remember going through an internal dialogue about whether to give a friendly 'hi' as we passed or whether it was too early in the morning and too much effort. I decided to catch his eye and say 'morning'; to my surprise he replied 'Hi Warren', it was Vince. We stopped and had a talk which amongst other things included a chance for me to ask him for his opinion on whether the video should be shared and with whom. This interaction caused me to reflect on how easy it is to miss opportunities to engage with those who are already marginalised.

The benefits of a gesture as simple as eye contact and a hello were also raised by Brian:

'You can't do without people around...you can't do without bumping into someone and saying hello. You've got to have that...social...' (Brian).

He referred to a place that he often goes to with the specific purpose of making these interactions happen. Ballantynes⁹ is a place he likes to go to intentionally wait for people (usually women) so he can open the door for them. The benefits are significant for him:

'It makes you feel so good...they always say thank you very much... '
'I love walking around, getting...saying hello to people and getting a smile back' (Brian).

⁹ A well-known Christchurch department store.

Comments from the participants highlighted their desire for differing forms of relational interaction. These included references to interactions with people from the broader community (housed people) through 'casual engagements' (Hodgetts et al., 2006, p. 934) such as in the preceding quotes from Vince and Brian. Alongside these were comments referring to engagement with other members of the homeless community as they meet on the streets in the course of their day-to-day activity. Comments from Brian reflect his acknowledgement of the need for interaction but recognised his and other homeless people's right to privacy, even though these interactions occurred in essentially public spaces. His description of how he and other homeless people engaged on the streets shows how he manages this delicate balance in a less than ideal situation. He emphasises that if he sees someone he knows he would '*say gidday, give them a smile and walk on*'. He would not interrupt them especially when they were in what he recognised as that person's special 'private' place and he could tell they were '*mulling something over*'. I asked Brian if they might sometimes have a more in depth conversation, to which he replied:

'We all got problems, none of us...I don't want to talk about them... to people...to my mates...I know, they know' (Brian).

The idea of homeless people lacking spaces where they can 'gain some respite from the street' (Hodgetts et al., 2007, p. 713), while not directly mentioned by the men in this study, is one that seems likely to be an issue. Public Libraries have been identified as one of the few indoor spaces where homeless people are able to legitimately spend time. This has benefits related to reducing stigma and social exclusion (Hodgetts et al., 2008) and may also serve as something of a retreat as shown by the following extract from Brian's description of his typical day:

I go right up to St Albans ...get to Bealey Avenue...turn around and come back down Victoria Street. do a round around the Casino, looking for something...go to the library because its open now ...head back to the Cathedral (Brian).

He mentioned visiting one or another library three times during his day. His use of the library included listening to music, *'Lorde, she's unique'*, using the computers, *'I Google something...'* and using the toilets. He did not talk about interacting with other library users, rather his use of the library seemed more solitary. He gave the impression that it was a place that he felt comfortable; this may be explained by the legitimacy of his presence and the potential to go unnoticed in such a place (Hodgetts et al., 2008). This was in contrast to the time he spent around the hospital where he had to sneak around if he had any chance of getting a coffee from one of the coffee vending machines without being noticed: *'Now to the hospital, toilet, read a mag, maybe sneak a coffee if I look tidy and move quick'* (Brian).

As a homed person I find it difficult to imagine how it is possible to have any privacy when spending a large proportion of a day in public spaces whether outdoors or public indoor spaces. The conceptualisation of privacy in society is generally linked to property, with a presumption that 'to lack property means to lack privacy' (Sparks, 2010, p. 848). This aspect of homeless people's lives is closely related to the broader issues of homelessness; the desire to be included rather than excluded, to participate in society rather than be marginalised (Hodgetts et al., 2006). How can society recognise homeless people's right for privacy with entrenched understandings of the relationship between property and privacy alongside the social distancing of the homeless that results from marginalisation?

Reference was made to 'therapeutic landscapes' in chapter 6; other terms for this concept are healing spaces, landscapes of healing and spaces of care (Curtis, 2004; Gesler, 1996; Gesler & Kearns, 2002; Hodgetts et al., 2007). Many places acknowledged for their healing qualities have a spiritual or historic origin for this reputation or a clearly defined and agreed purpose and meaning (Gesler, 1996). Increasingly attention is being given to the therapeutic qualities of 'ordinary' spaces (Curtis, 2004; Gesler & Kearns, 2002; Hodgetts et al., 2008; Wakefield & McMullan, 2005). The concept acknowledges the importance to

health and wellness of 'experiences in social spaces that are not medical' (Curtis, 2004, p. 4) and that many varied types of spaces and places may be viewed as having therapeutic and healing qualities. The example given earlier was Latimer Square, in particular its beneficial qualities highlighted by Vince. Other spaces that emerged from the PV process as being associated with emotional or spiritual nourishment of some kind included the Curator's House garden, the Botanic Gardens, the Library, the CTV site, and the City Mission ('the Mish'). The qualities attributed to these places relate to some of the many aspects of nourishment. A good example of this was the City Mission (See Figure 7) which was mentioned often in comments from the participants, highlighting a strong sense of respect for and appreciation of the nurturing and nourishment the City Mission provided. This was reciprocal; when discussing this study, the logistics and potential issues associated with it the staff were very careful to stress that it should be an open, respectful and empowering process.

The places and spaces mentioned so far were all fairly predictable in that most people would be able to identify with the therapeutic or nourishing qualities encompassed in them. A less predictable choice was the Harvey Norman department store¹⁰:

*Sitting in my space at Harvey Norman, Moorhouse Avenue.
No one can see me. I just sit here and drink and expose my
smelly feet. I cough on a few cigarettes; think about the
treatment and care I'm getting from the City Mission (Brian).*

The way Brian described this space reinforced its meaning and importance to him, meeting his needs for privacy, relaxation and as a place for contemplation. However, although it is not clear from the quote it is possible that '*sit here and drink*' means drinking alcohol and possibly getting drunk. If this was what was happening it would be stretching the concept of therapeutic spaces beyond that intended. Aside from this consideration, spaces such as this seemingly ordinary example have been described as 'fields of care' (Wild, 1963 as cited in Tuan,

¹⁰ This is a large department store on the edge of the Central Business District with a large car park and other vacant land around it.

1979, p. 412), these are types of spaces that are not obvious, either visually or functionally. It would not be obvious to many, if any, that the space Brian referred to was a place with the attributes he described. This is in contrast with 'public symbols', places such as formal gardens and sacred places, like the CTV site, that are by their design and nature more obvious (Wild, 1963 as cited in Tuan, 1979, p. 412). The places highlighted by the participants may not all qualify as therapeutic places according to formal definitions however they do illustrate the possibility of ordinary spaces having therapeutic qualities (Curtis, 2004).



Figure 7: The Christchurch City Mission - photo exported from the video

As suggested, when first defining nourishment, food and nutrition are often the first factors that come to mind. References to food and how and where the men obtain it were frequent throughout the PV process, the final video and other transcripts. This is not surprising given the likelihood of difficulties in obtaining food for homeless people (Daiski, 2007; Hodgetts et al., 2007). Although obtaining food is often difficult and therefore a priority for homeless people many of the men's comments rather than concentrating only on food, often referred to the companionship involved with food and eating. The emphasis given to food and companionship occurring together reinforces that seeking physical nutrition, while important to their wellbeing, is not sought at the

expense of relational nourishment (Hodgetts et al., 2007). This combined nutritional and relational nourishment is firmly identified by the findings as being linked to place. Once again Latimer Square features, it is '*one of the homeless people's great hangouts*' (Roger) and according to Brian the homeless or needy have food of some type provided there nearly every night of the week.

The use of public spaces for the purpose of providing food for homeless people has been controversial throughout history (Gesler, 2005), with some arguing doing so perpetuates homelessness. A place such as Latimer Square is very visible and as such the activity involved in these people gathering and eating is very public. Visible gatherings of homeless people such as these are said to cause discomfort amongst the homed community as it is a reminder that 'all is not right with the world' (Hodgetts et al., 2011, p. 1739). This discomfort is also fed by stereotypes of homeless people being somehow different and aberrant leading to further stigmatisation and marginalisation. This further reinforces the reality of the challenge involved for these men in meeting their various needs for nourishment in these predominantly outdoor city spaces.

The discussion in this chapter on the findings related to the theme of nourishment has highlighted the considerable effort required for a homeless person in the city to gain emotional and nutritional nourishment in an environment they have little control over. The nature of homeless people's daily activity, some of which is dedicated to their quest for nourishment, is the subject of the next chapter which addresses the findings as they relate to the theme of daily activity.

Chapter 8: Daily Activity

The previous chapter addressed the theme of nourishment, which amongst other things drew attention to the considerable effort required to maintain or attain this nourishment. The current chapter will go on to address another key theme - daily activity, what the men do and what they said about this activity. This exploration of daily activity will begin with an examination of its conceptualisation in relation to homelessness. This facilitates an exploration of various aspects of the day-to-day activity of the participants, including the practical work of days spent in the urban environment. The consideration of daily activity will unavoidably incorporate aspects of place; as previously indicated although they are themes in their own right, it would be difficult and even artificial to deny the obvious relationship between them (de Certeau, 1984; Radley et al., 2010).

The Daily Path through Time and Space

Rowe and Wolch identified the significance of day-to-day activity in the life of a homeless person, conceptualising the activity related to what they call 'essential functions' and the social interactions involved in this as 'an individual's daily path through time and space' (1990, p. 188). They identify some negative impacts of a homeless person's typical lack of a home and workplace to be a barrier to continuity in their daily path, which they maintain is detrimental to their social networks and self-esteem (Rowe & Wolch, 1990). This conceptualisation encourages a consideration of activity in the context of place and social interaction as well as considering the practical aspects of activity.

The reality of this 'daily path' is borne out in a written account by Brian, offered completely of his own initiative and motivation, describing a typical day in his life as a homeless man in Christchurch. His account portrayed something of the practical aspects of his efforts to fill his day purposefully and to meet his needs for physical and emotional nourishment. In the following excerpts Brian gave some examples of the routine and ritual involved in obtaining scraps of food, loose change and cigarette butts along with his appreciation of the aesthetic and emotionally nourishing aspects of the Curator's House garden:

I wake as late as I can. I wash and toilet; if I have food I eat food, then it's out the mission door. Residents gather at the gates a while and it's normally at this time that you decide what to do. Uptown is first choice for overnight scraps but after years on the street you already have a time for your ashtrays [places to look for cigarette butts] and naps. That's about it, City Mission, past Latimer Square, past the Cathedral...

Yes, got coffee and now sit on a bench in the Curators cottage, Botanic Gardens. The little herbal garden is peaceful and full of gardening tips. I can use this view to lay out the Smith St garden area we plant. It might help, who knows? Gives me something to think about, and it's free (Brian).

Even though only a part of a typical day, its general features and uniformity are representative of the style and content of his other descriptions of his daily activity. In fact, Brian comments on the repetitive nature of his typical days, 'Then I go round again...it's the same route and I bump into the same people'. Although this comment may be construed as being neutral he goes on to say:

Oh how little I get up to during the day,...that's pretty much... honest. That's about it and writing down what I do every day has reminded me of how little I do each day (Brian).

There appears to be a conflict present in Brian's comments. His reflections clearly indicate that although his days appeared to be full of activity, such as his routine walks which in a broad sense enabled him to seek and obtain nourishment, this activity did not satisfy him as being significant or meaningful.

The quality and consistency of day-to-day activities or 'daily path' are thought to be significant; with impact on a person's relationships, identity and wellbeing (Rowe & Wolch, 1990, p. 190; Sheehan, 2010). The significance of this is explained by the contribution an individual's daily path plays in determining the

direction of their eventual 'life path' (Rowe & Wolch, 1990, p. 190). As is the case for most homeless people, Brian does not have much autonomy regarding the activities of his typical day, let alone being able to ensure a consistent, proactive daily path that will benefit his life path (Sheehan, 2010). Instead he finds himself locked into a cycle of *'checking out every phone box, every parking meter, every kerb, every alley, every smoking spot'*, and why? As Brian so clearly said, *'you find nothing but it makes the walk important'*. A similar sense was evident in his comment regarding a day at the hospital when he volunteered for a study, *'something real to do at last'*, indicating the low regard he held for his usual activities. This was further reinforced by his comment that since he had been transient he considered he was *'hardly doing anything'* and that much of his daily routine *'just gives me something to do'* (Brian).

The experience of lacking control and options in their daily activities was also reflected in comments from other participants. Vince at one point described how he was feeling as *'shittedness'*; he gave no explanation as to the meaning of this term, expecting it was self-evident. Some of its meaning emerged through Vince's other comments which reflected the struggle he was having in his current state of homelessness. He told of his experience of dealing with WINZ (Work & Income New Zealand) and highlighted the *'obligation bullshit'* imposed by them, which led to him *'walking around 5 days a week'* just to meet their requirements of looking for a job to maintain his benefit. This particular account of his frustrations started with WINZ announcing to Vince that they had a job for him. He expressed anger and frustration in his retelling of the account:

*They don't understand the struggles we have to go through.
Like, WINZ they say to me one time, we've got a job for you.
And I said, oh yeah ok, how do you figure that out? And they
reckon, what do you mean? You want to give me a job...you
know I'm homeless ... so for a start; what the fuck do I have for
breakfast? Where the fuck am I going to stay and what am I
going to have for lunch and tea? (Vince)*

Vince had a clear sense of what was required before he was able to start working which included 'rehab', which he was starting, and having somewhere to live and prepare for each working day. His frustration was at the expectations placed on him to spend time and energy meeting requirements he thought were of little value given what he felt to be the disjointed nature of the approach from WINZ. All this 'trying to get a benefit just to live' and to avoid WINZ 'chopping it in half whenever they feel like it' (Vince), in a situation where he thought there were no jobs suited to him anyway. Evan agreed that to move away from homelessness was more complex than merely getting a job or housing as isolated occurrences:

*You've got to start somewhere – so you just can't go to work
without a home to go to and without food to feed yourself, to
sustain yourself (Evan).*

He felt confident that his own situation would improve soon, that he would find work easily but needed the foundation, a home, to be in place first.

These comments from the participants highlight a difference in context between them as homeless and unemployed individuals and people that are housed and employed. In their conversation on daily and life paths Rowe and Wolch emphasised the importance of the home and workplace as points 'of constant return, essential functions and intense social interaction' (1990, p. 190). This has some similarities to Nicholls' assertion that 'housing embeds people in time and space, and has an ontological as well as material influence on the reality they are in' (2010, p. 36). Although some of these functions may be met in part by the City Mission Night Shelter as a proxy home, their day-to-day routines that in some ways mimic work and their peer network as their social supports, these are often incomplete and inconsistent. One of the realities of their lack of housing and a workplace (a job), that emerged from the data is a sense that the obligations they are compelled to fulfil in their daily lives holds them back from those activities and interactions that may be of more long term benefit. This time lost to fulfilling obligations and a lack of opportunity to achieve long term goals both encourage a focus on activities that 'result in feeling good in the present' (Thomas et al., 2012, p. 788).

This milieu of activity, consisting of meeting both the requirements of the system and personal needs in a way that makes the activity feel important, seems as an observer, to require considerable thought and effort. The participants' activity was predominantly carried out in the outdoor city spaces, which are often poorly suited to the purpose (Dooling, 2009), with some respite provided by public indoor spaces such as the Library and the City Mission. It is also important to acknowledge that these men do not inhabit these spaces alone; there is a 'being togetherness' involved in life in the city where many individuals and groups are seeking to meet their own particular goals (Amin, 2006, p. 1012). Amin seems to imply, amongst other things, that there is a competitive element involved in this being togetherness which is reinforced by his assertion that even a well-functioning city treats the marginalised less well than other inhabitants (Amin, 2006). Most people would agree that Christchurch in its post-earthquake state is not a well-functioning city. The tenuous nature of life for homeless people and the typical treatment of marginalised people in any city (Amin, 2006) is added to the complexity of a city in its post-earthquake state.

The preceding sections have explored the findings that related to the men's activity in the city spaces from a general perspective. A particular aspect of activity that was identified as being significant in the findings was walking. Some reference has already been made to walking in this chapter; the next section will pay particular attention to the purpose and value placed on walking by the participants. There will also be some discussion of Baugh (2010) and de Certeau's (1984) ideas regarding the part that walking plays in the life of homeless people.

Walking

Much of the activity highlighted in the data from the PV sessions and filming around the city has at least some connection to walking. In one of the predominant presentations walking was present by implication rather than

overtly; an enabler of other activities rather than the focus. As in the example of Brian's regular 'butt stops':

'there's a regular run, everybody's got one...we've all got our regular little alleyways, doorways that we go to and there's that little tin at the end of it' (Brian).

The value placed on walking in literature is varied ranging from it being considered a 'privileged mode of encountering space and place' when compared to other modes of moving around a city (Baugh, 2010, p. 87), to being 'a chore' by homeless people who have little option (Hall & Smith, 2011, p. 38). It is unlikely that the men in this study would consider their walking as a privilege. Vince's comments to the WINZ worker quoted earlier in the chapter showed he considered walking to be a chore, at least sometimes, whereas Brian portrayed it as more of a necessity *'It's a trip from one to the other'*. Walking enables the men to move from place to place to attend to the various opportunities for nourishment offered by their city spaces and place. Radley et al. (2010, p. 38) describe this manifestation of walking as 'walking as a means', a mechanism to facilitate needs and goals.

In some ways the practical filming sessions, a major part of the PV method, mimicked the concept of 'walking as a means' as it applies to their usual day-to-day walking (Radley et al., 2010, p. 38). The men walked as an integral part of the video-making process, not for its own sake but to get from place to place with the aim of showing and describing their use of these city spaces. The following excerpt from Roger's narration gives a sense of this:

Ok, we're now on Worcester St, heading towards the main cathedral in the centre of the city. As we go down Worcester Street you will see that some of the area still has some buildings. Some of the area is just parkland... As you look across the road towards Gloucester St, you can see the Gloucester Street car park. In front of me as we walk down

Worcester St, you may be able to see the back end of the cathedral (Roger).

The men's approach to walking could also be said to have impacted their filming style. It may have been coincidence or related to their inexperience with a camera but their filming was distinctive when compared to conventional styles of filming. The camera wandered as they walked, there was a strong sense of movement in the video images. The participants had no hesitation in moving the camera around in many different directions during one shot¹¹, as if to show as much as possible of the places they consider to be significant. They wandered, filming as they walked and talked, describing what they were filming and where they were heading. The filming style and the resultant view presented by the men may be partly explained by the dynamic involved in Baugh's assertion, that walking reduces barriers between the walker and the city 'as the walker is part of the very fabric of the space being traversed' (2010, p. 87). It seemed to me that the filming style they adopted was very natural to them, fulfilling their aesthetic requirements and possibly reflecting the dynamic of their days spent walking and wandering. The men certainly expressed a conscious recognition of their pleasure at the style of their video as shown by these comments:

Vince was doing that filming when he went up and down [the cathedral] (Brian).

He's got a bit of hidden cameraman talent there (Evan).

de Certeau maintains that 'to walk is to lack a place', a lack that is somehow seeking to be compensated by the 'relationships and intersections of these exoduses' (1984, p. 103). Roger's comments, describing homeless people such as themselves as individuals that '*come from the streets, are on the streets or have been on the streets*', highlight the streets as the setting for their daily lives. The streets are the places they walk, where the walking is in some ways as important as the destinations. It is possible that the participants' walking of these streets is a consequence of their lack of place, not merely because they have no option but in an attempt to fill their lack of a home and workplace with their movement

¹¹ I comment, as this is quite different from the technique I would use or teach.

through and interactions amongst the city spaces (Rowe & Wolch, 1990; Sheehan, 2010; Wolch & Rahimian, 1993). This shows itself in Brian's comment that walking around his regular run looking for cigarette butts and coins in parking meters is *'like a job'*. This looking and feeling busy to satisfy oneself and those looking on is described by Goffman as 'make work' (1971, p. 109); it is not too difficult to see this as an attempt to compensate for a lack of work or a workplace.

The place of walking in the men's lives was reinforced when I was considering the logistics of us getting from place to place during the filming sessions. I wondered whether we would need to borrow a van or possibly use a taxi. It soon became apparent to me when I mentioned this issue to the men that they did not expect anything else but that we would walk. Whatever the deeper motives behind their walking, it is clear that walking is their main option for moving around the city. It appears that a few homeless men have the option of cycling. Vince had a bike that he seemed to use from time to time, but walking was still the predominant form of transport for that trip from one place on the daily route to the next. These men are 'pedestrians of necessity' (Hall & Smith, 2011, p. 42), a necessity that obliges attention and preparation to cope with the practical aspects imposed as illustrated in the following interaction:

I look forward to Summer, when I get up in the morning I think 'Oh God, I hope it's fine'. Because your feet sweat enough now, you can't help getting wet feet. Your feet get frikkin wet and you wear your shoes out so fast and you get second hand shoes already. It doesn't matter what you buy they always leak so I'm going for safety boots next. It's really important eh, what you've got on your feet (Brian).

I always wear 2 pairs of socks (Vince).

Yeah, with mine [leaky shoes] I have to dodge every puddle (Brian).

There's no fun in that (Evan).

It breaks the day... always looking for the dry spots
(Brian).

On the second afternoon of filming the practical implications of being a 'pedestrian of necessity' (Hall & Smith, 2011, p. 42) were made clearer to me, as although it was not raining there was a very strong, cold wind blowing. As we set off towards Latimer Square, as the first place to film that day, I enquired of one of the men if he was warm enough in what he was wearing. He looked at me shrugging his shoulders and replied, '*this is what I wear*'. To be outdoors for most of every day in whatever weather the day brings and to walk is these men's reality.

The preceding exploration of the findings related to the theme of daily activity leads to a focus on the content and purpose of this activity along with the participants' attitudes towards it. A particular emphasis was the level of activity required in the quest to obtain nourishment and to fulfil the requirements of the system. The conceptualisation of daily activity as it relates to homelessness was explored using Rowe and Wolchs' construction of essential functions and social interactions as 'an individual's path through time and space' (Rowe & Wolch, 1990, p. 188) which provided a useful framework in which to consider this theme. This concept highlighted the importance of the quality and consistency of an individual's daily activities; a lack of which having a negative impact on an individual's longer term 'life path' (Rowe & Wolch, 1990, p. 188; Sheehan, 2010). An examination of the findings in relation to this concept revealed a lack of control and options in the participants' daily paths with a considerable amount of time and energy going towards meeting obligations and the basics of day-to-day life. To understand this is helpful but does not offer any solutions; there is limited scope for a well-planned and constructive daily path in the context of homelessness given the associated lack of control and options.

The chapter also included a discussion of walking and its part in the daily activity of homeless people. The importance of walking shown from analysis of the findings was not surprising given the prominence of walking in other literature. Discussions of walking ranged from it being described as privilege, a chore and

as a means to the meeting of needs and goals (Baugh, 2010; Hall & Smith, 2011; Radley et al., 2010). The context and focus of the walking when considered in relation to literature and the previous references to daily activity served as another reminder of the lack of control and choice homeless people have in their day-to-day lives. When considered in the light of de Certeau (1984), the participants' walking is an adaptation, like much of their activity it is a consequence of their lack of a place they can call their own.

Chapter 9: Further Discussion and Concluding Comments

Meaning, Purpose and the Daily Path through Time and Space

The main aim of this study was to increase understanding of how homeless men in Christchurch use the city spaces and to explore their understanding of how their use of these spaces impacts on their wellbeing. Alongside this there was a hope that through the use of PV, a method with its foundations in participatory action research, there would be the possibility of some benefit for the participants. The findings resulting from this study have already been identified and discussed in the findings and discussion chapters. This chapter will further explore these concentrating on the relevant concepts and highlighting their broader significance and implications for homeless men in Christchurch. Prior to this the potential of the research method, PV, will be further explored with reference to the possibilities offered if continuation of the process was an option.

Although there is no way to be certain, it is possible that the PV method provided an environment that enabled some unexpected findings to emerge. The issue of the participants' engagement with PV, which related to the third research question, was discussed in chapter 5. This also included discussion as to whether the application of PV in this study met the aims of participatory research as well as the impact of the limitations to participation in this study. Would there have been additional benefit for the study findings and the participants if the PV process was continued beyond the limits of this dissertation? The PV process itself can be open ended, with several possibilities for developing the project if the participants and I were willing and able to do so. One example of further activity that did eventuate was the video being shown beyond their group, to the staff of the City Mission Night Shelter. The men had indicated that they wanted this to happen; ideally they would have presented the video themselves but as this was not possible they were happy for me to do so. There were seven staff present for the viewing of the 30-minute video. The staffs' responses were varied from friendly laughter at some of the mannerisms and styles of presentation, to some staff expressing that they gained a better understanding of the impact of

the earthquakes on the men. Someone else commented that they had never heard one of the men open up as much as he did in the video, seeing this being positive. All of the staff expressed empathy for the men's frustration at the expectations placed on the men by WINZ. They agreed that it was unrealistic to expect the men to accept a job before they had consistent housing. Mary, the manager of Men's Services, expressed how she was pleased that the PV process had not exposed the men, that they had been treated with respect. It is possible that by carrying on with this project its impact could have been extended. Other possibilities could include involving other members of the homeless community in a continuation of the PV project and the participants interviewing people who have the power to influence issues that impact homeless people such as city councillors or landlords. Any further activity would of course be determined by the participants.

Three dominant themes, place, nourishment and daily activity emerged from this study; although they were identified during analysis as distinct themes it became increasingly apparent that they shared much in common. This was particularly evident when considering the function of place in the context of nourishment and the activity involved in obtaining this nourishment. There were facets of the participants' pursuit of nourishment in all its forms that could also have been addressed in relation to either place or activity. These commonalities were even more evident when considering the implications resulting from exploration of these themes at a conceptual level. A consideration of the conceptualisation of place, nourishment and daily activity identified a range of potentially useful concepts. As with the application of any concept, they are only useful if they enable the findings to be framed in a way that helps to increase understanding of the matter being addressed. Concepts identified from the literature that presented as being the most relevant and useful in this context were place and meaning (Atkinson et al., 2012), place and purpose (Proshansky et al., 1983), therapeutic landscapes (Gesler, 2005) and the daily path through time and space (Rowe & Wolch, 1990). These concepts reflected and illuminated some of the dynamic of the relationship between the city spaces and wellbeing for the participants, as a group and individually.

The concepts of place and meaning, and place and purpose helped to reinforce the significance of particular city spaces to the participants. They underlined how the men attributed their own particular meaning and purpose to places rather than necessarily adopting those as defined by others. Their expressions of meaning and purpose defined places of beauty, places to meet, places to be alone and contemplate or rest, earthquake damaged places and sacred places; with any one place being able to fulfil any combination of these purposes. These examples highlight the vital part certain city spaces and places play in the men's endeavours to achieve nourishment and wellbeing in what is a predominantly outdoor and often harsh experience of the city environment.

For the purposes of discussion, the theme of nourishment (chapter 7) was loosely divided into emotional and nutritional nourishment. This discussion reinforced the previously highlighted links between the themes as demonstrated with the concept of therapeutic landscapes (Gesler, 2005). This was first introduced in chapter 6 in relation to place but was found to be equally applicable to nourishment; emphasising the links between nourishment and place especially when considering the different aspects of emotional nourishment. The need for emotional nourishment was multifaceted, incorporating a strong relational aspect, which highlighted the need for both relational interaction and privacy or solitude. These distinct functions of the relational aspect of emotional nutrition were shown to be strongly associated with particular types of places. Public places such as Ballantynes were chosen to increase the likelihood of incidental interactions with housed people, whereas if solitude and contemplation were the aim, places such as the Curator's House garden were preferred. As was alluded to previously the designation of what are therapeutic landscapes or spaces is often a subjective one. There may be a common understanding of some spaces as having therapeutic qualities whereas others may be unique to individuals or a group such as homeless people. One feature of the idea of relational nourishment that is prominent in the findings and subsequent discussion is that the encounters described in regard to the quest for relational interaction with housed people seemed tenuous and

superficial. Opening doors, getting a thank you and a smile, a gesture, a hello in passing; it seems unlikely that these would meet a need for relational nourishment or social inclusion. In spite of this these interactions were described in a way that indicated they were sought after and valued.

The nutritional aspects of nourishment were also a feature in the findings, which was not surprising given the presumed challenges to being well nourished as a homeless person in the city environment. Although the practical aspects of attaining food were addressed there was considerable emphasis on the relational aspect of being fed and eating, with some links to the significance of place. As some of the men said, Latimer Square is where food is provided to homeless people and others almost every day of the week. The fact that they often ate as a group was presented as a positive feature although on reflection they may not have had much of a choice given their options for obtaining food.

Homeless people's ability to achieve personal nourishment, which in turn contributes to their wellbeing, has been shown to have strong links to the consistency and quality of their daily activity (Rowe & Wolch, 1990; Sheehan, 2010). The theme of daily activity proved to be significant based on the strength of its prominence in the participants' descriptions of their interactions with city spaces and the links shown in the literature between an individual's daily activity and their long-term outcomes (Rowe & Wolch, 1990). The participants' daily routines were shown to consist of several different expressions of activity. These included activity to obtain physical, emotional and relational nourishment; to fulfil obligations and to fill and give meaning to their day. Applying the concept of the 'daily path through time and space' highlighted the importance of daily activity and especially social interactions being situated in time and space, with potential negative long-term outcomes if it is not (Rowe & Wolch, 1990, p. 188). Being well situated in time and space is defined as 'time-space continuity', 'the degree to which successive daily paths resemble each other and occur in the same locale' (Rowe & Wolch, 1990, p. 190). This highlights difficulties for those who are homeless, as this conceptualisation considers a home and workplace as essential for continuity and quality in one's daily path and therefore to being

well situated in time and space (Rowe & Wolch, 1990; Sheehan, 2010). How can these and other homeless people overcome these potential barriers to them living their daily lives in a way that has sufficient consistency and quality?

The activities that make up the participants' daily routines are examples of their resourcefulness, of them adapting elements of their lives to make the best of their situation. This adaptation and resourcefulness could be said to extend to the participants creating their own proxies for home and work amongst their lives in the city spaces. For these homeless men the City Mission may fulfil some of the functions of home and their daily routines exhibit some characteristics that show how they may serve as a proxy for work. This possibility was further reinforced when Goffman's idea of 'make work' was considered in relation to how the men choose to present themselves (Goffman, 1971, p. 109). The value of home and work in creating a supportive framework for the 'daily path through life and space' (Rowe & Wolch, 1990, p. 188), highlights the possible benefits of these facsimiles in the lives of homeless people. Although these may go some way towards mimicking some of the functions of home and work, and their associated essential and social functions, they are unreliable and not able to offer the security needed to allow an individual to focus on longer-term goals.

When considering how homeless men relate their use of the city spaces to their wellbeing it is important to remember that it is not the level of wellbeing being considered but the contribution to their wellbeing generally. It is helpful to clarify this as the challenges identified in this study are a reminder that the predominately outdoor city spaces are far from an ideal environment for anyone to maximise their wellbeing. Consideration of each of the themes identified very similar challenges; most of these related to the potential for vulnerability. This was highlighted by the demonstration of the depth of relationship homeless people have with certain places in the city. This increases homeless people's vulnerability because of the impact this relationship has been shown to have on their wellbeing. A major factor contributing to this vulnerability is the potentially insecure nature of homeless people's access to and continuity of use of what are essentially public spaces. Although it can be presumed that access to many of the

more public spaces such as Latimer Square should not change there is the possibility of a change to conditions of access to places that are only marginally public, such as the Curator's House garden.

Access is only one aspect of the challenges identified; even if there are no problems with access the issue of the city spaces not being well-suited to meet the requirements of day-to-day nourishment of those without housing still remain (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001). This challenge is highlighted when considered in the light of the concept of the daily path through time and space (Rowe & Wolch, 1990). This gives a sense of the significant effort involved in maintaining the quality and consistency of daily activity in the city spaces; emphasising that homeless people live their lives in a setting that offers little guarantee of consistency along with a lack of control over the substance of their activity. The challenges identified in this study can be summarised as vulnerability related to living in an environment that is poorly suited to the attainment of wellbeing, coupled with a lack of control and influence over these spaces and their own day-to-day activity.

Highlighting the challenges identified in this study is important but so is acknowledging the positive findings that emerged. The participants showed that they live out their lives in the city spaces with a surprisingly positive attitude given the challenges and energy required to strive for wellbeing in this environment. They appreciate the aesthetic qualities of the city; they value those places that meet their needs for emotional and spiritual nourishment as well as the more obvious need for physical sustenance. These dynamics combined with the example given of two of the participants taking control of the PV process to suit their own needs and purposes could be said to be examples of wellbeing in action. The previously discussed description of wellbeing talked of 'human flourishing' and 'strength of character' (MacKian, 2009, p. 235). The subjective nature of human flourishing makes any outside determination difficult, if not inappropriate. However, with this in mind it does seem appropriate to state that the findings revealed convincing examples of the participants striving to flourish.

From the time I spent with the men I observed that their striving certainly required and involved strength of character.

I hope that the preceding chapters have presented the findings in a way that gives some deeper insight into the ways that homeless men attempt to maintain their wellbeing through their use of city spaces. Given the attempt made by this study to use a form of a participatory methodology, an important part of the process of developing recommendations from this study would require the findings and conclusions I have proposed be fed back to the participants and other homeless men. This would give them the opportunity to both comment on whether the conclusions agree with their experience and give them the opportunity to offer their suggestions for possible solutions to the challenges and vulnerabilities highlighted by this study. It is not possible to do this presently but I may look for opportunities in the future.

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