



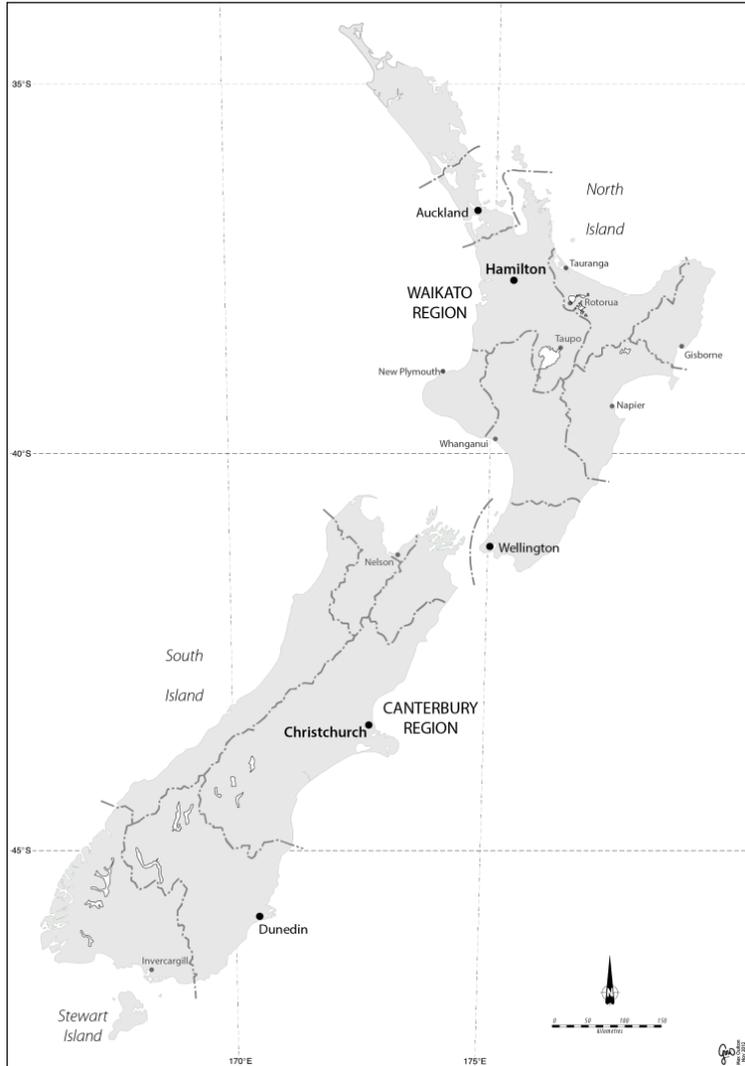
Bodies, buildings and rhythm

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- This project has also been shot through with movement, including: seismic movement, movement of people (relocation), emotional movement and rhythmic movement
- In this presentation I describe interviewees' connections to and with the built environment at different geographical scales

Christchurch's Earthquakes



Theoretically speaking ...

- Emotion and affect encompass the dynamic connections between psychosocial, physical and unconscious dimensions of experience
- Bodies and buildings co-constituted
- Human, non-human, material objects, belongings, and technologies combine to engender the affective experience of what it means to dwell

- Cities as a ‘hum’ of activity, rhythms, pulses and habits
- Embodied reactions between people and places, complexity to place attachment
- The arrhythmic city - disjointed living, stress and constant change

Methods: Cantabrians in Waikato



- Semi-structured interviews and focus groups
- Changing spaces of research, moving closer – being closer
- Empathy, bodily affects and non-conscious ‘communication’, intense analytics

Buildings and earthquakes don't mix



Discussion: What it means to dwell: Greg's desk

- When a home becomes disrupted so are belongings and routines – bonds exist between inhabitants and the familiar objects and routines of the home
- *I have a desk which I personally covered under on several occasions [laughs]. The 13th June earthquake tipped my cup of coffee and it spilt all over my [computer] mouse. And on my desk is a clear coffee-mark impression of the outline of my mouse. I'm sort of conflicted whether it's actually a good thing to see each day it brings back some really horrific memories. But still often I will just put my mouse in its coffee-mark as if that's where it belongs you know? (Abridged quote, Interview 12 February 2013)*

Fearing home, grieving for home



Peaceful house but not yet home

- Holly: *“it is a very calm peaceful place to live. The guy who owned it was an elder in the Church and I get the feeling he blessed the house because it just has this calm peaceful feeling to it ... It doesn’t get that ‘wind-up’ feeling with the house, you know, some houses you think are just so ‘busy’ and you’d think with the colour scheme in here that it wouldn’t work, but it does, it’s just the house, it’s very calming (Follow-up Interview 20 Feb 2013)*
- Not all residents calm, some felt trapped and guilty

Christchurch – a city of gaps and discordant rhythms



‘Vibration sensitivity’ in the city

- Helen: *“our general rhythm of life has been upset by the earthquakes. I mean I could just about program the car to take us home and we would flow along the roads without hardly thinking. Here [Waikato] we have a disjointed feeling, taking note of every little twist and turn”*
(Interview 1 Nov 2011)
- Ross: *“It’s like your senses are tuned to different things”*
- Chris: *“Yeah, you are more sensitive”* (Focus group 27 Nov 2011)

Concrete and glass = bad vibes

Bill: *“At Chartwell [shopping mall] I went outside of the mall because I just couldn’t bring myself to park undercover or up in the building because I thought, well actually that’s a concrete slab and a death trap!”*
(Interview 4 Oct 2011)



- People develop close affections to buildings and the built environment – they are much more than a backdrop to everyday life
- Outlines the complexity of interactions with non human elements, unconscious rhythms and sensitivity to vibrations that remain in the body
- Time and context are important – how long does it take to regain a sense of rhythmic security?
- Will a rebuilt Christchurch still feel discordant?