



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Waikato CARN Symposium

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FASS Scene-Setter

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Geography Programme

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

The University of Waikato

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Christchurch earthquake relocation



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- The PhD project combined established areas of geographical thought on disasters and natural hazards with emerging work on emotion and affect
- Why relocation? Insider/outsider, placing the research
- Emotion and affect = focus on collectivity



Context: Leaving Christchurch



- Predominantly families with children who were renting in Christchurch and lived in severely damaged areas
- Almost half of respondents relocated after third major earthquake on 13th June 2011
- No.1 reason for relocating to Waikato – the perceived geological stability of the region
- Time crucial as experience still raw and ground in CHCH still shaking



And to action?

- Semi-structured interviews with 19 families outlines lack of networks and connection in the Waikato
- Shifted focus from value of participants' dialogue to value of research *for* participants
- Organic and shifting research process – flexibility and empathy



Hamilton Botanical Gardens

30th January 2012



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- Working toward a support group ‘Cantabrians in Waikato’
- Letting participants *needs* direct the research
- Spontaneous focus groups (picnics, parks and cafés) – researcher identity on the down-low
- Goal of memorialising 22 February 2012 – a year since at 12:51



12:51 in Christchurch watched via video-link in Hamilton



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NEWS

Waikato welcome helps ease pain for quake exiles



Maryanne Twentyman

Reporter Maryanne Twentyman gathered with fellow Cantabrians at Keystone Bar in Hamilton yesterday to mark the anniversary of the February 22 earthquake.

Earlier this month I got married at The Boatshed Cafe on the banks of Lake Karapiro. It was a beautiful day, the perfect venue, but it was bitter-sweet as our wedding was meant to take place in Christchurch, which is where both my partner Barry and I come from.

But last year's February 22 earthquake took out potential venues. Friends and family wanted out ... wanted something to look forward to in a place where they could enjoy a celebration without the threat of the ground shaking beneath their feet.

More than half the guests were from Christchurch ... but an important one was missing. Barry's father died in August last year, and although he isn't included in the official earthquake death toll of 185, we have no doubt that the stress of losing his home for many months and the constant barrage of earthquakes contributed to his demise.

I have to wonder how many more earthquake victims have departed this world in the same vein over the past 12 months.

It was an interesting talking point with around 40 fellow Cantabrians who yesterday came together at Hamilton's Keystone Bar to mark the one-year



Painful anniversary: The Ember family at yesterday's memorial service at Keystone Bar in Hamilton – but their youngest daughter was too traumatised by the memory to join them. From left, Adrienne Ember, Viola, 12, Flavian, 10, and Stefan Ember.

Photo: Bruce Mercer/Fairfax NZ

anniversary. Specially made red and black ribbons were carefully attached to a number of Crusaders and Canterbury rugby jerseys.

Few words were needed over the poignant gesture ... the sad eyes and grim faces spoke volumes.

Those Cantabrians – who now call Hamilton home – openly wept, held hands and stood as one at 12.51pm. The emotion in the room was palpable.

Earlier a Maori elder, sitting in the corner with a guitar slung over his shoulder, played along to the national memorial service on television as *How Great Thou Art* was played from Hagley Park ... for those few moments we were all transported home.

Despite the sadness of the day, those who had gathered at the Victoria St bar were keen to speak of new beginnings

and about being overwhelmed at the support and generosity from people in the Waikato who had made their transition so much easier.

Scientist Dr Adrienne Ember was joined by her husband Stefan, a former Christchurch City Council human resources manager, and two of her three children, Viola, 10, and Flavian, 12.

"My youngest, who is six, is too traumatised to be here. She hasn't forgotten," Dr Ember said.

But Ngaruawahia born and raised Maire Duffell wants to return to the city that was her home for nine years.

"But I have to say being away has made me more scared – it's hard to explain," she said.

"But my children and grandchildren are there – and Christchurch is still the most beautiful place in the world."



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To finish

- Not all topics would be appropriate
- Researchers need to remain critically engaged with the whole research process
- For me, changing my research focus has been personally rewarding

- This confidence in routine, the constancy of social and material environments gives people ‘psychological protection’ from uncertainty.
- Hawkins and Maurer (2011) reason that disaster response and recovery policies need to take into account the interconnections between people and their immediate environment in the context of Hurricane Katrina and use ontological security as a framing

- Emotion, affect and feelings are inseparable from human experience.
- Since our bodies are always located in a context or a particular space or place, it becomes important to examine the interplay between embodied materiality, immateriality or non-human things (technologies, buildings)
- Emotional geographies afford a focus on the curiously rich and unruly nature of what is usually unspoken in everyday life, and the ways in which these elements collude into complex assemblages.

- Emotional geographies include embodied and embedded knowledges
- Ontological security is helpful in finding new ways to speak about and represent climate change impacts including their emotional geographies
- Places can be perceived as being ‘concrete’ locations. They may also exist through the inflections of emotional memory, and they can be bounded by the experiences that are encompassed in their borders, therefore, place sits at the cross-roads of subjectivity and objectivity.