Men's re-placement: social practices in a Men's Shed

David Anstiss, Darrin Hodgetts, Ottilie Stolte

Abstract

Transitions into retirement can be difficult at the best of times. Many men find themselves having to reflect on who they are and what their lives are about. Their access to social supports and material resources are often disrupted. Men's Sheds offer a space where retired men can actively pursue wellbeing, and respond to disruption and loneliness through emplaced community practices. This paper draws on ethnographic research in a Men's Shed in Auckland, New Zealand in order to explore the social practices through which men create a shared space for themselves in which they can engage in meaningful relationships with each other. We document how participants work in concert to create a space in which they can be together through collective labour. Their emplacement in the shed affords opportunities for supported transitions into retirement and for engaging healthy lives beyond paid employment.

Men spend a large proportion of their lives in paid employment, where identities are developed, material and psychological resources are secured, meaning is often found, and social networks are developed (Barnes & Parry, 2004). Paid employment often provides patterned social environments through which men become emplaced and bound with others (Allen, 2011; Thrift, 2000). A job typically provides opportunities for monetary remuneration, societal contributions and the structuring of daily life (Barnes & Parry, 2004). Paid employment also provides many men with crucial social spaces and structure(s) that offer a sense of purpose and belonging within society. Positive paid employment can be approached as an arena within which men can experience social support, form

attachments, and experience emplaced belonging (Barnes & Parry, 2004; Ormsby, Stanley, & Jaworski, 2010). Although some men may look forward to ceasing labour obligations tied to employment when they retire, doing so can mean walking away from settings and structures that grant men access to social, health and material resources (Barnes & Parry, 2004; Nicholson, 2012; Pease, 2002). For many ageing men, retirement can bring about disruptions to their relationships and identities.

This paper explores the ways in which a group of older, retired men (re)construct personal, yet shared selves through emplaced and embodied social practices at a Men's Shed in Auckland, New Zealand. As communal spaces, Men's Sheds offer settings where men can meet regularly to socialise and work on projects—typically woodwork and metalwork (Ballinger, Talbot, & Verrinder, 2009; Golding, Brown, Foley, Harvey, & Gleeson, 2007), while learning from and supporting each other (Golding, 2011), and contributing to local communities (Morgan, Hayes, Williamson, & Ford, 2007; Vallance & Golding, 2008). The social makeup of individual Men's Sheds often reflects the grassroots nature of the Shed movement. Each Men's Shed tends to be established in accordance with the needs of the communities in which they are developed (Glover & Misan, 2012); thus each differs in structure, purpose, and activity (Golding et al., 2007). The sites themselves come in a range of forms and may take the shape of church halls, barns, learning centres (Golding, 2006), unused school classrooms, or purpose-built workshops. Men's Sheds provide space, tools, and equipment with which to complete projects, and usually an area to socialise in (Golding, 2011). For many participating men, Men's Sheds are places they can enjoy the company and camaraderie of other men, and make new friends (Ballinger et al., 2009; Golding et al., 2008). By participating in Men's Sheds, men come into contact with a diverse range of people that they might not otherwise encounter or choose to associate with, and many enjoy doing so (Ballinger et al., 2009; Golding et al., 2008). Such Sheds comprise safe spaces for positive gendered interactions in retirement, and comprise responses to men's desires for connection and companionship with other men in later life (Golding et al., 2007; Skladzien & O'Dwyer, 2010). Men's Sheds can be approached as community responses to older men's disenfranchisement in retirement by offering spaces where older men can address issues such as loneliness and social

isolation through shared practices. We document how men who participate in a particular Men's Shed reflect on their past experiences of paid employment and related identities whilst engaged in material practices that draw on skills they obtained through previous employment. We demonstrate how these men re-anchor themselves in the world of retirement and in doing so make a new place for themselves. The men who participate at the Men's Shed North Shore call themselves 'Sheddies' and will be referred to likewise in this paper.

In order to conceptualise the study, we draw on related scholarship in the areas of social practice (Dreier, 2009) and the dialectics of place (Massey, 2005). In recounting the significance of the Shed and the experiences of men located within it, we invoke a nexus of social practices that exceed the materiality of the place, the material objects used and created, and the men that populate it. Social practices comprise routine and shared forms of human action that encompass the use of particular material objects (Dreier, 2009). For example, objects such as tools exceed their instrumental purposes becoming implicated in how men come to see themselves, their purposes and place in the world (Hodgetts et al., 2017). Tools and the practices within which they are entwined become metonymic markers of work histories, skills and identities. We will document how, through their use of specific objects in the Shed, retired men can realise themselves as purposeful, interconnected and emplaced beings in retirement (*cf*., Heidegger, 1927/1973). Through their interactions with material objects, retired men can cultivate agentive strategies for responding to disruptions that come with retirement and literally co-recreate a place for themselves to be together. As a place, the Shed is personally and collectively constructed dialectically through social practices of occupancy, cooperation and dwelling, and the relations of the men who populate this place (*cf*., Massey, 2005). We are interested in how men become embroiled within and create the Shed for themselves.

The present study: research setting and process

The site for this research was the Men's Shed North Shore in Auckland. The Men's Shed North Shore is situated at Elliott Reserve, Glenfield, on Auckland's North Shore. The 2013 Census data indicated that Glenfield's income, age, and gender statistics are largely reflective of the greater Auckland region (Statistics New Zealand, n.d.). The median income for Glenfield residents aged 15 years and over was $29,300, compared to $29,600 for the greater Auckland region, with 38% receiving an annual income of $20,000 or less (compared with 39% for the greater Auckland region), and 25% receiving an annual income of $50,000 or more (compared to 29%). In regards to age demographics, 10% (431) of Glenfield residents were aged 65 years or over (with roughly equal numbers of older men and women) compared to 11.5% (162,788) of the greater Auckland population, which is, again, reflective of the greater Auckland region.

The Men's Shore North Shore was inspired by the Men's Shed movement, which has provided social and health benefits to communities of ageing men (Golding, 2011). At Men's Sheds, construction projects are used to facilitate activities and social connections. Central to our ethnographic (Whitehead, 2004; Willis & Trondman, 2000), case-based approach (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012; Radley & Chamberlain, 2012), the first author engaged in the material practices of the Shed, which provided an entry point and helped the first author to build rapport with Sheddies and cement his membership in the Shed space. Such an orientation afforded insights into processes of re-placement and belonging in the Shed. Labouring at the Shed with others is not just about creating objects or achieving outcomes, it is about engaging in mutual practice, co-operation, and engaging with other men.

Fieldwork took place over a 14-month period (March 2012 – April 2013). This work focussed on the first author's participation-observation and sustained social contact (cf., Willis & Trondman, 2000) to explore the taken-for-granted activities and engagements of participants' everyday lives at the Shed. Participant-observation notes were recorded in a journal by the first author at the end of each participation day. Themes and issues constructed from journal entries were explored in more depth

through interviews and a semi-structured focus group discussion with twelve men (7 participated in both the group discussion and an interview; 2 participated in the group discussion only; 3 participated in an interview only). The first author conducted the interviews and focus group discussions. Actual names of participants involved in the group discussion or interviews were used where they requested we do so. Six participants requested pseudonyms and not all provided details about their age. Gleaning demographic information was difficult, as many participants did not return consent forms, preferring instead to provide verbal consent, which was audio recorded. The ages, ethnicities, occupations at the time of the research, and aspects of the research the participants engaged in, are presented in Table 1. Many Sheddies who participated at the Shed declined to take part in interviews or group discussion for this research, but were more than happy to chat informally and be observed in the Shed. Ethical approval was granted by the School of Psychology Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato.

[Table 1 here]

In the initial stages of this project, the first author participated in the building of the Shed and witnessed bonds between Sheddies develop and grow through their participation. Figure 1 shows photographs of the Shed at various stages of its development, from concrete slab to internal fit-out by a core group of Sheddies. The photographs in Figure 1 represent a transformation of the Shed's physical space, the interior of which was completed by its members, the Sheddies. As the physical structure of the Shed took shape, it provided the material means by which Sheddies developed relationships. The photographs depict not just the evolution of a physical space, but also point to tangible evidence of the relationships that made it possible, and which endured long past the completion of the Shed. The Shed itself is not simply a product of Sheddie labour, but offers a visual demonstration of their solidarity and collaborative effort. The development and modification of

spatial arrangements at the Shed renders visible the dynamic interplay between the social and material in the Shed, and their mutually defining nature (O'Donnell, Tharp, & Wilson, 1993).

[Figure 1 here]

The internal physical space of the Men's Shed North Shore (see Figure 2) houses the gathering of men interested in shared social and physical activity. The collection of machinery for woodwork and metalwork projects renders visible the expected material practice that takes place at the Shed. The open-plan setup and shared workstations in the workshop further imply the expectation of collaboration and open observation.

[Figure 2 here]

On visiting the Shed, one's attention is drawn to the objects (see Figure 2) that are used to participate there both physically and socially. Such objects, associated practices and the Shed space, provide reflection points through which these men come to place themselves in the Shed, and convey how they can relate to others there (Hodgetts, Hayward, & Stolte, 2015; Hurdley, 2006; Reckwitz, 2002). We document how these men respond to familiar objects such as tools and practices that are fundamental to 'making things'. In this way, Sheddies can come to understand and emplace themselves through engaging with particular activities, objects, and people present in the Shed (Heidegger, 1982; Willis, 1977). At the same time, these men draw on place-based markers to (re)anchor a sense of self and of continuity (Cuba & Hummon, 1993).

Through this research, we were less concerned with developing a representational model of male behaviour, and more with exemplifying a particular instance of positive and supportive relationship-building in this Shed. As such, findings from this research are not meant to be used to make generalisations about all men or all Men's Sheds. However, the findings may still be used to inform broader understandings of processes in similar instances (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012; Radley &

Chamberlain, 2012), such as how some men might pragmatically, materially, and communally adjust to retirement, or continue wellbeing in later life through socio-material practice. By making inferences about the Shed, we can consider whether its social, emplaced, and materially-mediated elements could apply to others, given alike circumstances (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012).

In this research, we embrace the position of researcher-as-bricoleur (Kincheloe, 2005). As bricoleurs, we employed a fluid and immersive approach (Jahoda, 1992) to exploring participants' Shed-based activities. From this orientation one can embrace the recognition that life is complex, intersects on material and social planes, and involves a complex layering of context and being (Dicks & Mason, 1998). More specifically, we draw on theoretical and empirical accounts of emplaced social practices in seeking to understand and explain the Shed and men's interactions within this space. The analysis drew on a range of qualitative techniques that evolved as the research continued. Of particular use in making sense of participants' transcripts, was the identification of recurring themes or patterns within the data. This process was informed by (but not limited to) common practices in qualitative analysis such as reading and re-reading empirical materials, and dividing the data set into themes, which were particularly helpful in rendering the material manageable. We then used the first author's journal entries and informal discussions with key informants to triangulate and explore this data. The themes were then subject to (re)interpretation with the help of various academic frameworks and theories. Here, continued back-and-forth interactions with empirical materials and the literature informed our interpretation and sense-making of the participants' accounts. The participants themselves were also involved in aspects of the analytic process, such as answering questions we had of the data and discussing our interpretations. The findings we discuss here centre on one particularly salient theme: "To me this is a home": re-placement at the Shed through familiar practices with like-minded men.

"To me this is a home": re-placement at the Shed through familiar practices with like-minded men

The Shed constitutes a particular shared space for a cohesive community of like-minded men. It makes sense that men who share similar backgrounds and interests, would come together, develop friendships (Eastwick, Finkel, Mochon, & Ariely, 2007), and reproduce essences of meaning and connection that were previously derived from paid employment. These men literally create a place for themselves through shared interests in making things. This involves various efforts to connect and collaborate with one another. As Ross explained, some Sheddies connect and build rapport without prior knowledge of each other, and within a short time of being in the Shed, given their common identification as 'do-it-yourself guys':

> Every new person that comes in here, on any day that we're open, within ten minutes, they're chatting with the other guys. It's like mates even though they've met for the first time […]. It happens darn near every day; you'll get somebody walk in, ten minutes later they're laughing and chatting and communicating with the guys and I find that quite good… I think it's sort of, possibly we're all built with the same genes or something, cos we're all do-it-yourself guys in the main, most of them.

The extract provides an exemplar of the ways in which shared interests can facilitate conversation and rapport-building through common identification that is often taken-for-granted. Such relational practices work to create a sense of camaraderie, but also 'oneness' and commonality, and experiences of becoming part of something that is bigger than yourself, the Shed. Tajfel and Turner's (1979) conceptualisation of human group categorisation is useful in this context to consider how people feel connected to others through shared understandings and enactments of solidarity. In particular, a human group can be considered as a collection of persons who understand themselves and proximal others as fitting within a social category, as being emotionally invested in the category that unites them, and as sharing consensus around the group's definition (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). They become 'Sheddies' in the Shed. This social grouping anchors our participants as men engaged in shared endeavours within the present social milieu and life stage of retirement.

In building relationships with each other, participants emphasise the need for a shared interest in engaging in productive activities and the means of making things together. As is illustrated in Figure 3, this often involves getting around a table or machine and working together materially. Men at the Shed anchor themselves and each other through shared activities, and a subsequent sense of connection (Mallett, 2004). As Deasy stated:

> We were here sorting out nuts and bolts and washers and screws with people, which was a boring, boring job, but it was made interesting by the conversation and the relationships that developed through that.

Joint activity provides Sheddies with a deep sense of connection and 'being together' with the other men that take part. Cooperation is seen as both central to activities in the Shed, and as a skill that comes with age: "*we're at the age where we appreciate other people's input*" (Jerry). Through cooperative endeavours, these Sheddies identify certain attributes in one another that they consider to be foundational to productive work. These include an enquiring mind, liking to use their hands, and skill in the use of tools. When these attributes are in play, participants report satisfaction in fixing and repairing objects, making new things, and experiencing companionship through practical social interactions with each other. Sharing the company of other men interested in construction projects is centrally important to this sense of belonging for this group of men. The opportunity to work together continues a life-long pattern of working with other men in domestic and/or occupational workshop settings, which is particularly attractive for men who no longer have access to designated construction spaces at work or at home (Golding et al., 2007). In this context, Sheds also become settings where the boundary between labour and leisure is blurred (Lefebvre, 1991).

[Insert Figure 3]

Participation in shared practices opens up opportunities for these men to re-engage their work skills and in doing so redefine the meaning of collaborative labour later in life to be about relationship

9

building and enactment. Many of the Sheddies contrasted the Shed with their previous workplaces emphasising how, in paid employment, they tended to compete more than collaborate with one another, with particular emphasis on efficiency and productivity. In the Shed, they experience a more profound sense of similarity and connection with one another. Rather than simply working with someone else as they did in their working lives, they are now also working to connect with one another in more meaningful ways:

> To me, this is the whole thing [concept of the Men's Shed]… We're here as men learning to be men, I feel. Or maybe even learning what women have always known of how to be harmonious I suppose is the word. You know what I mean? They're all linked together (Rat).

These men jointly respond to retirement as interconnected beings collaborating through the production and use of material objects. Experiences of similarity, connection and cooperation in the Shed are juxtaposed by participants with their experiences of working alone at home, where these men report experiencing loneliness and isolation. The company of similarly aged men engaged in similar interests renders the Shed as a home away from home: "*It's just the feeling, to me, I'm home. To me this is a home*" (Rat). This issue was also invoked by Deasy:

> It [being at home] was a lonely existence and I missed the fellowship of my peers, you know, chaps my own age, probably interested in the same thing… Just talking to these people, the cross-section of people we've got here in membership and their other interests, their outside interests that you swap notes on, that sort of thing, is what, to me, is important. I don't get that at home in my own garage or workshop. I can turn the radio on, I can talk to my wife and have a cup of coffee, but I haven't got that connection with like-minded people.

Participants emphasise the importance of the company of other men of a similar age. Several drew attention to how they feel isolated in domestic spaces despite their wives' presence. They invoke the importance of gendered company in feeling socially connected and being able to express themselves.

One suggested that he feels he could not talk to his wife about the same subjects that he discusses with the other Sheddies.

There is a growing body of research that links active social engagement in Men's Sheds with men's self-rated health, feelings of valuable contribution (Golding, 2011; Ormsby et al., 2010), improvements in self-reported wellbeing, particularly self-esteem, happiness, confidence, social skills, community cohesion, quality of life, and feelings of self-worth (Ford, Scholz, & Lu, 2015; Golding, 2008; Golding et al., 2007; Skladzien & O'Dwyer, 2010). This body of research has more recently considered the potential for Men's Sheds to create inclusive and enabling environments for marginalised groups of men such as Indigenous Australian men (Bulman & Hayes, 2011; Cavanagh & Bartram, 2013), men with long-term disabilities (Hansji, Wilson, & Cordier, 2015), and men experiencing symptoms of depression (Culph, Wilson, Cordier, & Stancliffe, 2015). Through their participation and tangible contributions at Men's Sheds, men become increasingly engaged and enmeshed within social and community networks (Ballinger et al., 2009; Golding, 2011), and develop deeper relationships that are safe and supportive, crystallising their inclusion within a socially constructive space (Ormsby et al., 2010). Inclusion is an important determinant of health (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003) that is manifest in Men's Shed communities through active engagement (Golding, 2011) and in meeting the social needs of aging men (Cordier & Wilson, 2013). Sheds are also spaces where men feel valued and viewed positively, through contributions such as making products to sell, donating tools and machinery, helping to run their Shed, and promoting the Shed to others (Ballinger et al., 2009). Social inclusion is felt through opportunities to relax, reflect, reminisce, tell stories, and share jokes with other men, in a space where they feel that they can expect to be treated as equals (Hansji et al, 2015; Ormsby et al., 2010). Indeed, the 'fit' Sheddies experience between themselves and their Shed is an important feature of how their experience their quality of life and willingness to engage in health practices such as giving and receiving advice (Ford, Scholz, & Lu, 2015). Ultimately, Men's Sheds offer vital links between practice, social inclusion, belonging, and wellbeing (Cohen & Willis, 1985; Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003).

In the context of the Shed, men can 're-place' themselves through familiar ways of being from their working lives. Sheddies can reconnect with shared practices that help to forge new place-based enactments of solidarity with other men (Golding et al., 2007). Such re-placement is possible because Sheddies' sense of belonging and placement is made, is rendered malleable and maintained, and is relocatable across space and time (*cf.*, Gorman-Murray, 2011). Fred and Jerry similarly made references to familial-like relationships in the Shed, drawing particular attention to positive and supportive relationships through: "caring and sharing… with strangers becoming, well, family" (Jerry). Participants' understandings of home, then, are not limited to domestic spaces, but include places which cultivate a sense of belongingness, valued memories, and self (Altman, 1975; Charleston, 2009). Men do not just 'do things' at the Shed. They are homed and dwell there through social and material practices that cultivate a strong sense of belonging (Mallett, 2004). Feeling like one is 'at home' and surrounded by family illustrates men's sense of placement and belonging in the Shed, and bolsters their efforts in responding to disruption.

The participants experienced the Shed as "*something to look forward to*" (Mike) and which "*provides structure in your life when you're retired*" (Mike). The Shed opens up opportunities to connect with others within familiar routines. Texturing the Shed in this way renders visible the anchoring of men to place through familiar routines, the promise of purposeful activity, and the valuing and use of their skills and experience. As Fred explained:

> Being able to come here really makes an awful difference. And I think it… probably the greatest thing is our mental attitude. You at least wake up and think, 'oh, I got something to do', you know? And you've got projects, people, and a place to go. Very important.

Participation and social inclusion are ways of belonging (Lave & Wenger, 1991), are linked with positive wellbeing (Cohen & Willis, 1985; Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003), and are made available to Sheddies through familiar and jointly understood practices, such as the need to sort out key supplies (e.g., the bolts). Emplacement in the Shed provides men with opportunities to 'do wellbeing' in later life,

particularly through participating in a context in which they feel engaged and stimulated, and contribute to an atmosphere of communal purpose.

By reconnecting with familiar daily structures and routines, Sheddies not only emplace and recognise themselves in the Shed, but also within broader social and economic structures. By continuing long-standing everyday routines from their working lives, Sheddies create a sense of continuity, ground themselves to the Shed through shared practices, and anchor themselves to other Sheddies through a common understanding of how the day should unfold for working-class men. This was particularly apparent in terms of practices such as taking a lunch break in a designated part of the Shed at a set time. As the first author noted in his research journal:

> Today, I asked Rat why all the Sheddies are so keen and relieved to break for lunch, given that they could take a break at any time. He laughed and exclaimed, "you liberal bastards! Always asking why". He said he was brought up with the motto: 'ours is not to question why; ours is to do and die'. Rat then went on to tell me that this was a time of day that had been ingrained in them through years of schooling and work. It occurs to me that maintaining this practice might give the Sheddies some sense of structure and continuity with their former lives in paid employment. He also said it was a special time for socialisation (Journal entry: May 15, 2013).

The lunch break is an opportunity for Sheddies to ground themselves in familiar and comforting routines that complement production and labour practices. It is also a symbol of the way labour routines have been entrenched in these men's lives, and the way their bodies have been wrought as productive tools through pervasive capitalist demands. As 'living tools', these working class men have been expected to be engaged in production throughout certain periods of the day. The lunch break is thus a cherished time in the Sheddies' day where Sheddies can be human beings (as opposed to human tools), and can relate to one another in ways not associated with labour, such as through socialisation and shared relaxation. Even though this group of retired men is no longer bound by labour obligations tied to paid employment, the practiced consumption of their bodies for production is such that the

need to remain productive, and to take breaks only at controlled intervals, lasts long after leaving paid employment.

When participating in the Shed, our participants communally use familiar routines and objects to re-place themselves in the world in retirement. This re-placement happens through engaging in the Shed and in ways that espouse a shared and familiar sense of 'being' and 'doing' (Dixon & Durrheim, 2004). Through familiar gestures, people are able to establish a sense of belonging, particularly within a certain space (Dixon & Durrheim, 2004). However, Sheddies' achieve much more than merely belonging to a space. They draw together subject, place and routine to establish the Shed as a community of caring men who purposefully create continuity and familiarity. Ultimately, they create a second home for themselves with other similar men. Objects play an important role in these processes and relationships. In the Shed, objects such as tools and raw materials are much more than physical things employed by the Sheddies to construct specific projects. Rather, objects are agents in Sheddies' social interactions and help stage and shape Sheddies' patterns of relationship-building. The objects that have been brought into and positioned within the Shed have an ongoing influence on the social interaction that takes place there (Wood & Giles-Corti, 2008), which is rendered visible through action (Gaver, 1996). In the context of coping with identity and embodied disruption, such consumptive practices help men to escape adversity, imaginatively and concretely (Hodgetts et al., 2010).

Discussion

In leaving paid employment, many men are 'displaced' from places and practices through which they have anchored themselves meaningfully in the world (Barnes & Parry, 2004; Dixon & Durrheim, 2004; Nicholson, 2012; Pease, 2002). These men find themselves separated from places in which their sense of belonging and emplacement has previously been cultivated and affirmed (Deaux, 2000). We have explored how a particular group of such men respond to retirement by re-placing themselves in a

Men's Shed together. In doing so, they draw together aspects of place, routine or social practice, and shared experiences to establish a sense of continuity and familiarity through the material 'doing' of connection, solidarity and cooperation. Indeed, 're-placement' is a core element of the Shed, where these men's sense of belonging is intrinsically linked to place and the practices that take shape there. Briefly, the Shed offers a space for men to (re)situate themselves (see Cuba & Hummon, 1993), where a sense of belonging draws together subject, space, and identity (Gorman-Murray, 2011), and encourages a joint focus on emplacement and connection.

Sheddies participating in this study openly reflected on their desire to create a place where they can communally participate in shared ageing, collaboration, and support through agency, creativity, and active engagement. Such practices emplace men in the Shed, where a new sense of belonging, value and purpose can be cultivated (Cuba & Hummon, 1993; Deaux, 2000). The re-placement that happens in the Shed reflects aspects of the findings of research into the experiences of migrating people who work to establish a sense of belonging through familiarity and a shared sense of 'being' and 'doing' in particular places (Dixon & Durrheim, 2004). In the present instance, the Shed affords a shared space where processes of home-making are enacted, where feeling like one is 'at home' and surrounded by kindred spirits grounds their sense of placement and belonging in the Shed, and bolsters their efforts in responding to disruption. It is not surprising to find these men navigating the challenges of older age by constructing a feeling of homeliness through the recreation of labour practices, when such practices have been so deeply entrenched in their lives through years of paid employment.

More broadly, men in the Shed have grown used to 'being' in the world through paid employment. Such labour-based practices of being come to be wrapped up in their continued sense of self, purpose and wellbeing. The Shed offers these men an opportunity to transplant practices of engaging materially and socially from workspaces into retired life. It is a site which facilitates a positive transition from paid employment to retirement, and provides a landscape for the reworking of placement and belonging that may once have been tied to elements of paid employment or a particular workplace.

Some of these men seek to recreate the very labour practices that many may be relieved to give up. The use of men's time and bodies through both paid and unpaid labour eludes to processes which work to blur the boundaries of labour and leisure (Lefebvre, 1991). Continued labour in retirement provides these men with a sense of continuity and connection. But, it also does more than these things. It offers opportunities for reflection, growth and solidarity.

Our findings reflect research illustrating the importance of labour on wellbeing (Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003), and highlights the way men can use place-based social practices to (re)construct and (re)situate themselves in new domains (Deaux, 2000). This research highlights the important role relational resources, such as a sense of belonging, social support, solidarity and efforts to help others, play in the ongoing wellbeing of these men and their sense of social connection (Cohen, Underwood, & Gottlieb, 2000). Indeed, mental and social wellbeing are important to men who participate at Men's Sheds (Misan, Haren, & Ledo, 2008). Accordingly, we argue that Men's Sheds can constitute communities of resilience (Pooley, Cohen, & O'Connor, 2006), which provide opportunities for group members to experience stability and human connectedness (Sonn & Fisher, 1998). The embracing of relational being also provides these men with greater resilience resources (Steptoe, O'Donnell, Marmot, & Wardle, 2008). In the process, these men draw on health restoration practices located in the Shed, such as social engagement, which appear to buffer them against the disruptive influences of retirement (Cohen & Willis, 1985; Steptoe et al., 2008).

Despite the positive facets of these men's participation in the Shed, this community place of resilience cannot completely lighten the disruption these men experience with retirement (Cattell, 2001). Rather, the Shed provides a mechanism through which Sheddies can come together and support one-another through such disruption. These men make use of the Shed space, and the social relationships that take form there, in order to respond positively to challenges associated with ageing. The physical environment of the Shed plays an important role in promoting the wellbeing of this group of older men (O'Dwyer, Baum, Kavanagh, & MacDougall, 2007; Putland, 2008), especially in enabling social

interaction that facilitates positive, affirming, and equalising experiences (Hansji, Wilson, & Cordier, 2015; Wood & Giles-Corti, 2008), and a sense of collective ownership of the Shed (Nowell, Berkowitz, Deacon, & Foster-Fishman, 2006). In particular, the Shed is set up in a way that encourages material cooperation and collaborative social interaction over projects, which further cements Sheddies' social inclusion and participation. The Shed climate and the activities that occur there are mutually shaping and (re)produce the Shed as a place to be together in retirement (O'Donnell et al., 1993). This highlights the importance of orienting space to facilitate community building and shared participation when considering the construction of healthy and restorative places for ageing men. Further research into how this may take shape for men who do not participate in Men's Sheds is warranted. There is also scope to consider how researchers and practitioners who wish to be involved in health promotion with older or socially isolated men can become involved in such community oriented initiatives (Wilson & Cordier, 2013). This research highlights the way Men's Sheds materialise in accordance with the needs of the local men who bring their particular Sheds into being (Glover & Misan, 2012). As a result, the social structures of particular Sheds will likely develop differently based on the practices that take place there (see Giddens, 1986). This warrants further exploration into the practices of other Men's Sheds in New Zealand which emerge in response to particular needs that are prevalent in their local communities.

References

Allen, C. (2011). On actor-network theory and landscape. *Area, 43*, 274-280.

Altman, I. (1975). *The environment and social behavior*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Ballinger, M., Talbot, L., & Verrinder, G. (2009). More than a place to do woodwork: A case study of a community-based Men's Shed. *Journal of Men's Health, 6*, 20-27.

Barnes, H., & Parry, J. (2004). Renegotiating identity and relationships: Men and women's adjustments to retirement. *Ageing and Society, 24*, 213-233.

Bulman, J. & Hayes, R. (2011). Mibbinah and spirit healing: fostering safe, friendly spaces for Indigenous males in Australia. *International Journal of Men's Health, 10(1)*, 6-25.

Cattell, V. (2001). Poor people, poor places, and poor health: The mediating role of social networks and social capital. *Social Science & Medicine, 52*, 1501-1516.

Cavanagh, J. & Bartram, T. (2013) Men's groups and sheds: confronting social determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men's health and well-being. *Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues, 16(3)*, 51-65.

Charleston, S. (2009). The Enlish football ground as a representation of home. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 29*, 144-150.

Cohen, S., Underwood, L., & Gottlieb, B. (2000). *Social support measurement and intervention: A guide for health and social scientists*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, S., & Willis, T. (1985). Stress, social support and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin, 98*, 5-24.

Cordier, R., & Wilson, N. (2013). Mentoring at Men's Sheds: an international survey about a community approach to health and wellbeing. *Health and Social Care in the Community, 22(3)*, 249-258.

Cuba, L., & Hummon, D. (1993). A place to call home: Identification with dwelling, community, and religion. *The Sociological Quarter, 34*, 111-131.

Culph, J., Wilson, N., Cordier, R., & Stancliffe, R. (2015). Men's Sheds and the experience of depression in older men. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, 62(5)*, 306-315.

Deaux, K. (2000). Surveying the landscape of immigration: Social psychological perspectives. *Journal of Community and Applied Psychology, 10*, 421-431.

Dicks, B. & Mason, B. (1998). Hypermedia and ethnography: reflections on the construction of a research approach. *Sociological Research Online, 3(3),* 1-15.

Dixon, J., & Durrheim, K. (2004). Dislocating identity: Desegregation and the transformation of place. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 24*, 455-473.

Dreier, O. (2009). Persons in structures of social practice. *Theory & Psychology, 19*, 193-212.

Eastwick, P., Finkel, E., Mochon, D., & Ariely, D. (2007). Selective versus unselective desire: Not all reciprocity is created equal. *Psychological Science, 18*, 317-319.

Ford, S., Scholz, B., & Lu, V. N. (2015). Social shedding: Identification and health of men's sheds users. *Health Psychology, 34(7),* 775.

Gaver, W. (1996). Situating action: Affordances for interaction: The social is material for design. *Ecological Psychology, 8*, 111-129.

Giddens, A. (1984). The construction of society. Cambridge: Polity.

Glover, K., & MiSan, G. (2012). Men Together, Questions of Men's Experience in Sheds. *New Male Studies: An International Journal, 1(2),* 63-73.

Golding, B. (2006). A profile of men's sheds in Australia: patterns, purposes, profiles and experiences of participants: some implications for ACE and VET about engaging older men.

Golding, B. (2008). Researching Men's Sheds in community contexts in Australia: WHat does it suggest about adult education for older men? *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, 14*, 17-33.

Golding, B. (2011). Older men's wellbeing through community participation in Australia. *International Journal of Men's Health, 10*, 26-44.

Golding, B., Brown, M., Foley, A., Harvey, J., & Gleeson, L. (2007). *Men's sheds in Australia: Learning through community contexts*. National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

Golding, B., Kimberley, H., Foley, A., & Brown, M. (2008). Houses and sheds in Australia: An exploration of the genesis and growth of neighbourhood houses and men's sheds in community settings. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 48(2),* 237.

Gorman-Murray, A. (2011). Economic crises and emotional fallout: work, home and men's sense of belonging in post-GFC Sydney. *Emotion, Space and Society, 4*, 211-220.

Hansji, N., Wilson, N., Cordier, R. (2014). Men's Sheds: Enabling environments for Australian men living with long-term disabilities. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, *23(3)*, 272-281.

Heidegger M (1927/1973) *Being and time* (J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Trans.). England: SCM Press.

Heidegger, M. (1982). *Basic problems of phenomenology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hodgetts, D., Groot, S., Garden, E., & Chamberlain, K. (2017). The precariat, everyday life and objects of despair. In C. Howarth and E. Andreouli (Eds.), The Social Psychology of Everyday Politics (pp. 173-188). Routledge: London.

Hodgetts, D., Hayward, B., & Stolte, O. (2015). Medicinal commodoties and the gift of the caring mother. *Journal of Consumer Culture, 15*, 287-306.

Hodgetts, D., & Stolte, O. (2012). Case-based research in community and social psychology. *Journal of Community and Applied Psychology, 22*, 379-389.

Hodgetts, D., Stolte, O., Chamberlain, K., Radley, A., Groot, S., & Nikora, L. (2010). The mobile hermit and the city: Places, objects and sounds for a social psychology of homelessness. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 49*, 285-303.

Hurdley, R. (2006). Dismantling mantlepieces: Narrating identities and materializing culture in the home. *Sociology, 40*, 717-733.

Jahoda, M. (1992). Reflections on Marienthal and after. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 65*, 355-358.

Kincheloe, J. (2005). On to the next level: Continuing the conceptualization of the bricholage. *Qualitative Inquiry, 11*, 323-350.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *Critique of everyday life*. London: Verso.

Mallett, S. (2004). Understanding home: A critical review of the literature. *Sociological Review, 52*, 62-89.

Misan, G., Haren, M., & Ledo, V. (2008). *Men's Sheds: a Strategy to Improve Men's Health*. MensSheds Australia Ltd, Parramatta, NSW.

Morgan, M., Hayes, R., Williamson, M., & Ford, C. (2007). Men's Sheds: A community appraoch to promoting mental health and wellbeing. *Journal of Mental Health Promotion, 9*, 48-52.

Nicholson, N. (2012). A review of social isolation: An important but inderassessed condition in older adults. *The Journal of Primary Prevention, 33*, 137-152.

Nowell, B., Berkowitz, S., Deacon, Z., & Foster-Fishman, P. (2006). Revealing cues within community places: Stories of identity, history and possibility. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 37*, 29-46.

O'Donnell, C., Tharp, R., & Wilson, K. (1993). Actitivty settings as the unit of analysis: A theoretical basis for community intervention and development. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 21*, 501-520.

O'Dwyer, L., Baum, F., Kavanagh, A., & MacDougall, C. (2007). Do area-based interventions to reduce health interventions work? A systematic review of evidence. *Critical Public Health, 17*, 317-355.

Ormsby, J., Stanley, M., & Jaworski, K. (2010). Older men's participation in community-based men's sheds programmes. *Health and Social Care in the Community, 18*, 607-613.

Pease, B. (2002). *Men and gender relations*. Croydon: Tertiary Press.

Pooley, J., Cohen, L., & O'Connor, M. (2006). Community resilience and its link to individual resilience in the disaster experience of cyclone communities in Northwest Australia. In D. Paton & D. Johnston (Eds.), *Disaster resilience: An integrated Approach* (pp. 161-170). Springfield, IL: Charles C. THomas.

Putland, C. (2008). Lost in translation: The question of evidence linking community-based arts and health promotion. *Journal of Health Psychology, 13*, 265-276.

Radley, A., & Chamberlain, K. (2012). The study of the case: Conceptualising case study research. *Journal of Community and Applied Psychology, 22*, 390-399.

Reckwitz, A. (2002). Toward a theory of social practices: A development in culturalist theorizing. *Social Science Quarterly, 79*, 243-263.

Reed-Victor, E., & Stronge, J. (2002). Homelessness students and resilience: Staff perspectives on individual and environmental factors. *Journal of Children and Poverty, 8*, 159-183.

Skladzien, E., & O'Dwyer, S. (2010). *Making good connections: How community participation enriches learning, wellbeing, and a sense of identity in older men*. Retrieved from Australian Capital Territory:

Sonn, C., & Fisher, A. (1998). Sense of community: Community resilient responses to oppression and change. *Journal of Community and Applied Psychology, 26*(457-471).

Statistics New Zealand. (n.d.). *QuickStats about Glenfield North*. Wellington: Statistics NZ. Retrieved from http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/quickstats-about-a-place.aspx?request_value=13247&parent_id=13171&tabname=&sc_device=pdf

Steptoe, A., O'Donnell, K., Marmot, M., & Wardle, J. (2008). Positive affect and the pscychosocial processes related to health. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 99*, 211-227.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In S. Worchel & W. Austin (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (pp. 94-109). Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole.

Thrift, N. (2000). Actor-network theory *Dictionary of human geography, 4th edition* (pp. 4-6). Oxford: Blackwell.

Vallance, S., & Golding, B. (2008). 'They're funny bloody cattle': Encouraging rural men to learn. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 48*, 369-384.

Whitehead, T. (2004). *What is ethnography? Methodological, ontological, and epistemological attributes*. Retrieved from EICCARS Working Paper:

Wilkinson, R., & Marmot, M. (2003). *Social determinants of health. The solid facts (2nd edition)*. Denmark: World Health Organization.

Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to labor: How working class kids get working class jobs*: Columbia University Press.

Willis, P., & Trondman, M. (2000). Manifesto for Ethnography. *Ethnography, 1*, 5-16.

Wilson, N. & Cordier, J. (2013) A narrative review of Men's Sheds literature: reducing social isolation and promoting men's health and wellbeing. *Health and Social Care in the Community, 21(5)*, 451-463.

Wood, L., & Giles-Corti, B. (2008). Is there aplace for social capital in the psychology of health and place? *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 28*, 154-163.

Images

Figure 1. Photographs depicting the physical construction of the Men's Shed North Shore
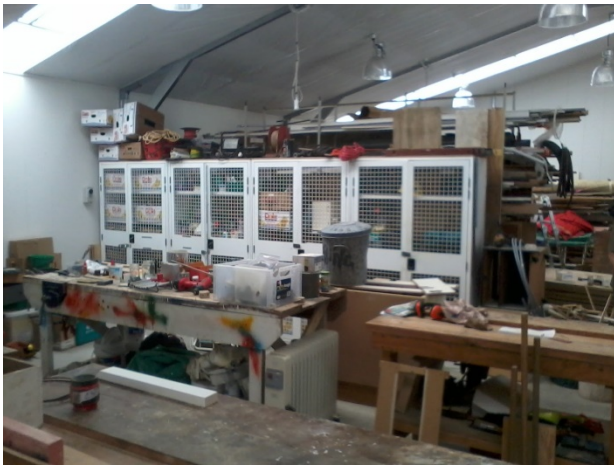
Figure 2. Photos of the Shed's workshop space, and organisation of practical and symbolic objects such as tools

Figure 3. Photograph showing the gathering of men around tools and construction projects

Tables

Table 1. Participant information (at time of stage two of the research)

Participant	Participated in Group Discussion	Participated in interview	Age	Occupation	Ethnicity
Dave	✓	✓	74	Employed part-time	NZ European
Deasy	✓	✓	82	Retired	NZ European
George	✓	✓	82	Retired	NZ European
Jerry	✓	✓	81	Retired	English
John	-	✓	-	Retired	English
Rat	✓	✓	67	Retired	NZ European
Ross Mc	-	✓	-	Retired	NZ European
Ross M	-	✓	-	Retired	English
Skip	✓	✓	67	Employed part-time	NZ European
Tuatara	✓	✓	62	Self-employed	NZ European
Mike	✓	-	-	Retired	NZ European
Fred	✓	-	75	Retired	South African