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Exploring Concepts of Home for Returned Long Term Travellers

A thesis submitted in fulfilment
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by

NAOMI POCOCK



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Abstract

In this thesis, I take a reflexive approach in exploring concepts of ‘home’ for returned long term travellers, whereby ‘concepts’ represent ideas or constructs rather than definitive truths. ‘Home’, being ideologically constructed (Somerville, 1992; Gurney, 1997), has traditionally represented feelings of comfort, familiarity and belongingness. Yet, within the context of return from long term travel, concepts of home may become elusive and uncertain, as previously familiar environments may seem strange (Storti, 1997; Ahmed, 1999) and as the (physically) returned traveller may remain emotionally and socially ‘elsewhere’. Thus, I foreground the emotional and experiential dimensions of return from long term travel in this thesis, surpassing spatially limited notions of an ontological home, and engaging instead with the entangled complexity of social, interpersonal and personal concepts of (knowing) ‘home’.

The context of the thesis is set within the first nine months of return to New Zealand from a long term travel experience, being the phase of travel when concepts of home are perhaps most questioned and arguably blurred. The methods I chose were underpinned by philosophical hermeneutics, and thus, I sought to privilege the participants’ own interpretation of their ‘home(s)’. Within this approach, I necessarily offered one reflexive interpretation of the returned travellers’ stories, while acknowledging that alternative interpretations may also be possible. In contrast to many theses within tourism studies that relegate reflexivity to the methodology chapter (Perriton, 2001; Feighery, 2006), I have attempted to incorporate my reflexivity throughout the thesis. For example, I commence this thesis by openly and honestly situating myself within the thesis, by examining my interest in the topic and my reasons for taking a reflexive approach.

In terms of methods, I conducted open, conversational interviews with five long term travellers who had returned to New Zealand after living and working abroad, in a variety of countries, for between nine months and five years. In these initial interviews, I encouraged participants to reflect on their experiences of return and

start conceptualising their ‘home(s)’. This interview was followed by a period of video diarising, whereby the returned traveller chose scenes of ‘home’ to film with little input from me. In addition, to broaden my understanding of the participants and their ‘home(s)’, I conducted independent interviews with up to five of each of the returned traveller’s ‘significant others’; namely, friends and family members selected by the travellers as being ‘significant’ to the returned travellers and/or their experience of return. Finally, I conducted a follow-up interview with each returned traveller, whereby we explored and discussed together his or her notions of home. Such innovative and iterative forms of data collection are rare within tourism studies, despite an emerging criticality evident within some areas of tourism scholarship (Ateljevic, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2007).

Thematic analysis revealed a renegotiation with home that emerged through the participants’ dialogue with themselves, with others and with me. Concepts of ‘home’ reflected a “mixed bag of emotions”, and emerged through often passive resistance to perceived social norms, and within the context of the returned travellers’ personal historicity, that is, their worldviews, priorities and personal and social histories. ‘Home(s)’ for returned travellers were described as “dynamic”, “fluid” and “emotional”, subjectively constructed, and influenced by the returned travellers’ priorities at that stage in their wider life courses.

This thesis contributes to philosophical ‘framings’ of tourism studies (Tribe, 2009) by moving beyond spatial assumptions of ‘home’ as a contrast to ‘away’ and engaging instead with subjectively constructed, pluralistic epistemologies of (knowing) home. Indeed, ‘home’ is an important experiential construct within tourism discourse, as tourism and recreation take their very meaning from “traditional anchors of identity, namely *work* and *home*” [italics in the original] (Williams & McIntyre, 2001, p. 392) and home and away (White & White, 2007). Yet, complex, subjective, situated, contextual and value-laden constructions of ‘home’ remain uncritically examined within mainstream tourism scholarship. This thesis attempts to address this gap.

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Glossary of Terms & Colloquial Language

The following terms and colloquial language was used by returned travellers in their stories of return.

Aotearoa: Most widely known and accepted Māori name for New Zealand (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>).

Aussies: A colloquial term used to denote Australians.

Cringed/cringy: A colloquial term meaning embarrassment or shame.

Haka: The traditional dance form of the Māori. It is a posture dance performed by a group, with vigorous movements and stamping of the feet with rhythmically shouted accompaniment (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>).

Helen Clark: Former Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Hīkoi: A term of the Māori language of New Zealand generally meaning a protest march or parade, usually implying a long journey taking days or weeks (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>).

Hole: A colloquial derogatory term for any wretched or unpleasant place (<http://www.urbandictionary.com>).

Ka Mate: Refers to the All Black haka (refer above), performed at the beginning of an international rugby game.

Kiwi: Colloquial term for a New Zealander.

Kiwiana: A term that represents iconic Kiwi (refer above) elements (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>).

Māori: The indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>).

Maoridom: Of or relating to the Māori or their language or culture (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/>).

Marae: In Māori society, the marae is a place where the culture can be celebrated, where the Māori language can be spoken, where intertribal obligations can be met, where customs can be explored and debated, where family occasions such as weddings and birthdays can be held, and where important ceremonies, such as welcoming visitors or farewellling the dead (*tangihanga*), can be performed. Like the related institutions of old Polynesia, the marae is a *wāhi tapu*, a 'sacred place' which carries great cultural meaning. In Māori usage, *marae* is technically the

enclosed space in front of a *whareniui* or meeting house (literally "big house"). However, it is generally used to refer to the whole complex, including the buildings and the open space (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>).

Munted: A colloquial term meaning to be broken or distorted (<http://www.sit.ac.nz/pages/about/slang>).

Pākehā: The Māori word for a New Zealander of European descent (<http://www.Māoridictionary.co.nz>).

Pounamu: Several types of hard, durable and highly valued nephrite jade and bowenite found in New Zealand. Pounamu is the Māori name; the rocks are also known as "greenstone" in New Zealand English. Pounamu plays a very important role in Māori culture. It is considered a taonga (treasure). Tools, ornaments and weapons were made of it; in particular adzes, mere (short clubs) and hei-tiki (neck pendants). These were believed to have their own *mana*, were handed down as valued heirlooms and were often given as gifts to seal important agreements (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>). *Mana*: prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma - *mana* is a supernatural force in a person, place or object (<http://www.Māoridictionary.co.nz/>).

Pōwhiri: Māori term for invitation, rituals of encounter, welcome ceremony on a marae (<http://www.Māoridictionary.co.nz>).

RSA: Returned Services' Association - one of the largest voluntary welfare organisations in New Zealand and one of the oldest ex-service organisations in the world. The 'local RSA' is a well-known meeting place or restaurant (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>).

Tāngata Whenua: A Māori term of the indigenous peoples of New Zealand and literally means "people of the land", from *tāngata*, 'people' and *whenua* land (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>). **Tāngata Whenua:** local people, hosts, indigenous people of the land - people born of the whenua, i.e. of the placenta and of the land where the people's ancestors have lived and where their placenta are buried (<http://www.Māoridictionary.co.nz>).

Whānau: The Māori term for extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people (<http://www.Māoridictionary.co.nz/>).

Womad: The arts and music festival held annually in New Plymouth, New Zealand (http://womad.co.nz/womad_index.html).

1 Prologue

I would like to commence this thesis by openly and honestly situating myself within the thesis, thus acknowledging that “[many] texts are personal statements” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 413). With this approach, I challenge the assumption that it is possible to create a doctoral thesis that does not bear trace of its author, while also demonstrating my understanding of the topic by outlining my own experiences of travel and return, and acknowledging the plurality of human experience, understanding and interpretation (Ateljevic et al., 2007).

I chose to investigate the return from long term travel when I returned myself from four years living and working abroad. I left New Zealand in April 2001 to ‘develop my cultural awareness’. I lived and worked in Basel, London and Dublin for four years. I returned to New Zealand because my visa had expired and because I decided that if I was to set up a new life for myself for a fourth time, I would prefer to do so ‘at home’. My own return was relatively seamless, perhaps because I was investigating other people’s experiences and mine paled in comparison to some of theirs. However, I do remember being challenged by people close to me in terms of where they thought I should be in my life (married despite no boyfriend at the time) and how I should be conducting myself (more humbly than my newly acquired self-confidence and ‘global awareness’ allowed).

I wrote a rather ‘deductive’ master’s thesis on the return from overseas experience (O.E.), and, wanting to continue to PhD level, and with a supervision team who valued the reflexive nature of qualitative research, I undertook to explore concepts of home for ‘returnees’ from long term travel. A reflexive approach led me to several realisations: one, that the participants were not ‘returnees’, but rather travellers who had returned physically, but not necessarily emotionally or socially; two, that concepts of home are complex, value-laden and continually changing, and not something that I would be able to specifically ‘define’; three, that in-depth, qualitative research, if conducted ‘properly’, is as much a study of oneself as of others; and four, that with reflexive research, rather than an endeavour to ‘bracket oneself out’, the researcher inevitably has an influence on

the research process and outcome (Dupuis, 1999; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Tribe, 2005; Ateljevic et al., 2007). I have endeavoured to incorporate these realisations into this thesis.

I would also like to note that this research is not generalisable across a population, but is historically and contextually situated, local and personal. I have tried to privilege the participants' voices where possible; however, *I* have necessarily chosen the methods and the final words, stories, and concepts that comprise this thesis. Therefore, I see this thesis as a 'joint story', mine and the returned travellers', whereby my conceptual (academic) positioning is underpinned by 'rich', descriptive accounts in the participants' own words. Moreover, I have presented the thesis with the hope that the reader will engage with the returned travellers as profoundly as I did, and realise that mine is but one possible interpretation of their stories. As Gadamar (1975) said, "Interpretation is not a means through which understanding is achieved; rather, it enters into the content of what is understood" (p. 398). Therefore, I hope that readers of this thesis will create their own interpretation in order to make sense of 'our' story.

2 Setting the Scene

This thesis aimed to explore concepts of home for returned long term travellers. To this end, the thesis focuses on personal lived experiences, foregrounding the voices of the individual participants and privileging their personal and contextualised stories of return in order to allow the returned travellers to speak for themselves. Philosophically, the thesis is underpinned by philosophical hermeneutics, which views interpretation and understanding as a fundamental element of human existence (Gadamer, 1975; Phillips, 1996; Guignon, 2002). Within philosophical hermeneutics, therefore, the ‘interpreter’ may comprise the participant, the researcher and the reader (Gadamar, 1976). Thus, the thesis allows readers to form their own judgements as is congruent with the fifth moment approach to research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). A secondary aim of the thesis was to reflect on the research process within this wider exploration of concepts of home for returned long term travellers. To this end, the thesis takes a reflexive approach by discussing the researcher’s ‘positionality’ as an embodied researcher with her own experiences and worldviews, and her ‘intersectionality’ in terms of her relationships with the returned travellers.

Theoretically, this thesis moves beyond dualistic approaches in its exploration of ‘home(s)’ for returned long term travellers and considers instead alternative, pluralistic and multi-dimensional epistemologies of (knowing) home (Morgan & Bischoff, 2003). Indeed, the thesis suggests that newly (physically) returned travellers may still ‘be’ elsewhere on emotional or social levels, and in their thoughts, imaginings and desires. Therefore, the thesis also considers negative perceptions of ‘homelessness’. However, rather than viewing home and homelessness dualistically as oppositional concepts, an approach that would contradict the pluralistic epistemologies this thesis aims to reflect, the thesis considers instead more fluid, dynamic and blurred concepts of ‘home’ that are being constantly renegotiated within the context of physical, but not necessarily emotional or social return from long term travel. Therefore, this thesis makes an important contribution to the philosophical ‘framing’ of tourism studies by moving beyond spatial conceptualisations to explore the subjective, emotional, and social meanings of home(s) for returned travellers, and thus critiquing

fundamental assumptions of 'home' and 'away' upon which much tourism studies research is based.

The thesis may also be viewed from a postmodern perspective, which acknowledges the interconnectedness, complexity and multiplicity of ways of living and thus ways of understanding the world that are set within individual contexts. Such an approach works outside definitive frameworks or ways of knowing and instead adopts open-ended, pluralistic approaches to research. The postmodern perspective allows for the multiplicities of possibilities that engagement with the world engenders (Hall & du Gay, 1996; Wearing & Wearing, 2001). Indeed, this approach allows for a diversity of meanings, constructs and ways of knowing that necessarily change as the 'knower' creatively interacts with the world. Such changes are accepted and indeed expected within the postmodern perspective and thus align with the multi-dimensional, pluralistic nature of this thesis.

The postmodern approach represents a significant development in Western philosophy in the latter half of the twentieth century (Seidman, 1994), yet remains only narrowly addressed within tourism studies. Although tourism theory acknowledges that travel experiences are "highly personal, subjectively perceived, intangible, ever fleeting and continuously on-going" (O'Dell, 2005, p. 15), the tourist experience itself remains contested, due largely to researchers' differing ontological and epistemological assumptions (whether or not these are voiced) (Jamal & Everett, 2004). Consequently, multiple meanings and interpretations of the tourist experience exist within both the field of tourism studies and the global tourism industry. This thesis seeks to explore such multiplicity of meanings and interpretations by bringing the travellers' own readings of their experiences to the fore. More specifically, the thesis acknowledges the changing, complex and interconnected nature of concepts of home and adopts a pluralistic philosophy in its exploration of such concepts. The individual stories told by returned travellers offer a rich, in-depth interpretation of experience that a more 'modern' or functionalist approach to research would have overlooked.

Thus, the thesis is formatted as a constructed ‘story’ of return from long term travel by exploring returned travellers’ concepts of home, rather than as a definitive ‘truth’. The individual stories told by each traveller in Chapter 4 - Getting to Know the Characters (page 122) present the personal, contextualised, situated experiences of return from long term travel and ruminate on individual concepts of home. However, the thesis presents a wider ‘story’ of return and discusses more theoretically returned travellers’ concepts of home.

To this end, this initial chapter ‘sets the scene’ of the thesis by reviewing the literature relevant to explore concepts of home for returned long term travellers. In particular, the chapter argues for broader and more critical approaches to tourism ‘framings’ that embrace pluralist and multi-dimensional epistemologies (Morgan & Bischoff, 2003; Tribe, 2009). The chapter positions long term travel within one such pluralist approach, namely the mobilities perspective (for example, Hall, 2005b; Sheller & Urry, 2006). This chapter then establishes the physical return from long term travel as a significant phase of the travel experience by proposing that the emotional and social journeys of long term travellers continue beyond the physical phase of return, and suggesting that concepts of home may arguably be blurred for returned long term travellers. Indeed, this chapter conceptualises home(s) as complex, often contradictory, ideological constructs that are emotionally based and reflect partly self-construction, partly categorisation by others and partly wider social influences (Malkki, 1992; Wu, 1993). The place attachment literature is drawn upon to discuss embodied negotiations with place; however, ‘being’ at home is conceptualised more as a presence or absence of feelings than a connection to physical places. Therefore, this chapter also argues towards a link between concepts of home and processes of (often fragmented and multiple) identity constructions (Hall & du Gay, 1996), as questions of identities and belongingness are also raised within the context of return from long term travel.

The ‘creating the story’ chapter then discusses the philosophies and methodologies that informed the research design. Alternative philosophies and paradigms are considered, and philosophical hermeneutics is proposed as an appropriate approach through which to explore concepts of home for returned

long term travellers. In particular, enabling participants to interpret their own experiences was a fundamental hermeneutic philosophy that underpinned the design of this research. Therefore, the following chapter ‘introduces the characters’ by presenting in-depth, verbatim stories of return for each returned traveller to foreground the participants’ own interpretations. This approach also builds trustworthiness and credibility of the research and enables the reader to ‘get to know’ the characters. A ‘plot’ is then ‘created’ through one interpretation of the returned travellers’ stories. This ‘plot’ is presented around four themes of historicity, emotion, resistance and (re)negotiation, which arose through ruminations on what was perceived to be important to participants. In the chapter that follows, the ‘plot’ is then ‘thickened’ through reflections on my own ‘entanglements’ (Ateljevic, Harris, Wilson, & Collins, 2005) with the research. In particular, the emotional impact the research had on me and the apparent effect being involved in the research had on returned travellers is discussed in this chapter. The ethical messiness of research is also discussed, particularly in terms of representing the significant others’ voices. Finally, the thesis is ‘wrapped up’ as the main line of argument is drawn together in the thesis overview, contributions the thesis makes to tourism scholarship are proposed and avenues for future research are suggested. The following section commences this discussion by critiquing narrow definitions within mainstream tourism scholarship and arguing for more critical approaches that acknowledge pluralist and multi-dimensional epistemologies.

2.1 Purporting new ways of knowing

Historically, the conceptual and theoretical positioning of tourism phenomena within mainstream tourism scholarship has been limited by narrow definitions that fail to capture broader and more critical areas of inquiry (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b; Tribe, 2006; Ateljevic et al., 2007). As Hollinshead (2007) argues, “too much of the conventional thinking in Tourism Studies is based upon shallow typologies, structured around stark ‘binary’ or ‘dualistic’ classifications” (p. 165). For example, the traditional positioning of tourism as a hedonistic escape from everyday life has neglected the routine and undesirable aspects of tourist experiences as people travel to visit sick relatives, feel threatened, insecure or

vulnerable in their travel encounters or experience stressful situations (Harris & McIntosh, 2006). Similarly, the concept of a tourist as a “sightseer” or consumer of places has ignored the embodied and performative nature of travel experiences (Crouch, 2000, 2003). Moreover, dualistic conceptualisations like home/away, host/guest, self/Other, and mind/body have arguably limited the scope of tourism studies to essentialist dualisms rather than privileging more pluralistic ways of knowing (Ateljevic, Hollinshead, & Nazia, 2009). In contrast, this thesis moves beyond such dualistic approaches in its exploration of ‘home(s)’ for returned travellers and considers instead alternative epistemologies of (knowing) home.

Furthermore, pertinent to the conceptual context of this thesis, the philosophical foundation of tourism being primarily about *place* has diminished the wider sociality aspects of travel, such as inquiries into copresent relationships, whereby parties may be physically absent but socially present (Gergen, 2002; Larsen et al., 2007; White & White, 2007). For example, as Urry (2007) explains, “there are multiple forms of ‘imagined presence’ occurring through objects, people, information and images” (p. 47). Thus, presence and absence may occur not only spatially, but also relationally, emotionally and temporarily. Particularly for long term travellers, feelings of being ‘present’ can be maintained through emotional connections, for example to friends and family, despite physical distances (Larsen, Urry, & Axhausen, 2007; Baldassar, 2008). Moreover, as Gustafson (2006) argues, traditional tourism research, which views places as bounded and self-contained, static and continual, ignores the interconnectedness and changing nature of places as they are regarded by individual or collective groups. Indeed, “a place does not necessarily have one specific meaning or set of meanings, agreed upon by everybody – individuals and / or social groups may have widely differing and even conflicting views of places that are important to them” (ibid, p. 18). Thus, tourism studies’ traditional preconception with *place* as a fundamental philosophical ‘frame’ through which to view the tourism phenomenon has limited its philosophical positioning within wider social science research. As McCabe (2009) argues, a “lack of attention to the ideological and philosophical positions taken by both the researchers and the researched on the concept of tourists [and tourism]... represents a missed opportunity to understand how people position their own [social world] (p. 33). In contrast, this thesis moves beyond spatial

conceptualisations to explore the subjective, emotional, and social meanings of home(s) for returned travellers.

In contrast to these traditional and limited philosophical framings of tourism studies, critical scholars have employed a more subjective approach to research, and embraced interpretive, alternative, reflexive and critical modes of enquiry to broaden philosophical and theoretical approaches to tourism research (Tribe, 2005; Ateljevic et al., 2007). The term ‘critical’ is contested, with a variety of meanings being claimed by different groups for different purposes depending on their ideologies and worldviews (Brookfield, 2005) and it is important to clarify particular meanings where the term ‘critical’ is used (Tribe, 2008). Thus, within this thesis, the ‘critical’ approach reflects the self-conscious reflexive concern for the impact of research on the researcher’s and the participants’ personal and emotional lives, as well as the wider critiquing of fundamental assumptions within tourism studies research, such as spatial conceptualisations of ‘home’ and ‘away’.

Such critical approaches recognise tourism spaces as socio-cultural constructions, rather than physical locations, foregrounding the individual’s subjective experiences and perceptions to explore constructed meanings of tourism phenomena. These approaches move beyond conceptual dualisms to consider new ways of knowing (for example, Rojek & Urry, 1997; Crouch, 2000; Pritchard & Morgan, 2000; Aitchison, MacLeod, & Shaw, 2001; Ateljevic et al., 2009). Such approaches “encompass multiple worldviews and cultural differences... [thus reflecting] the plurality of all positions, practises and insights” (Pritchard & Morgan, 2007, p. 11). Indeed, as Morgan and Bischoff (2003) argue, “by connecting more fully with the wider debates in the social sciences and embracing pluralist, multi-dimensional epistemologies... tourism studies has the opportunity to create a richer, more inclusive and more innovative research base” (p. 295). This thesis is positioned within such epistemologically-centred studies, whereby “the ways of knowing or how we know (epistemology), determines what we know and what we claim to be real (ontology)” (Pernecky, 2010, p. 11) and the ‘truth’ of tourism (Tribe, 2006) lies not in ‘correct’, ‘reliable’ and ‘valid’ accounts, but rather in interpretations of a multitude of meanings.

Accordingly, one ‘tourism phenomenon’ that has barely been raised within tourism studies, and where traditional concepts of tourism are challenged when viewed through a more subjectively-oriented lens, is the physical, but not necessarily emotional or social return from long term travel. One theory through which these challenging concepts of home may be explored is Bhabha’s (1994) ‘third space’. As Section 2.4.1 – Homes and identities (page 41) elaborates, in a ‘third space’ established structures of meaning and power are disrupted and identities are blurred and constantly negotiated through multiple encounters with otherness (Bhabha, 1994). Thus, as returned travellers face quests of belonging: where do they belong, how to they belong, when do they belong” (Ali & Holden, 2006, p. 237), they may re-construct their identities and their notions of home. These encounters with otherness may lead them to question perceived established structures both in the foreign and pre-sojourn environments. Yet, such considerations of emotional and social return and critical examinations of ‘home’ through subjectively-oriented lenses remain largely neglected in tourism studies research.

Therefore, by addressing the emotional and social return from long term travel and exploring experiences of return through concepts of home, this thesis makes an important contribution to the philosophical ‘framing’ of tourism studies (Tribe, 2009). To this end, the following sections set the theoretical scene for this thesis by conceptualising long term travel; moving beyond the physical return and exploring more emotional and social aspects of return; and presenting epistemological home(s) as important constructs through which to discuss the personal, emotional and social nature of return from long term travel.

2.2 Conceptualising long term travel

The context of long term travel in this thesis has been kept deliberately broad, and discussions pertaining to long term travel could potentially apply to, for example, backpackers (for example, Cohen, 2004; Noy, 2004; Richards & Wilson, 2004; Enoch & Grossman, 2010), overseas experience (‘O.E.’) travellers (for example, Bell, 2002; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Wilson, Fisher, & Moore, 2009a), volunteers (for example, Wearing, 2001; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Zahra & McIntosh, 2007b)

and many other types of long term travellers. Indeed, long term travel has a long history. Its history ranges from the Grand Tours of the 17th and 18th centuries offering site seeing, adventure and education, to the skilled tradesmen ‘tramping’ to seek training and work experience in the early 19th century (White & White, 2004), to the ‘rite of passage’ of the O.E., or the GAP year that offers an opportunity to postpone adulthood responsibilities and decisions (for example, Milne, Poulton, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2001; Bell, 2002; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Wilson, Fisher, & Moore, 2009a). More recently, the globalisation phenomenon, increasing diaspora policies where the global flow of skilled human capital is inevitable, and the concept of boundaryless careers, have created a new long term travel lifestyle that is evidenced by a continual circulation of travelling and dwelling in multiple locations (for example, Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, & Barry, 1997; Rapport & Dawson, 1998; Larsen et al., 2007). This continual circulation of human capital is also described within a mobilities perspective (Sheller & Urry, 2006), elaborated below, whereby the tourist experience is no longer static or linear, but rather emerges as a “fusion of fluid and dynamic mobilities and materialities, embodied and affectual encounters” (Scarles, 2010, p. 905).

However, although such mobility lenses are gaining momentum in tourism scholarship (for example, Williams & Hall, 2002; Sheller & Urry, 2004; Coles, Duval, & Hall, 2005; Hall, 2005a; Coles & Hall, 2006; Larsen et al., 2007), mainstream tourism literature arguably remains rooted in more traditional notions of tourism, such as “the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes” (UNWTO, 1994, p. 5). In contrast, this thesis concurs with Hall’s (2005a) argument, for the purposes of conceptualising long term travel at least, that “the conceptualisation and development of theoretical approaches to tourism should... consider relationships to other forms of mobility” (p. 132). As such, a mobilities lens is usefully drawn upon in order to conceptualise long term travel within this thesis.

A mobilities perspective leads us to “discard our usual notions of spatiality and scale, [and] undermines existing linear assumptions about temporality and timing, which often assume that actors are able to do only one thing at a time, and that

events follow each other in a linear order” (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 214). Moreover, in a mobilities perspective, time and space are compressed, nowhere is an ‘island’ and all places, people and things are tied into at least thin networks of connection (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Thus, in a mobilities perspective, places “are best thought of not so much as enduring sites but as *moments of encounter*, not so much as ‘presents’, fixed in space and time, but as variable events; twists and fluxes of interrelation” [italics in the original] (Conradson & Latham, 2007, p. 231).

Thus, the mobilities perspective challenges traditional notions of ‘home’ and ‘away’ upon which assumptions of tourism are based. Tourism as a concept is based upon the demarcation of home as an opposition to away and assumes a circular journey occurs from a stationary geographic home to ‘away’ and back home again. However, such conceptualisations of tourism limit our understanding of diverse tourism experiences, particularly as “experiences of culture, community, home and identity are increasingly mobile and complex” (Hui, 2008, p. 295). Therefore, the mobilities perspective challenges our assumptions that identities are tied to a singular place and that geographic rootedness may form the basis from which to develop social theories that explain tourism, leisure and identity (Williams, 2002). Long term travel provides one context through which to explore alternative notions of home and away as travellers ‘make a home’ for themselves in another location (Larsen et al., 2007; Nowicka, 2007; Hui, 2008), as their return to a previous ‘home’ raises questions of belongingness, and as their newly acquired perspectives critique the previously familiar environment to which they have returned (Schuetz, 1945). Therefore, within a mobilities perspective, concepts of home and away are not oppositional, but are “articulated off each other” (Hui, 2008, p. 302). To this end, this thesis moves beyond spatial demarcations of ‘home’ to explore the subjectively constructed, multi-dimensional, contextual nature of ‘home(s)’ for returned long term travellers.

Moreover, within a mobilities perspective, long term travel would not be conceptualised by a discreet timeframe. Rather, it would be recognised as subjective and contextualised by definition, constituting part of a wider life course of movement and connections (Sheller & Urry, 2006). For example, long term

travel for backpackers may conceptually comprise a six month world tour, whereas for global nomads and economic migrants, long term travel may be more than 10 years abroad, and either trip may comprise return visits to the originating country. Similarly, the return from long term travel, within the mobilities lens, would not be viewed as a defined period, but rather a longer transitional experience within the wider lifecourse of the individual (White & White, 2004), with immediate, but also lasting effects on returned travellers. Thus, the mobilities lens may argue that there is no travel (or return) phase, but rather a circulation of movement (imagined or real) across the life course of the individual. Accordingly, for the purpose of this thesis, long term travel is conceptualised based on the individual's intentions regarding travel and return rather than on discrete timeframes.

As a point of reference to conceptualising long term travel, definitions of permanent and temporary migration and traditional notions of tourists may be usefully contrasted. However, it is also acknowledged that these notions overlap within the lives of the individual, particularly as they change their minds about what they want. Therefore, within the scholarly conceptualisation of migration, long term travel and tourism, it is useful to “disentangle the changing relationships between tourism and migration which are inherent in the life courses of [many] individuals” (Williams & Hall, 2002, p. 3). This thesis attempts to contribute to this ‘disentangling’ discussion.

Williams & Hall's (2002) discussion of migration and tourism offers a useful reference point within which to conceptualise long term travel within this thesis. According to them, permanent migration implies a permanent move with no intention to return, a lasting relocation, a single transition. Thus, permanent migration contrasts with long term travel, as long term travellers arguably intend (or hope) to return at some stage in the future. In contrast to permanent migrants, temporary migrants may plan to return or move elsewhere, may be away for varying timeframes, and are usually repeat visitors with seasonal motivations. Moreover, temporary migration is defined by Bell & Ward (2000) as “any form of territorial movement which does not represent a permanent, or lasting, change of usual residence” (p. 88) or “repetitive events of variable duration, where absences

from home may last from a few hours, to days, weeks or even months” (p. 90). Examples of temporary migrants may include second home owners (McIntyre, Williams, & McHugh, 2006) and commuters (Bell & Ward, 2000). Clearly, some overlap with tourism and temporary migration is evident as a form of short term mobility. However, temporary migration arguably differs from long term travel. Firstly because a lasting, though not permanent, change of residence may indeed occur within a long term travel experience as travellers ‘make a home’ for themselves in the foreign location (Larsen et al., 2007; Nowicka, 2007). Secondly, because of the less repetitive nature of long term travel, whereby travellers leave for an extended period of time, may ‘tour’ within this period of time, and then return to the place they came from, usually with the intention to stay. Thus, the major point of difference between long term travellers and permanent or temporary migrants is that long term travellers intend or hope to return indefinitely at some stage in the future, but in the meantime establish a ‘home’ for themselves in the foreign location.

Uriely’s (1994) notion of a ‘permanent sojourner’ also offers a useful comparison to long term travellers as defined in this thesis. In Uriely’s conceptualisation and like the conceptualisation of long term travel in this thesis, permanent sojourners have no ‘concrete plans’ or ‘definite dates’, but maintain a ‘general wish’ to return to their homeland. Thus, they are conceptualised as part ‘sojourner’ and part ‘settler’ in terms of their orientation towards their place of residence abroad. However, this part ‘sojourner’ and part ‘settler’ orientation may also apply to their thoughts about the homeland they hope or intend to return to. For example, long term travellers may maintain emotional and social connections to the people and social environment they left (Larsen et al., 2007; Baldassar, 2008), making them feel ‘present’ in the physically distant environment, while still maintaining their ‘sojourning’ lifestyle abroad. Thus, they may be considered ‘permanent sojourners’ in terms of both their place of residence abroad and in terms of their orientation towards the environment they ‘wish’ to return to.

Long term travellers may furthermore be considered “middling” (Wilson, Fisher, & Moore, 2009b, p. 172) types of migrants, as they are not exiled nor refugees, but stay away semi-permanently and deliberately choose the level of interaction

they engage in with both their host and originating communities (Wilson et al., 2009b). They may be considered either travelling workers or working tourists (Uriely, 2001), but either way, they are driven by personal choice and travel independently of any organisations, and voluntarily return rather than being ‘forced’ to return due to political or organisational requirements, such as refugee status or a pre-defined length of expatriate sojourn.

Traditional notions of ‘tourists’, as people staying outside their usual environment for leisure, business and other purposes (UNWTO, 1994), may also be contrasted with the notions of long term travel presented in this thesis. While long term travellers may be considered ‘tourists’ as they travel within their longer term sojourn, they work and set up a life for themselves while living abroad.

Moreover, long term travellers may not be considered ‘tourists’, as they set up a ‘home’ or multiple ‘homes’ during their travel experience. They establish new communities, social networks and lasting relationships and they devise routines within their ‘transitional’ lifestyles (White & White, 2004; Conradson & Latham, 2005b). Thus, the intention to make a life (or a home) during the long term travel experience (meshing work with travel, routine with novelty, and familiarity with strangeness), and the intention or hope to (at least physically) return from whence they came (whether to nation, community or relationships) at some stage in the future distinguish long term travellers from permanent migrants, temporary migrants and traditional notions of ‘tourists’. Therefore, this thesis contributes to the ‘widening’ of horizons (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b) in tourism studies by drawing on a mobilities perspective of fluid and dynamic circulation and exploring the experiences of long term travellers’ return. As the next section elucidates, this return is explored in terms of its emotional and social connections to ‘home(s)’, rather than spatially as a physical return. Moreover, the intercultural experiences to which this next section refers relate not only to long-term travellers such as expatriates on assignment (Hurn, 1999), exchange students (Gaw, 2000), international missionaries (Walling, Eriksson, Meese, Ciovica, Gorton, & Foy, 2006), armed servicemen and women (Schuetz, 1945) and road trippers (White & White, 2004), but may be shared at least partially by other tourist groups. Certainly, the re-entry experiences of tourists themselves are barely examined or

understood within tourism scholarship, and this thesis aims to contribute to this gap.

2.3 Moving beyond the physical return

On a somewhat superficial level, an element of sedentarism, in contrast to the mobilities perspective presented in the previous section, may also be assumed to be present within the concept of long term travel, as long term travellers choose to return to the people and places they left, often with the intention or hope to remain indefinitely. Sedentarism, based on Heidegger's (1971) notion of dwelling and being at home in a place, locates bounded places (like nations) "as the fundamental basis of human identity and experience and as the basic units of social research" (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 208). However, as the intercultural studies literature suggests (for example, Werkman, 1986; Rogers & Ward, 1993; Hurn, 1999; Gaw, 2000; Ghosh, 2000), long term travellers may have returned physically, but their emotional 'being' may remain elsewhere. For example, as this section elucidates, returned travellers have been found to question their decision to return, wish they were back on their sojourn, criticise their originating culture and environment, connect with friends abroad better than with those who stayed behind, and talk about their recent, more transient life in a favourable light, especially when compared to the more sedentary lifestyle of return (for example, Foust, Fieg, Koester, Sarbaugh, & Wendinger, 1981; Austin, 1986; Brabanta, Palmera, & Gramling, 1990; Gaw, 2000; Smith, 2002). Therefore, this thesis proposes that newly (physically) returned travellers may still 'be' elsewhere on emotional or social levels, and in their thoughts, imaginings and desires.

Indeed, for some travellers, returning can be turbulent, traumatic and fraught with anxiety. This is evident in the intercultural studies literature, which uses terms like 'repatriation distress' and 'reverse culture shock' (Gaw, 2000; Sussman, 2000, 2001). In particular, the literature suggests that anxieties may arise through expectation discrepancies between the individual travellers and those who remained behind. For example, through a review of the literature Sussman (1986) suggested that pre-sojourn friends and family tended to expect returned travellers to exhibit 'normal' pre-sojourn behaviour, whereas travellers often felt they had

changed through their travel experiences. Similarly, Smith (2002) noted that returned travellers' relationships with family and friends can become strained as returned travellers noticed things about people they had previously ignored or accepted as "just the way it is" (p. 256). Freedman (1986) also noted that in terms of relationships, returned travellers "cannot simply pick up where they left off" (p. 22). Schuetz (1945) likewise theorised that returned travellers would appear 'strange' to those who were expecting them, that the changes in the traveller would not be understood by those who remained behind, and that in their attempt to understand the traveller's experiences, the 'others at home' would subsume the traveller's stories within their own (albeit limited) perceptions of travel (often gleaned through alternative means such as magazines, movies and other popular media sources). This discrepancy in understanding, according to Schuetz, represents "one of the biggest obstacles to mutual reestablishment of the disrupted [relationship]" (Schuetz, 1945, p. 374). Therefore, while not specifically examining the relationships between returned travellers and their pre-sojourn friends and family, such literature reports interpersonal tensions that arise within the context of the return experience, which arguably influence the emotional and social unsettledness of returned travellers.

Furthermore, as travellers question their decision to return and reflect on what is important to them, they may resist making decisions about their future (Foust, Fieg, Koester, Sarbaugh, & Wendinger, 1981; Bell, 2002; White & White, 2004), thereby exacerbating the feelings of emotional transience or unsettledness. As D'Andrea (2006) explains, long term travel "gradually undermines the fixity of social roles [and] identities... These have to be renegotiated, as subjects are forced to make uneasy decisions about their lives" (p. 103). Furthermore, returned travellers may feel 'bored', 'lonely' and 'restless' as they may be used to a more exciting, and less routine lifestyle and may become disillusioned with the social environment to which they return (for example, Foust, Fieg, Koester, Sarbaugh, & Wendinger, 1981; Werkman, 1986). Indeed, feelings of superiority may arise as travellers value their experience abroad above the experiences of those who have remained behind, as Foust *et al.* (1981) has suggested. Resentment by peers who have not experienced international opportunities may also lead to tensions in relationships (*ibid*). Thus, clashes between travellers' new views of the home

culture (changed as a result of experiencing otherness) and the cultural norms of the environment to which they returned can lead to tensions and contradictions that are difficult to resolve (Foust *et al.*, 1981; Hurn, 1999; Smith, 2002).

Certainly, a review of repatriation literature across disciplines such as psychology, communication studies, intercultural studies and anthropology, shows that the return phase, or repatriation, from extended travel overseas can often involve periods of distress or even depression for the individual traveller. Indeed, some scholars have noted that the return journey can be more difficult than adjustment to the foreign culture, due mainly to expectation discrepancies of both the sojourner and those who remained behind (Adler, 1981; Rogers & Ward, 1993; Smith, 2002). Returning travellers expect the environment to which they return to be familiar, anticipate that life will continue as it was before the sojourn, and assume that their memories and recollections of the pre-sojourn environment are accurate. Yet, as Schuetz (1945) points out, “the home to which [the traveller] returns is by no means the home he [sic] left or the home which he recalled and longed for during his absence” (p. 375). Thus, the homecomer maintains an “unwarranted assumption” (*ibid*) that the way of being in one social system may be transplanted into another, and “the unexpected nature of [these] repatriation difficulties appears to exacerbate re-entry outcomes” (Sussman, 1986, p. 392). As Freedman (1986) explains in his study of returning expatriates, “when people have been temporary, transient residents (more than just tourists) and return from the foreign culture to their native culture, they will soon discover that their cross-cultural problems are far from over” (p. 23). Such transitional difficulties imply that despite their physical return, long term travellers may often remain emotionally and socially displaced.

As such, within intercultural studies, scholars have recently taken an emotional lens in their exploration of transnational experiences. For example, Ryan (2008) explored the emotional journey of Irish nurses living and working in Britain, and discussed in particular how they managed homesickness and loneliness within their migrant experiences. Similarly, Baldassar (2008) examined the emotions of ‘missing’ and ‘longing’ in transnational families between Australia and Italy and found that “strong and affecting emotions like longing for and missing serve to

maintain and affirm relationships across distance” (p. 263). Svašek (2010) discussed the emotional aspects of human mobility and transnational family life, and suggested that while feelings of not belonging may be part of human nature, experiences of loss and homelessness can be directly attributed to migration circumstances.

Moreover, a 2007 special issue of *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* explored how emotions could be theorised to better understand experiences in an increasingly interconnected world. Within this special issue, Svašek & Skrbiš (2007) aptly explain the emotional connections that many transnational migrants experience:

Willingly or not, trans-nationally mobile people... “carry along” particular memories and feelings and are to some extent conditioned by emotional discourses and practices learned in their place of origin... this process does not take place in the isolation of their minds and bodies, but it occurs in their active emotional engagement with the past, present, and future environments. Mobile individuals are tied to their families and friends “back home,” but they also grow attachments to their new surroundings, learn to express feelings in new ways, and have particular hopes and expectations about what the future may bring (p. 373).

Thus, for these mobile people, as potentially for long term travellers, concepts of home are dynamic, often changing and require a “perpetual balancing act” (Baldassar, 2001, p. 6) as individuals find themselves pulled in different directions by their often emotional experiences in and connections with different social and cultural environments.

This emotional perspective in the context of migration is further elucidated by Skrbiš (2008), and thus illuminates the emotional turbulence experienced by long term travellers:

Migration is invariably a process that dissociates individuals from their family and friendship networks, as well as from other socially significant referents that have strong emotional connotations... Migrant stories are linked with the experiences of adjustment,

settlement, nostalgia, a shattered sense of belonging, renewal, loss, discrimination, abrupt endings, new beginnings and new opportunities – all potent sources of emotions (p. 236).

Moreover, as Conradson and McKay (2007) suggest, “the happiness, sadness, frustration, excitement and ambivalence that accompany emplacement and mobility are central to social life, shaping our experiences of the world and relations with others” (p. 169). Thus, the (both positive and negative) emotional component of return from long term travel is an important construct to consider, as returned travellers negotiate their way through personal relationships (both present and absent), social and peer-based expectations and cultural assumptions and norms. Yet, such deeply personal emotional experiences are barely raised within mainstream tourism studies, which has traditionally assumed tourism to be a pleasure-seeking activity and thus not in need of more emotive approaches to research.

Moreover, little scholarly attention has been paid to the return phase of travel specifically. As argued in a forthcoming publication (Pocock & McIntosh, forthcoming), the initial phase, named ‘before’, ‘anticipation’, or ‘planning’ has been accorded some attention within travel and tourism discourse (for example, Hyde & Lawson, 2003), and particularly in relation to information searching (Gitelson & Crompton, 1983; Fodness & Murray, 1999). The second, ‘during’ or ‘on-site activity’ phase predominates tourism discourse, with widespread discussion along themes such as tourist satisfaction (Pizam, 1978; Ryan, 1995); attitudes and behaviours on-site (for example, Brown, 1999); consumer behaviour (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007); tourist experiences (for example, McIntosh, 1999); and host-guest relationships (Pearce, 1982; Huxley, 2005). This discourse has on occasion included attention to the return from travel, arguably perhaps as an after-thought rather than through explicit research design (Bell, 2002; Hottola, 2004; White & White, 2004). The ‘after’ phase of the travel experience has more recently gained attention in the recollections of tourist experiences captured in Small’s (1999) memory work methodology and, for example, in research memorabilia collected while on tour (for example, Swanson & Horridge, 2006). However, the subjective, contextualised and affective ‘here and now’ of the return

from travel remains relatively unexamined within the published literature on travel and tourism.

Much more is known about this phase of experience in the leisure and recreation field, which has explored the multiphasic nature of leisure and recreation experiences (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Stewart, 1998). Indeed, much of the leisure and recreation research is based on Clawson and Knetsch's (1966) idea of an evolving recreation experience from anticipation and planning, through travel to the site, on-site activity, return from the site, to recollection of the trip. According to this multiphasic approach, the present study would sit between return travel from the site and recollection of the trip as it represents an immediacy of experience or a 'lived reality' that occurs after the physical return, but before recollection begins. The return is therefore part of the travel experience and the journey continues even when the tourist has physically returned. Indeed, as Gowans (2006) notes:

The continual motion of mobility itself, as well as the instability of location, suggest that [departure and arrival] are transient and fluid, and that the beginnings and ends of journeys are difficult to define... arrival at a place referred to as home does not (necessarily) mark the end of that journey... just as the boundaries between travelling and dwelling are blurred, the borders associated with leaving and arriving cannot be defined as discrete, especially when it is possible that a home is also being left (p.86).

This approach challenges the assumption that experience may be captured in a single moment and supports instead the dynamic and emergent view of experience being embedded within personal stories (Stewart, 1998). Such an approach aligns, for example, with Adler's (1981) conceptualisation of an expatriate's career spiral and Sussman's (2000) discussion of cyclical, or rather outward spiralling, cultural transition, whereby the cultural learning that has occurred within the individual and the intercultural relationships that have been established form part of the traveller's post-sojourn identity. The spiral metaphor supports the idea of an infinite process of change rather than the implication of a more cyclical pattern that one may return to a beginning point. Indeed, (physically) returned travellers cannot return to their pre-sojourn way of life, worldviews and

identities (whether personal or social), as they bring their travel experiences with them (Schuetz, 1945; Ahmed, 1999; Matthews, 2008). For example, new-found confidence through the journey of self-discovery (Brown, 2009), changes in attitudes and priorities (Noy, 2004), and new social networks (Conradson & Latham, 2005b; White & White, 2007) all shape the post-sojourn selves, which necessarily incorporate the pre-sojourn selves in a continual spiral of self-awareness.

Thus, the phases of travel (before, during, after) described in the tourism, leisure and recreation literature (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Botterill & Crompton, 1996; Woodside & Dubelaar, 2002; Poria, Butler, & Airey, 2003), and indeed upon which many tourism concepts are primarily based, are certainly blurred and may even be redundant (from a mobilities perspective at least). As the 'before', 'during' and 'after' phases of the travel experience are fluid rather than discrete, the return constitutes more than just leaving the destination to return, and is not just the trip home, but extends into a 'here and now' of return. Indeed, re-entry, or the nature of return, is purported to embody a transitional period of uncertainty and change, manifested in an often emotional and highly contextualised reality of impressions, reflections, questioning and adaptation (Foust et al., 1981; Freedman, 1986; Smith, 2002). Given the uncertain and emotional nature of the return from long term travel, it can be argued that the return phase is perhaps more concerned with an individual's life course, social relationships and identity, rather than the physical return to a geographic location, and begs the questions of how returnees identify themselves in the world, their goals and priorities, and who they have potentially 'become' through their travel experience.

Therefore, on a conceptual level, the mobilities perspective contributes to tourism scholarship by questioning the discreet boundaries upon which before, during and after phases of travel or concepts of 'home' and 'away' within mainstream tourism studies are largely based. As mentioned earlier, this means that rather than conceptualising home and away as definitive and static, and the return phase of travel as discrete, this thesis instead considers more fluid, dynamic and blurred concepts of home within the context of physical, but not necessarily emotional or social return from long term travel.

However, the mobilities absolutist notion that “all the world is on the move” (Urry, 2007, p. 3) overlooks the personal lived experience of the physical, emotional and social return from long term travel as a phase of life deserving specific attention. Although the world may be ‘on the move’, for the individual traveller returning to a place and relationships presumed familiar, stable and thought of as ‘home’, may now seem (unexpectedly) ‘strange’ (Storti, 1997; Ahmed, 1999). Therefore, the context of ‘movement’ may take second priority to the personal, often emotional and sometimes gruelling negotiations arising within this context of (at least the physical) return. In short, tourism (or mobility) may provide the context within which the experience occurs, but the personal lived experience itself may take priority in the mind of the individual traveller, and thus serves as the focus of this thesis.

Thus, on a more personal and individual level, this in-depth discussion of return among long term travellers may offer new insights into travellers’ experiences, personal and social identities and negotiations of home(s) in the context of return. Such a person-centred approach (Wearing & Wearing, 2001; Wearing, 2002) moves beyond “homogenising portrayals of tourism as a general type to pluralizing depictions that capture the multiplicity of the experience” [spelling in the original] (Uriely, 2005, p. 200). Thus, this thesis attempts to contribute to this widening of conceptual horizons within tourism studies by critically engaging with alternative ways of knowing, specifically by exploring concepts of ‘home’ for returned long term travellers.

Other studies have explored such affective, personal, subjective elements of tourist experiences. For example, Wearing and Wearing (2001) discussed the changes to self and identity through cross-cultural interactions in the context of volunteer travel. Noy (2004) discussed the “profound self-change” (p. 78) experienced by Israeli backpackers. Conradson and Latham (2007) found that the affective nature of cities allows the self to be “worked upon” (p. 232) as New Zealanders in London became cosmopolitan and thus “[re]configured their] Antipodean sense of selfhood and identity” (p. 251). Moreover, Brown (2009) found that the personal journeys of self-discovery through long term travel, in

particular, influenced changes in travellers' personal attitudes to lives, changes in priorities and a renegotiated way of life. By taking person-centred approaches to research, such studies offer new ways of exploring the subjective nature of tourist experiences, and therefore usefully inform this thesis.

In contrast, much intercultural literature has traditionally sought commonalities among participants and reported findings that are generalised to the returned traveller 'population'. For example, Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) proposed a 'W-curve' of intercultural adaptation, by describing a cycle of shock, recoil, adjustment and adaptation/synthesis for returned travellers. This 'W-curve' of intercultural adjustment theory remains invalidated by empirical findings (Martin, 1984), but nevertheless offers 'conceptual handles' by which travellers may understand their experiences of return (Freedman, 1986). Others (for example, Myers & Inkson, 2003; Milstein, 2005) propose broad personal developments through travel, in terms of improved interpersonal, intercultural, and communication skills; increased self-confidence and self-sufficiency; the development of a more global perspective and intercultural tolerance; and increased independence and autonomy. However, such studies have often ignored the individualised, personal, situated and contextualised (sometimes negative) nature of experiences of return. This thesis seeks to overcome this omission by foregrounding the voices of the individual participants and privileging their personal and contextualised stories of return (as elucidated in Chapter 4 - Getting to Know the Characters, page 122). While some 'commonalities' may become apparent in terms of broad themes across which the stories may be interpreted and discussed, each story is recognised and indeed valued in this thesis for its uniqueness and individuality. Indeed, as the next section suggests, concepts of home are uniquely constructed by individuals, while also being influenced by wider social relationships and structures. Thus, a person-centred approach was deemed appropriate for exploring concepts of home for returned travellers in this thesis.

2.4 Presenting 'home' as an important construct in experiences of return

'Home' offers a useful concept within which to discuss the emotional and social (that is the non-physical) dimensions of return from long term travel, because:

Home can and must compass cultural norms and individual fantasies, representations of and by individuals and groups... 'Home' brings together memory and longing, the ideational, the affective and the physical, the spatial and the temporal, the local and the global, the positively evaluated and the negatively (Rapport & Dawson, 1998, p. 8).

Therefore, congruent with the focus of this thesis, concepts of home represent the complexity and plurality of the social world. Such concepts acknowledge the subjective and multiple constructions of social phenomena and also recognise the wider social influences on these constructions. Concepts of home also span disciplines, as they encompass psychological, geographical and sociological epistemologies. Indeed, home "involves spatial and physical aspects as well as symbolic and emotional attachments to real or imagined places and people" (Uriely, 2010, p. 855), a particular way of life comprising small yet cherished elements (Schuetz, 1945). Therefore, concepts of home bridge various ways of knowing and philosophies of being as they encompass both spatial realities and emotional constructions. Moreover, both home and homelessness can be viewed as socially constructed. This social construction can be perceived as ideological and 'imagined' or experienced through "intellectualized reality" (Somerville, 1992, p. 537), that is, through cognitive and sensual intellect. Thus, 'home' is often contradictory and is based on emotionally charged experiences (ibid).

Furthermore, home "is always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorization by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, et cetera. It is a creolized aggregate composed through bricolage" (Malkki, 1992, p. 37). Therefore, as more complex experiences of travel and mobilities emerge, being 'away' from home may become an impossibility. For example, 'home(s)' may become 'internalised'

through global travel as self-reflexive constructs, through which travellers extend their vision beyond national boundaries, replace the physical home with an internal sense of belonging and therefore feel at home in the whole world (McCaig, 1996). Similarly, 'home(s)' may be found in relationships between self and others rather than in a geographic location. For example, for travelling professionals, being with family may create a sense of being at home despite diverse physical locations and cultural differences (Nowicka, 2007). Thus, as 'home' becomes internalised and no longer associated with physical locations, being 'away' from 'home' may become a conceptual anomaly. Moreover, as familiarity and strangeness converge, and as comfort and discomfort can be felt simultaneously within the same environment or relationship, as this thesis will demonstrate, being (or at least *feeling*) 'at home' may also become impossible.

The place attachment literature may potentially contribute to such a premise of an 'internal home'. Such scholarship examines the embodied encounters with place, whereby the individual "constantly negotiates the world in terms of relationships, emotions and feeling" (Crouch, 2000, p. 66-67) and where meanings attached to places are unsettled. Affect, emotion and feeling, cognition (knowledge and beliefs) and practice (action and behaviour) are all central to the place attachment concept (Low & Altman, 1992), and thus, place attachment theory seeks to understand how "individuals engage and encounter their surroundings in terms of [embodiment]" (Crouch, 2003, p. 1946). Place attachment theory also recognises that "space is socially constructed through the discursive and non-discursive practices of individuals" (Hui, 2008, p. 292), that is, as individuals interact in space (and interact with each other in space) they create meanings and values that render that space a place (namely, a space with meaning). Therefore, like this thesis, place attachment theory may potentially critique static and geographically limited notions of home (Manzo, 2003; Crouch, 2007; Hui, 2008).

However, place attachment theory is based on the philosophy that 'being-in-the-world' is a fundamental, ontological component of human nature, so that "place is an inseparable part of existence" (Manzo, 2003, p. 48). These places attached to may not reflect traditional assumptions of where one might belong or the places that are presumed to be meaningful for individuals. For example, a truck driver

may feel 'at home' on the highway (Heidegger, 1971). Nevertheless, the fundamental premise is that belongingness is linked with dwelling or being-in-the-world. This premise reflects a primarily spatial representation of being that is prioritised over alternative epistemologies of being, such as 'being' in relationships with others, or 'being' (or belonging) within oneself.

Indeed, belongingness may also be found in close personal relationships (Baldassar, 2008; Skrbiš, 2008; Svašek, 2008). For example feeling 'present' in relationships despite physical distances may be important for some global travellers' sense of belonging (Gergen, 2002). Similarly, the pursuit of meaningful activities, such as volunteering or leisure activities (Schmidt, 2005; Zahra, 2006) can create feelings of being 'at home' within oneself. Thus, while place attachment literature may make an important contribution to understanding the personal and emotional connection with meanings of physical spaces, this thesis seeks to move beyond such spatial representations as the fundamental (and philosophical) basis from which to explore concepts of home and moves towards more emotional and social conceptualisations of home(s) within the context of return from long term travel. In other words, rather than exploring 'where the heart is', this thesis explores 'how the heart is' within the context of return from long term travel. As Ginsberg (1999) argued, "our residence is where we live, but our home is how we live" (p. 31).

Thus, 'being at home' is more a matter of the presence or absence of particular feelings than a physical space. Indeed, as Tucker (1994) suggests:

Home is where we could or can be ourselves, feel at ease, secure, able to express ourselves freely and fully, whether we have actually been there or not. Home is a reflection of our subjectivity in the world... An emotional environment, a culture, a geographical location, a political system, a historical time and place, a house etc., [or] a combination of all of the above (p. 184).

Moreover, according to Jackson (1995), "home is grounded less in a place per se than in the activity that goes on in a place" (p. 148). Thus, home is "not simply a person, a thing or a place, but rather it relates to the activity performed by, with or in person's, things and places" (Mallett, 2004, p. 80). It is a subjective feeling of

comfort, familiarity, an ability to express oneself and to be accepted by others in that expression.

Thus, if 'home' represents comfort, familiarity and belongingness, not necessarily tied to dwelling (Heidegger, 1971), but rather in terms of senses and emotions, then home(s) may be found within travel experiences themselves. For example, a second home in a foreign location can be made to feel familiar through repeated visits over an extended period of time (McIntyre *et al.*, 2006). Similarly, an airport terminal may offer comforting emotional linkages to home (Iyer, 2000). Ahmed (1999), for example, finds airport terminals comforting and familiar, as they give her a sense of security and purpose, and represent her travel to a definite destination, which is usually 'home'. Equally, relating with people with common modes of thought and behaviour may make a strange location feel like home (Rapport & Dawson, 1998), such as in the case of diasporic communities (Yeoh & Huang, 2000; Wilson *et al.*, 2009b). Communicating with physically absent others and thus feeling 'present' in their lives through an emotional connection may also create homely feelings (for example, Gergen, 2002; Baldassar, 2008). Taking part in meaningful activities like dancing, speaking a native language, eating special foods or pursuing other cultural activities may create feelings of comfort, familiarity and 'being at home' (Jackson, 1995). Moreover, travelling with significant others may create feelings of being at home. For example, Nowicka (2007) found that for one transnational professional, a table (any table, not one in particular) that the family gathered around for the evening meal and to talk about their days represented his family being together. For another, home was where he and his family were, regardless of cultural differences. In turn, our home may be reflected in objects, artefacts and memoirs, like photographs, special clothes or meaningful furniture that remind us of specific events, places and people related to our experiences of feeling 'at home' (Nowicka, 2007). Thus, just as "people's experience of home influences the meaning and significance of their journeys and beyond it" (Mallett, 2004, p. 78), people's experiences of their journeys may also influence their concepts of home. This premise of journeys potentially influencing concepts of home informs this thesis by moving beyond spatial boundaries and acknowledging more emotional and social connections to meanings of home.

Yet, 'home' may also be viewed ambivalently or negatively, and may represent oppression, imprisonment and resentment (for example, Bowlby, Gregory, & McKie, 1997; Swift, 1997; Wardhaugh, 1999); "a space for strife as well as joy" (Manzo, 2003, p. 51). For example, Wardhaugh (1999) argued that many abused and oppressed women feel 'homeless-at-home' as their freedom and identities are constrained and confined, and suggested that for battered women, the home may represent a place of violence rather than refuge. Similarly, for others 'home' may reflect mundane aspects of daily life (for example, Ahrentzen, 1992; Swift, 1997) and for families of divorce the residence may comprise a site of stress (Anthony, 1997). Moreover, if home implies a sense of security, comfort and familiarity, where we can express ourselves freely and fully, the return from long term travel may be found far from comforting and familiar, if the repatriation literature is to be confirmed. Thus, negative perceptions of home as 'homelessness' are also important to inform the concepts of home explored within this thesis.

However, home(s) and homelessness are not conceptualised here as oppositional experiences or concepts, because such dualistic approaches contradict the pluralistic epistemologies this thesis aims to reflect. Rather, home and homelessness are viewed in this thesis as states of being that are constantly in flux, or "complex and shifting experiences and identities" (Wardhaugh, 1999, p. 93). Thus, home(s) may equally encompass strangeness and movement, for example as people may feel "at home in movement" (Rapport & Dawson, 1998, p. 27). Similarly, 'homelessness' may contain familiarity and fixity (Ahmed, 1999; Mallett, 2004), for example as people may feel frustrated by (familiar) dominant discourses of the social environment to which they have returned. While home may mean "one thing to the man [sic] who never has left it, another thing to the man who dwells far from it, and still another to him who returns" (Schuetz, 1945, p. 370), it is the fluid nature of home for the individual traveller with which this thesis is concerned. Thus, it is the premise of this thesis that concepts of home and homelessness offer a theoretical lens through which to explore experiences of return from long term travel, given the pluralistic and multi-dimensional epistemologies adopted in this thesis.

A review of the tourism literature, specifically, reveals spatial presumptions within many conceptualisations of 'home'. For example, studies of second home dwelling, which challenge presumptions of attachment to a primary home, retain spatial assumptions in their presumption of attachments to multiple homes (Hall & Müller, 2004; McIntyre et al., 2006). As discussed earlier, the place attachment literature within tourism studies similarly maintains spatial assumptions of being-in-the-world. Moreover, much hospitality literature, while critically exploring the relationships between hosts and guests within the home-hospitality setting (di Domenico & Lynch, 2007), maintains a spatial premise towards concepts of 'home', such as in the case of the commercial home (Lynch & MacWhannell, 2000; Lynch, 2005; McIntosh, Lynch, & Sweeney, 2007). Moreover, although Williams and McIntyre (2001) call for more emotional understandings of home, they frame this within spatial presumptions of 'emotional geography', by questioning "where does one's heart, one's identity reside? Where is one's emotional home"? [spelling in the original] (p. 392). Similarly, while White and White (2007) suggest new constructions of 'home' and 'away' in terms of the felt presence or absence in key relationships, they frame these key relationships with people 'back home' and thus fail to move beyond traditional assumptions of home that pervade tourism studies. In contrast, this thesis seeks to propose alternative epistemologies of (knowing) home, specifically for returned long term travellers.

2.4.1 Homes and identities

Certainly, concepts of home are closely linked with notions of both personal identity (a sense of who or what I am) and social identity (a shared understanding of who or what we are) (Milton & Svašek, 2005). Indeed, as Jansen (1998) suggests,

Similarly to the idea of 'travel', the notion of 'home' draws most of its significance from its function as a metaphor. The concept of 'home' is linked to that of identity, in that it is about the story we tell of ourselves which is also the story others tell of us (p. 105).

A review of the identity literature reveals alternative approaches for exploring and explaining concepts of identity. These approaches may be viewed from static (modern) to fluid (postmodern) explanations or along cognitive to interactional dimensions (Young, 2007). For example, modernist approaches view identity as

singular and consistent to the individual, “unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change” (Hall, 1996, p. 3). Such approaches believe that individuals may be defined by their attributes and traits, that is, their identity. These approaches are often embedded in managerial practice-oriented literature and imply that in managing people, there is a ‘right way’ of operating (Beech & McInnes, 2005). More broadly, Western society is purported to promote such modernist approaches to conceptualising identity, as ‘free-willed’ individuals supposedly exercise an ability to self-consciously make choices and reach decisions (Hall, 1996; Beech & McInnes, 2005). Therefore, modernist approaches fit within the static and cognitive approaches to identity construction.

In contrast, this thesis is based on more postmodern, interactional approaches, whereby identity is conceptualised as a process of constructing many selves that are not unified, often fragmented or fractured, and influenced by a combination of the individual project, influential others and wider social constructions (Pullen & Linstead, 2005; Wearing, Stevenson, & Young, 2010). Indeed, the thesis agrees with Wearing and Wearing’s (2001) postmodern theory of the self. This theory reflects the agency that is evident within the interpreting, emotional, reflexive, cumulative and changing nature of the ‘I’, but also takes account of the discourses, significant others, significant reference groups and cultural assumptions that influence the various constructions of ‘me’. Within such a view, identities are constructed not only by the individual, but also by others, so that “the self and others are in a dynamic identity-constructing relationship” (Beech & McInnes, 2005, p. 40). Thus, a further premise of this thesis is that ‘home’ and ‘identity’, while constructed by thinking, feeling and reflexive individuals are also influenced by relations with others and by wider social discourses and structures.

To this end, ‘significant others’, as conceptualised in this thesis and congruent with other studies, may comprise “any individual who is or has been deeply influential in one’s life and in whom one is or once was emotionally invested” (Andersen & Chen, 2002, p. 619). The concept of significant others is therefore based on theories of relational selves, whereby one’s sense of self is influenced by one’s relations with significant others. These theories of relational selves purport

that one's interpersonal perceptions, for example the inferences one makes when meeting new people, one's general social perceptions and even one's self-perceptions, are influenced by one's relationships with significant others (Andersen & Cole, 1990; Andersen & Baum, 1994; Baldwin, 1997; Andersen & Chen, 2002). Moreover, one's thoughts, feelings and motivations may vary depending on relations with significant others (Andersen & Chen, 2002). Thus, 'significant others' may include, for example, friends, family members, work colleagues, mentors, or any other people important to the primary participant.

This relational premise of identity, where the 'I' is relational (Wu, 1993; Andersen & Chen, 2002) raises questions of (reciprocal) acceptance and belonging within the context of feeling 'at home'. Perhaps, then, rather than being spatially constructed, concepts of home may be relationally constructed, as individuals' senses of 'being', their identities, are challenged and accepted or rejected by others. As Wu (1993) theorises, "when you accept me as I am, and I accept you accepting me then I am at home" (p. 194). Thus, in the context of return from long term travel, where travellers have been 'away' from their friends and family for extended periods (albeit perhaps still in contact with them during this period), questions of acceptance and belongingness may emerge, particularly, as mentioned earlier, as travellers may feel they have changed through their travel experience, and pre-sojourn significant others expect them to remain the same (Schuetz, 1945; Sussman, 2001). This questioning of belongingness and identities may lead to concepts of home being renegotiated.

From another perspective, Hall & du Gay (1996) suggest that identities are not so much about 'who we are' or 'where we come from', but rather are fantasised constructions of who we might become, how we have been represented and how we represent ourselves. This approach views the negotiation of identities as a socially reflexive process that occurs within the context of increasing complexity of social life and changing relationships (Giddens, 1991). Thus, an individual may "select experiences that will contribute to the formulation of an identity [or identities] in keeping with her/his self-conception" (Wearing et al., 2010, p. 44). Certainly, as travellers return from long term travel, they may draw upon experiences, encounters and relationships that reinforce their newly acquired self-

conception, and resist those interactions that deny or misrepresent their priorities and preferences. Specifically, they may question their decisions to return and what they want from their life. They may resist collective representations of who they should be, for example exhibiting the same behaviour as their pre-sojourn selves (Sussman, 1986), and may view themselves as 'separate' from that collective norm. Thus, as people make sense of the world through lived experience, 'home' becomes an ideological construct that emerges through and is created from that lived experience (Gurney, 1997; Mallett, 2004).

Similarly, and pertinent to the exploration of home(s) within this thesis, with the return to a previously familiar, but now 'strange' social environment and relationships with influential others, concepts of home and constructions of identity may become blurred (Ali & Holden, 2006). As Bauman (1996) notes:

One thinks of identity whenever one is not sure of where one belongs; that is, one is not sure how to place oneself among the evident variety of behavioural styles and patterns, and how to make sure that people around would accept this placement as right and proper, so that both sides would know how to go on in each other's presence. 'Identity' is a name given to the escape sought from that uncertainty (p. 19).

Thus, as identities arise out of the tension between belonging and division, they are negotiated through the uncertainty that arises from such tension.

Bhatia and Ram (2001) and Hermans (2001) explain this process of identity construction in terms of a dialogical self, whereby "the dynamic movement between [multiple selves] involves negotiation, disagreement, power, negation, conflict, domination, privileging and hierarchy... [as] self-negotiations, self-contradictions and self-integrations lead to various meaning constructions of self" (Bhatia & Ram, 2001, p. 301). They explain further that the dialogical self is influenced by a complex diversity of 'voices', for example, parents, siblings, peers, language, culture and society, and that 'dialogical negotiation' occurs as one moves among the multiple 'selves' that are influenced by this diversity of voices (Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Hermans, 2001). Thus, as long term travellers return to their pre-sojourn social environment, they may experience feelings of

belongingness and division, and find themselves renegotiating their pre- and post-sojourn identities, reconciling the multiple ‘voices’ of their pre- and during-sojourn environments, and, thus, reconsidering their concepts of home.

Bhabha’s (1994) reference to the ‘third space’ may also be usefully employed here. In the third space, established structures of meaning are disrupted, presumed histories and power structures are displaced, taken-for-granted cultural distinctions become blurred and dominant ideologies, such as colonialism, are challenged. Instead, a concept of ‘hybridity’ is purported, whereby identities are continually negotiated through a plurality of encounters and exchanges with otherness (Wearing et al., 2010). Thus, the third space is conceptualised as “a ‘place’ where identity is negotiated and refined, power structures are resisted, and life in its complexity, ambiguity and hybridity is performed” (Wearing et al., 2010, p. 125). Certainly, returned travellers may construct and re-construct their identities and their notions of home as they interact with otherness and as they question and resist the established structures and social assumptions of their pre-sojourn environment.

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter aimed to ‘set the scene’ of the thesis by reviewing the literature and highlighting gaps and contributions in the positioning of the thesis. Firstly, the chapter conceptualised long term travel by engaging with the mobilities perspective. Within this mobilities perspective, long term travel was defined by individual’s intentions regarding travel and return rather than by discrete timeframes. Permanent and temporary migration, Uriely’s (1994) notion of ‘permanent sojourners’, Wilson’s (Wilson et al., 2009b) notion of ‘middling’ types of migrants and traditional notions of ‘tourists’ (UNWTO, 1994) were used as reference points against which to conceptualise long term travel. Thus, this section attempted to ‘widen’ the horizons (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b) of tourism studies by drawing on the mobilities perspective to conceptualise the fluid and dynamic nature of return from long term travel.

Secondly, the chapter attempted to move beyond the physical return and explore emotional and social aspects of return from long term travel. The repatriation literature was drawn upon to discuss the often distressing nature of return, particularly as expectation discrepancies arose between returned travellers and their pre-sojourn friends and family. Moreover, the intercultural studies literature usefully demonstrated the diverse nature of the emotional turbulence many long term travellers experience and the “perpetual balancing act” (Baldassar, 2001, p. 6) that is required as travellers are pulled in different directions by their emotional connections with different social environments. Thus, through the personal lived experience approach proposed by this section it was suggested that new insights may be offered into travellers’ experiences, specifically in terms of their emotional and social return. Moreover, this section suggested that the discrete phases of before, during and after travel upon which many tourism concepts are based may become redundant as travellers bring their experiences with them and as the beginning and end of journeys become blurred.

Thirdly, the chapter presented concepts of home (and homelessness) as important constructs within which to explore the return from long term travel. ‘Home’ was discussed as it relates to identities, belongingness and emotions and was conceptualised as a changing, ideational, and complex entity that is personal and unique, while also being constructed through interaction with others and wider social influences. Thus, the chapter took a postmodern, interactional approach to conceptualising ‘home(s)’, rather than developing a definitive truth. Indeed, ‘home(s)’, being pluri-local, multi-dimensional and complex according to Despres (1991), Tucker (1994) and Mallett (2004), linked to concepts of identities and “inseparable from one’s sense of self” (Williams & McIntyre, 2001, p. 400), a representation of “how we live” (Ginsberg, 1999, p. 31), and influenced by relationships with others and wider social discourses (Somerville, 1997), was proposed as offering important constructs through which to ruminate on the personal, emotional and social nature of return from long term travel. Thus, this section critiqued the spatial conceptualisation of home prevalent in much tourism studies research and instead proposed fluid, dynamic and blurred concepts of home that are constantly renegotiated within the context of return from long term travel. This ‘scene setting’ chapter informs the remainder of this thesis and in

particular the discussion of the returned travellers' stories in Chapter 5 - Creating a Plot (page 231).

3 Creating the Story

This chapter ‘creates the story’ for the thesis by discussing the philosophical and methodological approaches that informed the research design and execution, and reflecting on methodological findings, challenges and limitations. Specifically, while alternative approaches were considered, philosophical hermeneutics, which recognises interpretation as a fundamental element of human existence, underpinned the methodological approach to research and to writing the thesis. Therefore, methodologically, participants were encouraged to interpret their own experiences, and their interpretations are presented in verbatim stories in the next chapter. Moreover, the research was situated within Denzin and Lincoln’s (2000) fifth moment of research, which advocates reflexivity, recognises the possibility for multiple interpretations and privileges the reader’s own judgement in interpretation (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b).

3.1 The paradigm debate

The philosophy of science raises questions regarding ‘existence’, ‘truth’, ‘knowledge’, ‘justification’, and ‘goodness’. Philosophers question what sorts of things exist (ontology), what their essential natures are (metaphysics), what counts as genuine knowledge (epistemology), how we can go about finding this ‘knowledge’ (methodology), and how one should live (ethics) (Maritain, 1930; Solomon & Higgins, 1996). Philosophical concepts underlie all genuine scientific inquiry, whether the researcher is aware of it or not (Jubien, 1997). Certainly, by undertaking social research, questioning, interpreting, understanding and publishing, one inevitably must consider what constitutes knowledge, how knowledge is justified and reflect on the nature and aim of the social research at hand and wider social theorising (Schwandt, 2003).

These general philosophical questions (and their subsequent ‘answers’) provide the guiding principles that distinguish different paradigms, and thus offer a useful place to begin justifying the approach I have taken with this research. Three philosophical questions in particular are discussed within this chapter, namely, the ontological, epistemological and methodological questions. Ethical

considerations are also addressed towards the end of this chapter and are elaborated upon in Chapter 6 – Thickening the Plot (page 284).

Ontological and epistemological philosophies are contested among scholars and are to some degree represented by differing paradigms. Indeed, although some authors use the terms ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ as umbrella terms to paradigms, I concur with Guba and Lincoln (1998) that a paradigm is a “basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways” (p. 195). The positivist and interpretive paradigms represent two extremes of the paradigmatic debate and therefore offer a useful demonstration of the diversity of ontological and epistemological philosophies within social science research.

The positivist paradigm is largely based on deterministic assumptions, whereby the world is believed to be governed by external forces (ontology) that can be ‘known’ and explained (epistemology) through the objective examination of causal relationships (Jennings, 2001). Indeed, the positivist paradigm, founded in the physical sciences, believes the natural world, which includes the social world, is organised by universal laws and truths, and can therefore be predicted and controlled. Taking this ontology further, a positivist researcher believes human behaviour can be shaped and controlled once the causal relationships have been determined (Jennings, 2001). The researcher starts with a hypothesis to be tested empirically and therefore proven or disproven in this perspective. Thus epistemologically, within the positivist paradigm a ‘truth’ can be established through ‘valid’ and ‘reliable’ research. However, this approach requires the researcher to conceptualise the hypothesis in the first instance, and therefore, the researcher is involved in choosing and designing the research question. This negates the philosophy of positivism, which argues that the researcher must be objectively separated from all aspects of the research.

I could have taken a positivist approach to this research, and collected observable or testable facts and made generalisations from these facts. For example, Inkson, Carr, Cameron, Edwards, Jackson, Allfree, Thorn, & Hooks (2004a) surveyed 2201 expatriate New Zealanders, and found that over 90% identified as ‘New

Zealanders' and that about half of these also identified with a second country or considered themselves 'citizens of the world'. Such statistics could be utilised to make suggestions regarding expatriate New Zealanders' concept of 'home'. However, the positivist approach to research overlooks the depth of the 'insider's' perspective. By surveying these expatriates objectively, the researchers may have 'validated' the 'reliability' of their results, but they have failed to capture the deeper meanings of the expatriates' identities. Thus, because of the personal and subjective nature of the research question in the present study, as well as my belief that human values inevitably intrude on the research process, I deemed a positivist approach inappropriate for an inquiry into returned travellers' concepts of home.

In contrast, the interpretive paradigm purports multiple realities (ontology) and multiple potential explanations of a phenomenon (epistemology). Thus epistemologically, rather than seeking a 'truth', interpretive researchers acknowledge the subjective nature of research and seek 'trustworthiness' of data, rather than 'validity' per se (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Credibility or 'trustworthiness' of interpretive data can be established through the level of researcher reflexivity apparent within the research project, through the evidence of prolonged ethical engagement with research participants, through the 'authenticity' and 'richness' of reported data (for example by using the participants' own words or by using 'thick descriptions'), through evidence of flexibility in the research design and reflections on how changes occurred and through the reverberation or 'resonance' the reader feels towards the research (Decrop, 2004; Tracy, 2010). Triangulation across data, methods, investigators and theories can also strengthen the credibility of an interpretive research project (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Flick, von Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004).

Moreover, the interpretive approach seeks an 'insider's' or 'emic' perspective and, therefore, privileges the participant's perspective over the researcher's, as opposed to the 'outsider' approach taken in positivism. The aim is for the researchers to become 'insiders' and experience the phenomenon themselves by immersing themselves in the field (Jennings, 2001). Through this approach, researchers gain an in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon under study.

Moreover, all participants' perspectives are valued equally within the interpretive paradigm and thus, 'multiple realities' are accepted.

Other paradigms, such as critical theory and social constructionism may hold overlapping ontological and epistemological views. For example, like interpretivism, social constructionism (elaborated below) reflects the subjective nature of knowledge, whereas the critical theory paradigm (also elaborated below) sits "between subjectivism and objectivism" (Sarantakos, 1998, p. 40), as researchers seek to effect a change in the power structures that they see as determining the social world of those being studied. Thus, paradigms are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Oakley, 2000), and one researcher may move between paradigms within an individual research project depending on specific research objectives. Furthermore, paradigms themselves need not be ontologically and epistemologically boxed as overlap between paradigms (and the ontological and epistemological philosophies that guide them) can occur in some cases.

Often divergent ontological and epistemological philosophies manifest themselves in methodological approaches and are therefore discussed in terms of the quantitative / qualitative debate (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004). For example, positivism is often linked with controlled experiments that can be repeated across different samples, such as surveys, whereas, the interpretive paradigm reflects a more subjective and value-laden approach that seeks an 'insiders' perspective, such as through interviews, participant observation and focus groups (Jennings, 2001). However, methods are not commensurate with paradigms. Thus, 'quantitative' surveys may be used to explore value-laden constructs, such as emotions, and interviews may be structured and analysed through the numeration of data, such as by counting the prevalence of key words and phrases in interview data. Thus, the paradigm debate is not about techniques or methods, but rather about theories of what can be known, what is knowledge and how the 'knowers' are viewed in relation to what is known (Oakley, 2000).

Within this paradigm debate, the domination of positivist and post-positivist approaches within tourism studies discourses has been critically challenged by

some scholars (for example, Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b; Ateljevic et al., 2007). Specifically, the functionalist approaches of these paradigms have been criticised for restricting understanding of the complexity, fluidity and inequality of contemporary life, and for privileging normative methodologies over creative and divergent approaches. Furthermore, these traditional paradigms have been criticised for ‘stripping’ the context of phenomena under study, and for proposing ‘grand theories’ and generalisations based on etic (outsider derived) understandings, which may have little meaning for the ‘insider’s’ individual case (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Pritchard and Morgan (2007), for example, have called for “more resistance from within the academy to those sites of power, which shore up existing points of privilege and stand in the way of more inclusive scholarship” (p. 11). Similarly, other scholars (for example, Botterill, 2001; Tribe, 2004; Pernecky & Jamal, 2010) have called for greater philosophical engagement within tourism research. These scholars have encouraged researchers to select philosophies, paradigms and methods that suit their research objective, rather than selecting methods in a ‘misguided’ attempt at producing ‘valid’ and ‘objective’ research (Walle, 1997; Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001).

This chapter attempts, therefore, to justify the approach taken within this research by acknowledging the philosophical perspectives that underpinned the research methodology. Specifically, the chapter summarises the alternative paradigmatic approaches that I considered but deemed inappropriate in framing this thesis, positions the epistemological philosophy that underpins the thesis, and presents and critiques the hermeneutic philosophy that informed the research design.

3.2 Alternative paradigmatic approaches considered

Alternative paradigms that were extensively considered in the design of this research comprised social constructionism, phenomenology and critical theory. Specifically, social constructionism portrays the mind as active in the construction of knowledge, as “human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as we construct or make it... [but that] we do not construct our interpretations in isolation but against a backdrop of shared understandings, practices, language and so forth” (Schwandt, 2003, p. 197). Thus, social constructionism moves

knowledge out of the mind of the individual and into the social realm (Gergen, 1995; Searle, 1995).

Furthermore, this paradigm views the human world as different from the natural world. It argues that because humans interpret and construct reality, the human perception of reality is not 'real' in an absolute sense, but is 'made up' by cultural and linguistic constructs (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Thus, social constructionists deny any interest in ontological reality. For example, von Glasersfeld (1991) claims that 'being' cannot exist outside of conceptual (social) constructs. Similarly, (Gergen, 1986) can see "no independently identifiable, real-world referents to which the language of social description [or interpretation] are cemented" (p. 143). Therefore, within the social constructionist paradigm, humans can not know external reality as it is, and all understandings of reality are contextual, interpersonal and therefore limited. Moreover, the notion of 'truth' is a consensus among informed constructors, and objectivity is meaningless unless situated within some value framework (Patton, 2002). Thus, social constructionists oppose the possibility of epistemologically unmediated understandings of the empirical world that reflect reality. They also oppose the view that meanings are fixed entities that are discoverable independently of the interpreter. Instead, social constructionists claim that all knowledge takes place within a conceptual framework through which the world is described and explained (Searle, 1995; Schwandt, 2003).

A number of tourism scholars have adopted social constructionist philosophies in their research. For example, Iwashita (2003, 2006) took a social constructionist approach to explore the significance of media representations on Japanese tourists' image of the U.K. as a destination and their perceptions of the character of the British. She purported in her research that the "tourism industry increasingly constructs discourses about tourism practise, tourist sites and destinations by offering a particular way of seeing them" (Iwashita, 2003, p. 335). More specifically, she argued that "media representations of places entail the construction of an imagined geography of [a] place and its identity (ibid, p. 336). In her research, Iwashita (2006) found that the way the U.K. was portrayed in

non-touristic media, such as films, television programmes and literature, and specifically in the film *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the television series of *Sherlock Holmes*, and Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit* stories, had a significant effect on Japanese tourists' perceptions of the U.K. and the character of the British. For example, *Harry Potter's* and *Doctor Watson's* gentlemanly behaviour was viewed by the Japanese tourists as "quintessentially British" (Iwashita, 2006, p. 69). Thus, Iwashita (2006) found that "images, signs, symbols, fantasies, associations derived from popular culture are... pre-eminent in constructing people's perception of the world" (p. 75). She concluded that popular media can create imagined worlds, which can engender significant meanings and emotions, leading to a desire to visit these worlds to which tourists feel an emotional link.

Pritchard & Morgan (2000) also adopted social constructionist assumptions in their critique of gendered landscapes within tourism discourse. They and others (for example, Crouch, 2000; Crouch, Aronsson, & Wahlstrom, 2001; McCabe, 2002; Saarinen, 2005) have stated that "spaces and places are increasingly regarded as socio-cultural constructions rather than physical locations" (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000, p. 115). Moreover, tourism sites are increasingly being conceptualised as spaces whereby "power, identity, meaning and behaviour are constructed, negotiated and renegotiated according to socio-cultural dynamics" (Aitchison & Reeves, 1998, p. 51). Thus, in the social constructionist worldview, rather than places being subjectively and contextually constructed in different ways by different individuals, they are instead shaped by historical and cultural language and discourses of gender, class and ethnicity.

Social constructionism may have been deemed an appropriate paradigm to examine returned travellers' concepts of home. Such an approach may have examined, for example, the power relations (interpersonal, social and cultural) that influenced (or perhaps dominated?) returned travellers' experiences, priorities and decisions. For example, I may have compared the discourses of returned travellers with those of their significant others to uncover the power dynamics within these interpersonal relationships or I may have examined popular literature

(for example, MacBrayne, 2001; Hotton, 2007; Ihaka, 2008) to explore socio-culturally based meanings of the term 'home' within the New Zealand context.

However, the objective of this thesis was to present a story of return based on the in-depth and personal experiences of the participants in this research, allowing readers to form their own judgements (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998), rather than adopting social constructionist presumptions from the outset. If I had taken a social constructionist view, for example, I may have assumed that concepts of 'home' were inevitably shaped historically and culturally by language and discourses, such as those of gender, class and ethnicity. Instead, I preferred to allow returned travellers to construct their own personal, subjective, contextual 'homes', while acknowledging that socially based relationships may (or indeed may not) influence their personalised concepts of 'home'. Thus, for me, social constructionist philosophies would not have allowed enough of the experiential and subjective dimensions of 'home' to emerge in the 'social' interpretation that would have inevitably resulted from this worldview. Instead, a constructivist approach was combined within the hermeneutic philosophy that underpinned the research design, whereby "'findings' [were] literally created as the investigation [proceeded]... through [dialectical] interaction between and among the investigator and [participants]" [italics removed] (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p. 207). Therefore, although *social* constructionism may have informed some of my interpretation within the discussion of the themes in Chapter 5 – Creating a Plot (page 231), the philosophical objective of the methodology was to take a subjective approach, allowing participants to construct and interpret their own experiences, rather than imposing a social constructionist lens on the research design.

Phenomenology was another interpretive approach that was considered for this research. The phenomenological paradigm examines the lived experience of a phenomenon for a particular person or group of people, in terms of its meaning, structure and essence (Holstein & Gubrium, 2005). As interpretations are often intertwined and key to understanding the experience, phenomenologists describe how people construct the experienced phenomenon in such a way as to make sense of it in their world. Thus, while phenomenologists recognise the subjective

nature of constructed meanings, they believe they can discover the ways that people interpret and make sense of events, and thus how people build meaning. Indeed, while the truth of an experience is unique to each individual within this paradigm, phenomenologists assume there is commonality in human experiences and use rigorous methods to identify these commonalities, or essences (Kvale, 1983; Schmidt, 2005). Thus, phenomenologists generally acknowledge, but 'bracket' their own prejudices, views and experiences in order to discover the 'common essence' of the experience (Kvale, 1983; Jennings, 2001).

Perhaps the most well-known adoption of phenomenology within tourism studies is Cohen's (1979a) characterisation of the tourist experience. In his typology, Cohen questioned the location of the tourist's 'spiritual centre' and subsequently proposed five modes of touristic experiences: the recreational, the diversionary, the experiential, the experimental, and the existential. These modes formed a continuum of 'spiritual' experiences from the pure recreation to "[recuperate] from the strains and tensions of... daily life [but with] no deeper meaning", through diversion as an "escape from the boredom and meaninglessness of routine, everyday existence into the forgetfulness of a vacation", the experiential mode, to "bask in the authenticity of the life of others", the experimental, whereby the tourist "experiments with various unfamiliar, alternative ways of life in the search of a new spiritual center" and finally the existential as the tourist "[acquires] a new, 'elective' spiritual center" (Cohen, 1979b, p. 22). However, such 'grand theory' approaches to conceptualisations of tourism and tourist experience have also been criticised by postmodernists, for example, for their emphasis on tourism as distinctive from everyday life (for example, Crouch, 2007; Larsen et al., 2007). Instead, these scholars purport a blurring of tourism and everyday life. Indeed, they argue that tourist-related experiences, such as gazing at distant destinations and engaging with different cultures, may become accessible within everyday life without the need for travel (for example, Lash & Urry, 1994). Thus, phenomenological approaches such as Cohen's have been criticised for simplifying the complexity and diversity of the social world in their search for the 'essence' of experiential phenomena. The 'absolute truth' sought by phenomenological philosophy has been disputed by the 'relative truths' of the postmodern era (Uriely, 2005).

Nevertheless, I could have taken a phenomenological approach and attempted to establish the essence of concepts of home for returned travellers. Within this approach, I may have interviewed more participants in order to establish commonalities across the data. Alternatively, I may have taken a more in-depth approach with each returned traveller to identify the 'essence' of their individualised concept of 'home'. I would have had to identify and 'bracket' my own assumptions and experiences in order to examine how returned travellers built meaning or made sense of their 'homes'.

However, based on my understanding of philosophical hermeneutics, I question philosophically whether it is possible for an interpreter to 'bracket' their own views in order to 'discover' the essence of a phenomenon. Rather, I concurred with hermeneutic philosophy (elucidated below), which negates this possibility of 'bracketing' the researcher's views and purports that interpreters' (both participants' and researchers') personal histories, personalities, prejudices and worldviews are fundamental to understanding itself. Indeed, I believe that my own experiences were central to my understanding of returned travellers' 'homes', and I have therefore incorporated this reflexivity into this thesis. Furthermore, I question the notion of discovering the 'essence' of a phenomenon (Kvale, 1983), as this implies the possibility of a singular or definitive 'reality', which the multiple realities perspective of interpretive research belies. Thus, I did not seek the 'essence' of each returned travellers' home or indeed a 'common essence' of home across the sample in this research. Instead, I valued the relativity of home, for example, by privileging the personal and contextualised history and worldviews that shaped concepts of home for returned travellers. Rather than a common concept of 'home', I acknowledged the diversity and complexity of the social world and thus proposed more subjective concepts of home.

'Critical theory' was also considered for this research project. Although there are many differing strands of critical theory, critical theorists share a common goal of attempting to 'emancipate' or further the cause of the people, groups or communities they study (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1998; Tribe, 2004). Ontologically, they view the world as comprised of complex and often hidden

power structures, which can subjugate and exploit minority groups (Jennings, 2001). Epistemologically, they view inquiry as a way to change the circumstances of these minority groups, thus, the researcher's values make an important contribution to changing the social setting being studied (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). While the researchers' values are also acknowledged as important in interpretive research, critical theorists criticise interpretive approaches for valuing all perspectives as being equal rather than furthering the cause of the oppressed (Jennings, 2001).

Ideas from critical theory are increasingly being adopted within tourism studies. For example, a critical theory approach was adopted in a number of research papers presented at the recent 3rd Critical Tourism Studies conference in Zadar, Croatia, 2009. Specifically, Gard McGehee (2009) suggested a number of ways in which critical theory may be employed to examine the phenomenon of volunteer tourism. For example, she exposed an inherent contradiction in the power relationships between volunteers and the *voluntoured* (italics added to emphasise contradiction), which could be examined further through critical theory. She ruminated whether theories of emancipation could equally extend to the “emotionally and spiritually hamstrung [volunteers, who]... suffer from their own kind of powerlessness” (ibid, p. 27). She also questioned the prevalence of images depicting the power of volunteers over the voluntoured (for example where the volunteer is presenting gifts) in promotional material. Finally, she critiqued the language used by volunteer organisations whereby host communities ‘lack resources’ or ‘face challenges’ rather than being ‘oppressed’ and ‘exploited’. These aspects of volunteer tourism, she argued, would benefit from a critical theory approach to inquiry.

Similarly, Čaušević & Lynch (2009) employed a critical theory approach as they questioned the role of tourism in creating peace and harmony in the post-conflict tourism setting of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They discovered that as tourists seek narratives from tour guides and locals, ‘social catharsis’ may be achieved and an alternative social construct therefore created. They concluded that although tourism may not be able to make a difference in itself, it can act as a tool to accelerate the process of post-conflict reconciliation, through the social dialogue

that can occur. Ong (2009) also adopted a critical theory approach as he revealed ‘hidden injuries of class’ within the lives of the working class in Macao, specifically boat builders and casino workers. Such critical approaches to tourism scholarship uncover structures of power and domination that may otherwise remain hidden or at least ignored.

While returned travellers are perhaps not ‘oppressed’ in the traditional sense, the emotional distress of travellers on their return was evident in the academic literature (for example, Rogers & Ward, 1993; Sussman, 2000, 2001) and in my discussions with other returned travellers. Thus, I could have adopted a critical theory approach to the research, for example, by arguing for more emotional support and understanding of the distressing nature of return travel within the social environment to which they returned. Indeed, I could have disputed some of the statements from friends and family of the returned travellers, to encourage their greater understanding of the return experience. Certainly, my ‘emotional dilemma’ described in Section 6.2 – My emotional dilemma (page 291) illustrates my desire to ‘emancipate’ and ‘empower’ returned travellers. However, my research objective was not to help returned travellers to assimilate back into the social environment to which they had returned, but rather to understand their experiences of return. Therefore, the hermeneutic philosophy was deemed more suitable to address the objective of this thesis, rather than the critical theory paradigm.

Therefore, alternative paradigmatic approaches such as social constructionism, phenomenology and critical theory were considered in the design of this research. However, the nature of the research objective, namely to explore the in-depth and personal experiences of participants’ concepts of home, and my philosophical worldviews deemed these approaches inappropriate, or at least less appropriate than philosophical hermeneutics, to address the research question. In terms of my philosophical worldviews specifically, my belief that interpretation is a fundamental element of human existence (pertaining in this case to both the participants and the reader of the thesis), my desire to privilege the experientially and subjectively constructed meanings of home(s) as understood from the participants’ perspectives, and my belief that researchers, rather than bracketing

themselves out of the research, may benefit from reflexively exploring the way their own experiences influence their understanding of others drew me towards hermeneutic philosophy, which the following two sections discuss.

3.3 Epistemological philosophy underpinning the thesis

Thus, to explore the deeply personal and subjective experiences of return from long term travel, I positioned this thesis within Denzin & Lincoln's (1998) fifth moment of qualitative research, elucidated below. While interpretive approaches have moved beyond the fifth moment and have now entered the seventh moment of qualitative research (Denzin, 2001), this seventh moment was deemed inappropriate for my philosophical hermeneutic approach, as it takes a more critical theory approach in terms of attempting to "change the world in positive ways" (Denzin, 2001, p. 325). My reasons for not pursuing a critical theory approach are elucidated in the previous section, and may be revisited in future publications. However, the fifth moment was deemed more appropriate for the hermeneutic philosophy employed within this thesis.

The fifth moment approach recognises the possibility for multiple interpretations and privileges the reader's own judgement by suggesting that interpretation be left open for readers to reach their own conclusion. Indeed, this approach recognises that "social agents are central to the construction of knowledge and that the researcher's voice is one among many that influence the research process" (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b, p. 17). By privileging the voices of returned travellers in this thesis, I allow readers to form their own judgements and interpretations. Thus, while I offer an interpretation of the participants' stories, I stress that this is but one possible interpretation and acknowledge that other readers may interpret the stories differently, depending on their own perspectives and worldviews.

Like philosophical hermeneutics (elucidated in the following section), the fifth moment approach also requires researchers to acknowledge their own biases and subjectivities, which I have attempted to do throughout this thesis, while relying on personalised accounts in the participant's own voices to ensure the

trustworthiness and integrity of the research. Indeed, the fifth moment represents the end of ‘grand narrative’, and a move towards specific, situated, local research, using dynamic, experiential, reflexive approaches and a range of innovative approaches to data collection. As Tribe (2005) notes, “reflexivity is not just a self-indulgent practice of using the first person or [researchers] writing themselves into the research. Rather reflexivity means looking and reflecting inwards upon themselves as researchers, and outwards upon those they ‘research’” (p. 6). Therefore, this thesis, particularly in Chapter 6 - Thickening the Plot (page 284), discusses my ‘positionality’ as an embodied researcher with my own experiences and worldviews that have impacted on the study, and my ‘intersectionality’ in terms of my relationships with the returned travellers (Tribe, 2005).

Moreover, the aim of this thesis is to construct a story, rather than to uncover a truth. Indeed, rather than seeking a definitive concept of home for returned travellers, the approach taken in this research was to explore multiple concepts or ideas of constructed home(s) for returned travellers. Therefore, far from the dualistic assumptions of many functionalist approaches (Oakley, 2000), the stories of returned travellers were explored to reveal more subjectively constructed meanings of home(s).

Therefore, by getting “inside the heads and hearts of the tourists themselves” (Wearing, 2002, p. 255), personal narratives of lived experiences are presented within this thesis that allow the returned travellers to speak for themselves (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b). This approach necessarily creates messy texts “where multiple voices speak, often in conflict, and where the reader is left to sort out which experiences speak to his or her personal life” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 411). However, rather than viewing such texts as ‘messy’, I would argue that the richness and depth that qualitative research seeks may only emerge through such often contradictory texts, because such texts reflect the diverse and complex nature of the social world.

3.4 Philosophical hermeneutics

The research approach and methodology I chose for this research are underpinned by ontological or philosophical hermeneutics, which assumes that participants can interpret their own experiences, rather than viewing the researcher as an all-knowing creator of knowledge (for example, Prasad, 2002; Arcodia, 2005). Indeed, within philosophical hermeneutics, understanding or interpretation is not a technique or art (as opposed to classical hermeneutics), and interpretation is not a procedure for understanding. Rather, understanding *is* interpretation, a fundamental element of human existence (Gadamer, 1975; Phillips, 1996; Guignon, 2002) and thus an ontological fact.

Philosophically, ‘historicity’ as a hermeneutic concept incorporates both the present and past understandings of the interpreter, where the interpreter within Gadamer’s hermeneutic philosophy, may comprise both the participant, as an ontologically interpretive being, and also the researcher. According to hermeneutic theory, historicity refers to the idea that our interpretations are shaped by a background of understanding that is “deposited in our inherited language and practices” (Guignon, 2002, p. 283), and that “all understanding and interpretation are guided and shaped by the shared background attunement that is opened by our historical culture” (ibid, p. 267). In other words, our personal and social histories, such as our past, present and emerging experiences, our worldviews as shaped by these experiences and our relationships with others, and our priorities within the wider context of our life courses, provide the windows through which we understand and interpret the world. Thus, the interpreter does not understand from an objective (or bracketed) point of view, but is immersed in his or her own historicity (Phillips, 1996). Likewise, a researcher within hermeneutic philosophy does not transcend his or her historicity, but works from a particular perspective.

Thus, according to Gadamer, “this sociohistorically inherited bias or prejudice is not regarded as a characteristic or attribute that an interpreter must strive to get rid of or manage in order to come to a ‘clear’ understanding” (Schwandt, 2003, p. 301), rather it is acknowledged as a necessary part of understanding and

interpretation, a part of us, who we are and how we understand the world and not something we can free or distance ourselves from. Therefore, understanding requires an engagement of one's biases, within hermeneutic philosophy, an examination of historically inherited biases and an attempt to reflexively overcome those that disable their efforts to understand others and themselves (Prasad, 2002).

Indeed, philosophical hermeneutics argues that as interpreters we cannot free or distance ourselves from our prejudices or biases, rather, they shape who we are and how we understand. Yet, these biases only become evident to us in our dialogical encounter with 'otherness'. Therefore, understanding is produced through dialogue within this philosophy, not reproduced through interpretation and analysis of that which we seek to understand. This philosophical approach is reflected within this research in terms of the methodology, whereby participants were asked to dialogue with themselves and with me as they considered what 'home' meant to them, and in the reflexivity that is evident in this thesis, particularly in Chapter 1 - Prologue (page 13) and Chapter 6 - Thickening the Plot (page 284).

One limitation of hermeneutic philosophy, however, is that it is deemed to be 'uncritical' as it fails to critique ideological aspects of interpretation and privileges individual interpretation over collective discourses and notions of power and social structure (Habermas, 1990; Jamal & Everett, 2004). Indeed, philosophical hermeneutics values all perspectives as being 'equal', rather than seeking, for example, implicit or explicit power structures and ideologies that may influence particular perspectives. "Ideology is a set of social (general and abstract) representations shared by members of a group and used by them to accomplish everyday social practices, acting and communicating" (Pritchard & Jaworski, 2005, p. 5-6). Thus, the hermeneutic philosophy overlooks the social constructionism that can shape meaning. Philosophical hermeneutics acknowledges the importance of the personal history, prejudices and biases of the individual interpreter, which necessarily include these wider socio-cultural elements. However, it argues that understanding or interpretation is experienced from a specific viewpoint, in which prejudices and ideologies are 'legitimised'.

This means that rather than critiquing a research participant's prejudices and biases, they are accepted as a necessary aspect of the interpretation and understanding. On the other hand, interpreters are encouraged within philosophical hermeneutics to 'overcome' unproductive biases through dialogue and reflection. Nevertheless, the critique of ideological consciousness that Habermas (1990) seeks in critical hermeneutic philosophy is not achieved within philosophical hermeneutics. Indeed, Habermas argued that "an adequate interpretive act must demonstrate a consciousness of this fissured nature of [social structure]" (Prasad, 2002, p. 22). Therefore, a critique of ideology, including the possible destruction of some prejudices, is necessary for understanding the self and other within critical hermeneutic philosophy.

Yet, such a critique of ideology requires a period of reflection that the immediacy or 'turbulence' of experience may not allow. Indeed, as the stories told by the relatively recently returned travellers indicate and as Section 6.4 - How I affected their lives: Fusing new horizons (page 297) explains, only elementary reflection took place, as it was difficult for returned travellers to overcome their 'unproductive prejudices' and interpret their own experiences. Therefore, philosophical hermeneutics informed the approach taken in this research; however, as themes were developed through the process of thematic analysis, wider social discourses and ideological critiques, such as discourses of conformity and resistance, shaped my discussion of these themes. Moreover, the thesis explores concepts of home not exclusively in terms of individual constructs of home or in terms of social influences on constructs of home, but attempts to integrate these worldviews in its discussion of the themes. "A pluralism of epistemological and methodological approaches is needed in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of... people's lives" (Dupuis, 1999, p. 45). Indeed, the reality of doing research rarely 'fits' within an individual philosophy or paradigm. Instead, a bricolage of approaches are needed for researchers to explore the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). This thesis attempts to reflect such pluralistic approaches.

The approach adopted in this thesis developed 'knowledge' by involving participants in a significantly different way to other qualitative methods. Instead

of viewing the researcher as the all-knowing creator of knowledge (Prasad, 2002), the approach taken encouraged the participants to interpret their own personal world (Flick, 2006). The basis of each story was participant-produced through video diaries and by allowing the participants to lead the conversations in interviews. Therefore, philosophical hermeneutics differs from other interpretive approaches that argue that human action has meaning that is decipherable by an interpreter, and therefore requires reflection on the influence of the researcher in the research process. Within this thesis, I created a reflexive analysis that offers but one possible interpretation of the stories told by participants. All researchers stem from a particular perspective, standpoint or situational context. The extent to which these influence their interpretations may differ among paradigms, depending on how far they attempt to distance themselves from the research, but arguably, untrustworthy or 'invalid' results emerge if a researcher does not even attempt to acknowledge this influence (Decrop, 2004; Ateljevic et al., 2005). Within philosophical hermeneutics, "meaning is negotiated mutually in the act of interpretation; it is not simply discovered" (Schwandt, 2003, p. 302). Thus, there is never a final or correct interpretation and meaning is not simply constructed, created, or assembled, it is negotiated, or come to terms with, as horizons are 'fused' (as elucidated in Section 6.4 - How I affected their lives: Fusing new horizons, page 297).

Other tourism-related studies that have employed philosophical hermeneutic approaches are rare, perhaps due to the relative lack of philosophical engagement within tourism studies research (Botterill, 2001; Tribe, 2004). One exception is Obenour's (2004) exploration of budget travellers' narratives regarding their journeys, using semi-structured interviews and philosophical hermeneutic assumptions for analysing texts. However, Obenour did not write himself into the research, nor acknowledge his own biases and prejudices that may have influenced the analysis, and instead used a software program to "identify meaning units that had the potential to embody a larger theme" (p. 4). Therefore, this study differs from the present thesis in terms of its reflexive approach to analysis and interpretation.

Other tourism scholars have discussed more theoretically the application of hermeneutic philosophies to broaden understandings in tourism studies. For example, Ablett and Dyer (2009) critiqued heritage interpretation, based primarily on cognitive psychological approaches to communication, for its privileging of the producer's voice to control the interpretive outcome. This approach, they argued, expects the receiver of information to conform with the sender's authoritative message. Alternatively, they suggest that hermeneutic approaches may view heritage interpretation as an "inclusive, culturally situated, dialogical and critically reflexive art" (p. 225), and, for example, may allow the audience to create its own interpretations. Such approaches would create context-dependent interpretations that are open to expansion, acknowledging multiple layers of meaning, rather than simply giving 'information'. Similarly, Jamal and Everett (2004) proposed combining critical gazes with hermeneutic approaches to deepen understanding of the natural-cultural life-world of Yellowstone Park inhabitants. They pointed out that critical approaches have been criticised for revealing problems in terms of domination and exploitation, but rarely making suggestions to mend these problems. They also noted that hermeneutic approaches lack an appreciation of the power-related issues through which human behaviour and practices can be controlled. By combining hermeneutic approaches with critical gazes, they suggested that a deeper understanding may be reached, whereby academics and research participants (in this case, Yellowstone inhabitants) may engage in dialogue and meaning-making about social research and the outcomes of such research. Thus, Jamal and Everett (2004) raised wider questions through this suggestion of combining critical gazes with hermeneutic approaches, such as what is the purpose of social research, and how should one engage in social research to do 'justice' to the topic and its participants? Moreover, Arcodia (2005) provided a useful overview of key hermeneutic concepts. He did not situate these within a specific research topic, but argued more broadly for greater use of hermeneutic philosophies in understanding tourist experiences. However, these studies do not methodologically describe the application of philosophical hermeneutic approaches in empirical studies. In contrast, the following section describes the iterative process that built a 'hermeneutic circle' of understanding (Phillips, 1996) between the participants and me.

Therefore, philosophical hermeneutics was deemed the most appropriate approach to address the research objective of exploring returned travellers' concepts of home. The appropriateness of the philosophical hermeneutic approach was evident in the way it allows and in fact requires participants to interpret their own experiences, acknowledges the present and past understandings of the interpreter (whether participant, researcher or reader) as contributing to that interpretation, and requires interpreters to engage with their own biases and attempt to reflexively overcome those that disable efforts of understanding others. Such philosophical assumptions are important in understanding concepts of home, because 'home' itself is subjectively constructed represents present, past and emerging experiences and is shaped by wider social influences or biases (Somerville, 1992; Tucker, 1994; Blunt & Dowling, 2006).

3.5 Methodological contributions to tourism scholarship

Methodologically, the purpose of this research was to 'get to know' the returned travellers as much as possible and to enable them to reflect on their concepts of home within the context of their return from long term travel. Thus, an iterative process was established to build a hermeneutic circle of understanding (Phillips, 1996; Guignon, 2002; Caton & Santos, 2008) between the returned traveller and me, thereby privileging the returned travellers' perspectives and generating a deep, rich, and 'authentic' understanding for me. Specifically, this hermeneutic circle of understanding was built through an initial interview with returned travellers; a period of video diarising, whereby the traveller chose the scenes of 'home' to film with little input from me, interviews with returned travellers' friends and/or family who had influenced their experiences of return, and a follow-up interview with the returned traveller, whereby I presented a mind-map to the participant as a framework from which to build a shared understanding of their experiences of return and of their 'home(s)'. These methods are discussed in more detail in Section 3.10 – Data collection (page 83). Thus, this thesis contributes to the call for more innovative qualitative enquiry into tourist experiences (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b), by presenting an iterative methodology that reflects a philosophical hermeneutic approach to 'fifth moment' research.

Significant others' voices tend to be incorporated in academic scholarship in an attempt to understand the relationship between two or more parties who are in a significant relationship with each other (for example, Kram, 1983; Kram & Isabella, 1985; Barbato, Graham, & Perse, 2003; Baldassar, 2008), or in order to independently corroborate the primary participant's story (for example, Handmaker, Miller, & Manicke, 1999). However, the approach taken in the present research, whereby the interviews with significant others were designed to build upon the primary participants' interpretation of their experience and contribute a deeper understanding of the primary participants is rare. As 'significant others' were likely to have had an influence on or even shape the travellers' experiences of return, their comfort levels in the social environment to which they had returned, and their feelings of being 'at home' (Brabanta, Palmera, & Gramling, 1990), it seemed appropriate to consider the views of these significant others in relation to the returned travellers' experiences and their interpretations of 'home'. Such an approach contributes to the pluralistic epistemologies purported by this thesis, by considering multiple perspectives of the returned travellers' concepts of home.

An additional methodological contribution made by this thesis pertains specifically to the video diaries method. The video diaries method aligned with the philosophical hermeneutic approach undertaken within this research, as participants were asked to interpret their own experiences with little input from the researcher. Moreover, the visual nature of video diaries offered a depth of understanding and interpretation that other interpretive methods, such as interviews and participant observation, may overlook. As philosophical hermeneutics attempts to capture the participant's own interpretation of their experience, the video diaries approach was deemed an effective way to visually capture this interpretation.

Despite the highly visual nature of the tourist experience, purported in particular by Urry's (1990) notion of the 'Tourist Gaze', few travel and tourism research methodologies incorporate visual methods. For example, Jenkins (1999) reviewed different techniques for measuring destination image and lamented the

dominance of word-based approaches. Thus, a call for more visual methods is emerging in tourism studies research. As Feighey (2003) notes, “as tourism is, to a large extent, dominated by visual experiences we can regard it as being a rich site for both the ‘creation’ and analysis of visual evidence” (p. 78). This becomes particularly important as a growing body of research seeks to capture the experiential nature of tourism (for example, McIntosh, 1999; Tucker, 2005; Harris & McIntosh, 2006; Noy, 2007; Brown, 2009). Given the subjective nature of constructed concepts of home in particular, visual methods were deemed especially important to deepening understanding of the participants’ home(s). However, whilst some researchers have used photographic methods to understand tourist’s experiences (for example, Chalfen, 1979; Albers & James, 1988; Caton & Santos, 2008), video-based methodologies remain relatively scant amongst published tourism research.

Other studies have successfully used video technology to meet research objectives, although with differing philosophical foundations. Thus, video methods may be adapted for differing paradigms depending on the research approach taken. For example, Nicholson (2006) analysed silent amateur home movie footage from tourists in the 1930s Mediterranean to understand how 20th century touristic visual practices have evolved. She viewed amateur travel film as a “visual representation of a mobile world” (ibid, p. 30) as actions and movements can be gazed upon beyond the edges of a static image. However, such footage, like with video diaries, is also limited in its representation of the ‘reality’ constructed by the tourists, as tourists select scenes they think are worth filming. Indeed, although “ filmmakers construct versions of reality by their own choosing... it is the viewers who interpret the material in different ways” (Flick, 2006, p. 240). Thus, Nicholson’s study represents her own interpretation of the involvement of tourist visual practices, rather than trying to understand the tourists’ perspectives themselves.

Using a different paradigmatic approach, Heath and Hindmarsh (2002) used a stationary camera to record medical consultations. They wanted to analyse the ways in which the material environment featured in practical action and interaction between the patient and doctor. The stationary camera approach

allowed them to leave the setting and ensure the participants were less distracted by the researchers' presence in the consultation. The philosophical approach undertaken within Heath and Hindmarsh's study constituted an attempt at objectively analysing a consultation from an 'outsider's' perspective. This differs from the approach taken within this thesis to subjectively explore the returned travellers' concepts of home.

In other examples, Rakic and Karagiannakis (2006) made an academic ethnographic documentary by filming their fieldwork (interviews and participant observation) to record the impact of tourism on Crete. Threadgold (2000) used video diaries and interviews in a longitudinal study on aging Vietnamese women's self-representation. Others have examined, for example, the effect of visual media on tourist behaviour (for example, Dunn, 2006; Iwashita, 2006) or examined through third party photography or videography, such as picture postcards or researcher-created film, representations and constructions within the tourism context (for example, Albers & James, 1988; Rakic & Chambers, 2009). Clearly, video methods can be employed to meet a diversity of research objectives. However, the common feature in these methods is the attempt to deepen understanding by complementing the verbal (transcribed to textual) representations with the visual, as the importance of image in the social world is recognised (Wagner, 2006).

Moreover, although video methods are now emerging in tourism studies research (for example, Feighey, 2003; Rakic & Chambers, 2009; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009), methodologies that give research participants direct control of the data collected (for example, through the video diary method) are rare. Indeed, despite the desired 'insider's perspective' that is manifest in many interpretive approaches to research, relatively few researchers hand over the camera to participants. This may be due to the loss of control and expert status assigned to the researcher, or perhaps because with this methodology the "respondent's account is afforded greater weight in relation to the researcher's than is usual [in academic research]" (Holliday, 2000, p. 519). The first example of researchers relinquishing the control of visualisation entirely to participants is Worth and Adair's (1972) Navajo study. This study offered revolutionary development of

emic understanding. Specifically, Worth and Adair realised the importance of 'walking' to the Navajo people, as the participants took extensive footage of themselves walking from one place to another. Initially these scenes seemed like "wrong filmmaking" (Worth & Adair, 1972, p. 144), but it later emerged as a significant aspect of their culture, "an important event in and of itself and not just a way of getting somewhere" (Worth and Adair, 1972, p. 146). Worth and Adair's reflections illustrate the discrepancy that can occur in interpretation and understanding between participants and researchers, as they initially discarded this 'walking' footage as wastage and later reflected on its importance to the Navajo people.

Similarly, Carelli (1998) has facilitated Brazilian Indians use of videomaking to foster "indigenous cultural and political self-awareness and autonomy" (Aufderheide, 1995, p. 83). Some critics have argued that such approaches patronise the primitivism of these cultural groups and contribute to cultural decay through the exposure to new technology. However, Aufderheide (1995) argues that this research acts as a form of advocacy by placing the culture "in the context of a struggle for political, economic and cultural space" (Aufderheide, 1995, p. 87) and enables participants to experience a revival of tribal rituals.

Such participant-driven elicitation approaches in tourism may also offer significant insights into the minds of both tourists and their hosts, and indeed into their impact on society as well as the impact of travel on their own life. While some tourism scholars have given 'control' to participants, for example, by examining photography created by the participants (for example, Botterill & Crompton, 1987; MacKay & Couldwell, 2004; Garrod, 2007; Caton & Santos, 2008) and using personal diaries to capture tourists' experiences, thoughts and feelings (for example, Pearce, 1981; Markwell & Basche, 1998; Muzaini, 2006; Enoch & Grossman, 2010) in order to capture their in-depth perspectives, few have used a video diary methodology.

In the present thesis, providing participants with the opportunity to record and narrate their own scenes was integral to the hermeneutic philosophy that underpinned the methodological approach in this research (Gadamer, 1975;

Phillips, 1996; Guignon, 2002). Indeed, the video diaries provided a mechanism through which I could capture an in-depth understanding of the participants I interviewed and share this understanding with readers of the thesis. The visual aspect of this approach, it is hoped, will enable readers to reach a deeper understanding of participants than text-based approaches would have achieved. This point is elucidated in Section 3.12.1 - Video versus more traditional methods (page 106). The process for collecting data from the video diaries, the length of time taken and guidance given to participants is described in Section 3.10.2 - Video diaries (page 90). Thus, by (at least partially) handing the 'control' for interpretation over to the participants, as per the hermeneutic philosophical approach, and allowing them to create their own interpretation through video diaries, a contribution to tourism scholarship is offered.

3.6 The research setting

This section provides the background context of the research setting, in order to demonstrate the relevance, significance and interest, that is the 'worthiness', of the research topic (Tracy, 2010). Some of the contextual description regarding overseas experience (O.E.) travel will be published in Pocock and McIntosh (forthcoming).

Between 2000 and 2010, on average 49,107 New Zealanders left New Zealand annually for 12 months or more (Statistics New Zealand, 2010). Statistics New Zealand calls these permanent and long term travellers (ibid). Over the same period, on average 24,475 New Zealanders (or approximately 50% of those who had left) returned to New Zealand annually, intending to stay for a period of 12 months or more, and after an absence from New Zealand for 12 months or more (ibid). Presumably, many of these returning New Zealanders may have created a 'home' for themselves (or at least semi-permanently resided) abroad. Thus, this research is relevant for a significant number of New Zealanders returning annually from long term travel.

Although no specific information exists pertaining to the demographics, for example, age, gender and educational background of these permanent and long

term travellers, the ‘brain drain’ phenomenon has been lamented within New Zealand society since at least the 1980s (Lidgard, 2001; Milne, Poulton, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2001; Inkson, Carr, Edwards, Hooks, Johnson, Thorn, & Allfree, 2004b). In contrast to the mobilities perspective discussed in Section 2.2 - Conceptualising long term travel (page 21), Inkson *et al.* (2004b) describe the brain drain phenomenon as the “haemorrhaging of talent from less developed to more developed economies” (p. 29), and estimate that approximately 0.7 per cent of New Zealand’s population is ‘haemorrhaged’ annually. Furthermore, Milne *et al.* (2001) found in a study of 980 children born in Dunedin during 1972-73 that 26 per cent had left New Zealand to live abroad and 68 per cent had remained in New Zealand. Their study was part of a longitudinal investigation into the health, development and behaviour of this sample of New Zealanders, which examined, for example, qualifications, socio-economic status, intelligence, physical health, smoking habits, mental health and personalities. Milne *et al.* utilised this wider data to compare emigrants to non-emigrants and found that emigrants tended to be better qualified, more intelligent, from more advantageous backgrounds, leaner, fitter, happier, less stress-prone, less volatile and more thrill seeking than non-emigrants. Their findings would suggest, as others have previously argued (for example, Dunn, 11 August 2005; Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, & Barry, 1997; Ministry of Economic Development, 1999; Catley, 2001; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Davenport, 2004), that the permanent and long term travellers potentially creating ‘home(s)’ for themselves abroad are largely composed of young, talented and economically-active New Zealand citizens.

However, some scholars have suggested that rather than “lamenting their departure as a loss to the country... we should be relishing the new ideas, experience and remittances that returnees and expatriates contribute to our society” (Lidgard, 2001, p. 16). Indeed, for New Zealand an opportunity exists to capitalise on the broad and global perspectives of returned travellers, to acknowledge their personal development and support their return (Inkson *et al.*, 1997; Hurn, 1999; Inkson & Myers, 2003). This thesis is therefore significant and relevant to New Zealand social interests as it explores subjectively constructed home(s) for returned travellers in an attempt to deepen our understanding of these travellers.

A key element in the ‘brain drain’ phenomenon is thought to relate to the ‘overseas experience’ (O.E.), and many of the long term travellers noted in the statistics above may arguably be ‘O.E.’ travellers. The ‘O.E.’ is an extended journey undertaken by predominantly white, middle class, young New Zealand adults who travel and work abroad (Milne et al., 2001; Bell, 2002; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Conradson & Latham, 2007; Wilson, Fisher, & Moore, 2009a; Wilson et al., 2009b). It involves young people from developed countries setting out to see the world, often backpacking on low budgets and working along the way (Bell, 2002; Slaughter, 2004; Wilson et al., 2009a). It is a significant life stage or rite of passage for young adults, especially those from ex-colonial countries like New Zealand, where the O.E. has become a ‘cultural institution’ (Bell, 2002; Wilson et al., 2009b), and has been likened to the gap-year undertaken by many young travellers from the United Kingdom (Bell, 2002; Clarke, 2004; Simpson, 2004; Conradson & Latham, 2005c; Wilson et al., 2009a, 2009b).

The ‘cultural institution’ of the O.E. in New Zealand offers important contextual significance to the present research. Since the 1960s, the O.E. has been considered a viable way for New Zealanders to ‘see the world’, as New Zealand’s geographical remoteness makes shorter terms trips expensive and thus more difficult (Wilson et al., 2009b). Its historical and ancestral links with Britain in particular have also facilitated the availability of working holiday visas (*ibid*). The O.E. is now considered a stage of life similar to leaving school, a first job or getting married, and is referred to often in everyday conversation in New Zealand (Bell, 2002). It is an independent, self-directed form of travel that offers a “spiritual journey of discovery of the world and of the self” (Bell, 2002, p. 144). Certainly, for middle class, young, white New Zealanders, not taking an O.E. has become unusual, and almost requires justification (*ibid*).

Typically, whilst overseas, O.E. travellers tend to settle semi-permanently in one or sometimes multiple foreign country/countries, acquire a job and long term accommodation, and establish social networks (Conradson & Latham, 2005b). The O.E. is “a temporary escape from conservative New Zealand, family

constraints, and looming responsibilities of adulthood” (Bell, 2002, p. 145). Similar to other forms of self-exploration through the liminality of long term travel, the O.E. offers an opportunity for sustained self-experimentation, development and identity formation through exposure to, and reflection upon, ‘Otherness’ (White & White, 2004; Conradson & Latham, 2005b, 2007). Once they have exhausted the desire for travel, O.E. travellers tend to either return to New Zealand or settle into a more permanent professional job overseas. Often, their return to New Zealand can be forced by expiring visas or family ties (Inkson & Myers, 2003).

Most long term travellers arguably report express experiencing personal development in terms of intercultural and communication skills, self-confidence, independence and a more global outlook (Steinkalk, 1979; Gmelch, 1997; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Noy, 2004; Simpson, 2004; Obenour, 2005; Zahra & McIntosh, 2007b); skills that may not have been developed had they stayed in New Zealand. Thus, such long term travel can be life-changing. However, as Section 2.3 - Moving beyond the physical return (page 27) discussed, the return from such long term travel can be problematic for returned travellers, as issues may arise such as strained relationships with those who were left behind (Sussman, 1986; Smith, 2002), the need for making difficult decisions about the future (D'Andrea, 2006), and a disillusionment with the social environment to which long term travellers return (Foust et al., 1981; Freedman, 1986). Yet, these turbulent and sometimes traumatic experiences are largely unanticipated by returned travellers (Freedman, 1986; Sussman, 2001). Moreover, assumptions of what home may mean to returned travellers (from both the returned travellers’ perspective as well as a more socially discursive perspective) may potentially exacerbate these repatriation difficulties. Therefore, this thesis may be relevant, or at least of interest, to the more than 24,000 New Zealanders returning annually as they explore their own concepts of home on their return from their long term travel experiences.

3.7 Research parameters and sampling

The parameters defining the scope of this research comprised the following:

1. Participants who were away for more than one year and for up to ten years

2. Participants who intended to return 'one day' (as determined by the individual participant)
3. Participants who had returned between approximately six to nine months
4. Participants who intended to settle in New Zealand at the time of data collection
5. Participants who were New Zealand residents prior to departure and on arrival.

These parameters aligned with the thesis aim of exploring concepts of home for returned long term travellers. As this section elaborates, the one to ten year timeframe aligns with long term travel as conceptualised in this thesis, whereby travellers settle temporarily in overseas location(s) and intend to return at some stage. The six to nine month timeframe is intended to capture immediacy of experience and facilitate participants' reflections on their concepts of home. Although it was not possible for returned travellers to predict their future movements, at the time of data collection, they were intending or hoping to remain in New Zealand, as opposed to just visiting. Returned travellers also needed to be New Zealand residents prior to departure and on their return, indicating a longevity of residence in the pre- and post-sojourn social environments.

More specifically, long term travel was defined as being away from one's country of origin for between one and up to ten years. These timeframes implied a desire to settle in a foreign country temporarily with an intention to return 'one day', in contrast to temporary or permanent migration, as outlined in Section 2.2 - Conceptualising long term travel (page 21). At the design stage of the research process, the context of long term travel was kept deliberately broad to enable a wide range of potential participants to contribute to the research. As Chapter 4 – Getting to Know the Characters (page 122) indicates, the travellers who participated in this research indeed represented a variety of long term travel experiences. Although Statistics New Zealand defines permanent or long term emigration as being resident overseas for 12 months or more (Statistics New Zealand, 2010), and although Milne *et al.* (2001) define brain drain emigrants as being away for more than five years, initial evidence from a study of New

Zealanders abroad indicates more complex dynamics regarding expatriates' settledness overseas, compared with their identity and intention to return permanently (Inkson et al., 2004a). In Inkson *et al.*'s (2004) study, 68% of the 2,201 New Zealand expatriates had been overseas for up to 10 years, 90% identified with New Zealand as (at least one of) their national culture(s), and although 51% considered themselves permanently settled overseas, 44% were certain or likely to return to New Zealand permanently sometime in the future with a further 29% unsure (Inkson et al., 2004a). These results support the concept of a new long term travel lifestyle of boundaryless careers, which is outlined in Section 2.3 - Moving beyond the physical return (page 27). The results also imply that although expatriates may be resident in another country for longer than five years, they may still identify with New Zealand and may return permanently one day. Therefore, this one to ten year timeframe aligned with the long term travel conceptualisation specified in Section 2.2 - Conceptualising long term travel (page 21).

The participants were chosen for this study if they had returned from abroad as close as possible to six to nine months prior to data collection beginning. Although no guidelines exist regarding the length of the repatriation effect (Sussman, 2002), anecdotal evidence indicates that the first four to six months are the hardest in terms of intercultural adjustment, and that expatriates tend to settle within a year (Chang, 1973; Ruben & Kealey, 1979; Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998). Six to nine months is also noted as the period following culture shock and leading into the cultural adjustment phase of the W-curve adjustment theory (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Hottola, 2004). Thus, for the purpose of parametising this research, the 'immediacy of return' was conceptualised as the period of up to (approximately) nine months following the physical return. The six to nine month timeframe for surveying cultural adjustment is also congruent with previous studies (for example, Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi, & Bross, 1998). It was hoped this timeframe would capture the 'immediacy' of the experience, being the period when returned travellers may 'be' emotional and socially elsewhere and when concepts of home are questioned (Storti, 1997; Ahmed, 1999), while also facilitating the participants' reflection on their experiences of return. It was also hoped that this timeframe would avoid the

challenges associated with recollection or memory work (Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Small, 2004), such as the ‘unreliability’ of memories (Onyx & Small, 2001).

Non-random sampling methods were applied (Jennings, 2001), whereby the research was publicly and locally advertised and participants voluntarily contacted the researcher directly. Targeted advertising was also conducted through organisations that maintained a link with the expatriate New Zealand community. Such organisations included, for example, Kiwi Expats Abroad, New Zealand’s global network connecting expatriates abroad, Global Career Link, an international recruitment agency that offers repatriate programmes and seminars, and New Zealand Edge, an organisation that aims to “strengthen [New Zealand identity and foster the global community of New Zealanders [by offering] new ways of thinking about New Zealand’s identity, people, stories, achievements and place in the world” (<http://www.nzedge.com/>). These organisations had indicated an interest in this research and a willingness to support the sampling process. The advertisements advised potential participants of the personal and subjective nature of the research. Appendix I (page 324) contains an example of the advertisement circulated by these organisations on my behalf. I received a substantial response from this advertising; however, many of the potential participants did not align with the research parameters, primarily because they had been back in New Zealand for longer than nine months. In total, five returned travellers and nineteen significant others participated in this research.

Due to the subjective, personal and in-depth perspectives that this research sought, a small sample size was not deemed a limitation to the research design as the thesis did not seek to represent a population. Instead, the small sample size reflects the depth rather than breadth of personal experiences that this research sought (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). As the research sought to understand the ‘lived experience’ of each individual, the five stories captured within this thesis represent five distinct and unique experiences of return. As Marshall (1996) argues, “an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that adequately answers the research question” (p. 523) and participants’ concepts of home were certainly extensively explored by employing the intensity of methods described

within this chapter. Furthermore, the small sample size enabled me to focus on the situatedness and context of each individual story, thus acknowledging the importance of contradictions and inconsistencies between participants (Dupuis, 1999), rather than seeking 'common' definitive findings that could be generalised across a population. The implications of this small sample is that readers seeking definitive answers to what constitutes 'home' for returned travellers may be disappointed by this thesis; however, those exploring broader discussions of 'home' and subjectively constructed lived experiences may find the thesis interesting. Theoretical 'saturation' occurred when returned travellers felt they had exhausted their conversation and conceptualisation of 'home', when they had 'nothing more to say' and found they were repeating themselves rather than adding to their story of return.

3.8 The returned travellers

The five travellers who self-selected themselves and contributed to this study were all New Zealanders, who had lived and worked abroad for between nine months and five years. They had therefore made a life for themselves overseas, but had also intended to return to New Zealand at some stage. The five returned travellers reported diverse experiences. They had lived in a range of places, including the U.K., France, Germany and Columbia. Two travellers were married, one was divorced with children, one was single and one had a boyfriend in Germany. Travellers ranged in age between 26 and 69 years of age, with the median age being 31. All returned travellers had siblings and three were female and two were male. All travellers had been back for nine months or less at the time of the first interview. Table 1: Demographics of Participants' Travel and Return (page 80) details this demographic information for the returned travellers. These demographics were deemed important for profiling the returned travellers in terms of their travel experiences and their family status. Most of the demographic information emerged naturally and in the relevant context within the travellers' stories as well as being captured by the demographic information questionnaire.

Table 1: Demographics of Participants' Travel and Return

Name	Length of time spent overseas	Date returned	Length of time back	Place of residence in NZ	Place of residence overseas	Nature of residence now	Marital status	Place in family	Job	Age	Gender
Kylie	5 years	Dec-06	9 months	Auckland	England, France	In parents' house, parents overseas	Married	1 younger brother	Test analyst Self-employed	31	Female
Simon	9 months	Mar-07	8 months	Auckland	London	Flatting	Single	2 older brothers	Trade insurance underwriter	29	Male
Dillon	20 months	Apr-07	7 months	Lower Hutt	Colombia	Renting	Married	2 brothers, middle	Public servant - education	34	Male
Teresa	2.5 years	Sep-07	6 months	Auckland	London, Germany	Living with parents	Long distance relationship	2 younger sisters	Project coordinator	26	Female
Margaret	3 years	Aug-07	8 months	New Plymouth	England (various places)	Own house	Divorced with children	4 older brothers, one son, one daughter	Retired	69	Female

Note: All names are pseudonyms.

While the O.E. context discussed in Section 3.6 - The research setting (page 72) may contribute to the contextual background of the research setting, the O.E. traditionally pertains predominantly to white, middle class, young New Zealand adults, who either backpack on low budgets and work to finance their travel, or who aim to advance their careers and gain new skills (Milne et al., 2001; Bell, 2002; Inkson & Myers, 2003; Conradson & Latham, 2005a, 2007; Wilson et al., 2009a, 2009b). In contrast, while the median age of participants in the present research was 31 years old, the thesis also incorporated perspectives from a 69 year old woman. Additionally, New Zealanders of Chinese ethnicity were also included in the present research, which contrasts with dominant typologies of O.E. travellers. None of the participants in the present research backpacked on low budgets while working to finance their travel, although the participants' working experiences did vary considerably. Therefore, this thesis moves beyond O.E. travel to consider concepts of home for a conceptually broader long term travelling group of New Zealanders.

3.9 The 'significant others'

The 'significant others', as conceptualised in this thesis, were people chosen by returned travellers as being influential in their lives and/or in their experiences of return. For logistical reasons, in terms of them being available to take part in the research, significant others were chosen only if they were resident in New Zealand at the time that interviewing took place. As explained below, some significant others were excluded from the study for mainly logistical reasons. Therefore, the significant others chosen to participate in this research should not be assumed to be the only people influential in the travellers' lives and experiences of return, or even those who were most influential. Rather, the significant others chosen were those who were influential and available and willing to take part in the research.

Nineteen people were identified by the travellers as being 'significant' in their experiences of return, or in their wider life, and were thus also interviewed for this research. One 'significant other' named by a returned traveller declined an interview due to disinterest in the topic and a very busy lifestyle, and was

therefore not included in this research. Others were excluded if it was logistically impossible for me to interview them. For example, Kylie's parents, although certainly 'significant' to her and her experiences of return, were still overseas themselves during the data collection phase of the research. Therefore, she only chose one significant other (her husband) for me to interview. Some significant others were chosen for their importance in the returned travellers' lives, while others were chosen for their influence on the returned travellers' experiences of return. In some cases, I encouraged the inclusion of a particular significant other, if the returned traveller had discussed them extensively in the initial interview. This was particularly the case if the returned traveller viewed the relationship with the significant other 'negatively', as it was important for me to obtain differing perspectives to broaden my understanding of the returned travellers' concepts of home, as per the hermeneutic philosophy that underpinned the research approach.

Of the 19 significant others interviewed, 11 were friends of the traveller, two were spouses, four were parents and two were siblings. It may be deemed interesting that more friends than family members were chosen by returned travellers as being influential on their lives and on their experiences of return. However, considering the independent nature of long term travel, whereby some travellers are no longer as reliant on connections with family members to achieve a sense of belonging and perhaps rely more on (often newly acquired) friendships while they are abroad (Foust et al., 1981; Smith, 2002), this prioritisation of friends over family members becomes less surprising. Interestingly, no returned travellers chose work colleagues as having 'significantly' influenced their experiences of return, perhaps because returned travellers had not been back long enough to establish deeply significant relationships with work colleagues. Most significant others, and certainly all friends lived within the same city as the returned travellers and were thus perhaps more influential in their experiences of return. Most friends were also at a similar stage of life as the returned travellers, in terms of being single or married. Five significant others had known the traveller for his/her whole life. The shortest relationship between a significant other and traveller was 2.5 years, with the average relationship being 18.5 years. Significant others ranged from 21 to 73 years of age, with the median age being 43. Five of the significant others were male and fourteen were female.

Of the nineteen significant others interviewed, four had never left New Zealand. Of the fifteen who had travelled abroad themselves, seven had lived and worked abroad for between six months and five years, with the remaining eight being on shorter trips with an average of eleven weeks. The most frequently travelled significant others were friends or spouses of the returned traveller. The people who had lived and worked abroad themselves had returned to New Zealand between six months and seven years before the time of our interview, with the average length of return being three and a half years. Thus, most significant others who had returned themselves had returned significantly longer than the returned travellers who took part in this study and had arguably passed the 'here and now' phase of return. Table 2: Returned Travellers' Significant Others (page 84) details this demographic information for the 'significant others'.

3.10 Data collection

Before commencing the first interview, following University of Waikato ethical procedures, I gave participants an information sheet (Appendix II, page 326), advising them on the personal nature of the research. I then elaborated on the reasons for this qualitative approach to research before the initial interview commenced. If participants agreed to continue with the process, they signed a consent form (Appendix III, page 330) and were advised that they could withdraw at any stage until data analysis commenced. No participants chose to withdraw at any stage of the research process.

I completed the data collection process, namely initial interview/s, video diary, interviews with significant others and follow up interview for each returned traveller before I commenced interviewing the next returned traveller. This enabled me to focus on each individual and their story. It also ensured that I refrained from 'confusing' myself by collecting data on multiple returned travellers simultaneously.

Table 2: Returned Travellers' Significant Others

Participant code	Length known participant	Relationship to participant	Been overseas?	Length of time spent overseas	Length of time returned to NZ	Lived/Worked Abroad?	Place of residence in NZ	Marital Status	Age	Gender
Kylie's SO1	5 years	Husband	Yes	9 months ongoing (Englishman living in New Zealand)		Yes	Auckland	Married	32	M
Simon's SO1	4 years	Friend	Yes	9 months	20 months	Yes	Auckland	Single	29	F
Simon's SO2	15 years	Friend	Yes	6 months	3 years	Yes	Auckland	Defacto	29	F
Simon's SO3	28 years (whole life)	Mother	No			No	Waikanae	Divorced, Have children	58	F
Simon's SO4	28 years (whole life)	Brother	No			No	Wellington	Have children	32	M
Dillon's SO1	9 years	Wife	Yes	8 months ongoing (Colombian living in New Zealand)		Yes	Lower Hutt	Married	29	F
Dillon's SO2	19 years	Friend	Yes	5 years	6 years	Yes	Lower Hutt	Married, have children	35	F
Dillon's SO3	16 years	Friend	Yes	3 years	7 years	Yes	Lower Hutt	Married	35	M
Dillon's SO4	35 years (whole life)	Mother	Yes	3.5 weeks		No	Lower Hutt	Married, have children	62	F
Dillon's SO5	35 years (whole life)	Father	Yes	3.5 weeks		No	Lower Hutt	Married, have children	66	M
Teresa's SO1	2.5 years	Friend	Yes	15 months	6 months	Yes	Auckland	Single	25	F
Teresa's SO2	10 years	Friend	Yes	1 month		No	Auckland	Defacto	26	F
Teresa's SO3	26 years (whole life)	Mother	Yes	3 weeks		No	Auckland	Separated, Have children	56	F
Teresa's SO4	4.5 years	Friend	No			No	Auckland	Girlfriend	24	M
Teresa's SO5	21 years	Sister	No			No	Auckland	Defacto	21	F
Margaret's SO1	30 years	Friend	Yes	12 months	9 years	No	New Plymouth	Divorced	73	F
Margaret's SO2	20 + years	Friend	Yes	3 months		No	New Plymouth	Married	73	F
Margaret's SO3	23 years	Friend	Yes	3 weeks		No	New Plymouth	Married	56	F
Margaret's SO4	22 years	Friend	Yes	2 months		No	New Plymouth	Widow	66	F

3.10.1 Initial interview

After the preliminaries of information sheets and consent forms, I conducted an open, conversational interview with each participant to gather background information, set the context of the research, build rapport and encourage participants to reflect on their experiences of return and their concepts of home. On average, the initial interviews lasted for 90 minutes, with the longest being two hours and 15 minutes and the shortest being 68 minutes. Table 3: Returned Travellers' Responses (page 86) outlines the length of interviews with each returned traveller. The data gathered in interviews was audio-taped with the express consent of participants. Interview data and audio on video diaries were transcribed for analysis.

Appendix IV (page 332) outlines the general themes of the interview questions. These themes were broadly derived from the literature, for example in terms of associating comfort and belongingness with concepts of home, and from the research objective in terms of understanding the traveller's experiences of return to set the context through which to explore their concepts of home. However, this format was rarely followed, as participants told their own stories based on what was important to them and their 'lived experience' (Dupuis, 1999). These 'conversational' interviews allowed me to gather 'rich' data, through the rapport that was inherent in the process (Jennings, 2001), as I allowed participants to follow their own train of thought rather than rigidly following a pre-defined interview format.

The aim of such 'conversational' interviews is to replicate a 'natural' conversation as closely as possible, despite the conversation taking place within a research setting (Wolcott, 2001; Silverman, 2006). However, as my main objective was to understand the participants' experiences, the 'conversation' tended to be one-sided, rather than reciprocal. I shared my own experiences if asked specific questions by the participants, and joined the 'conversation' to clarify my understanding of their stories or to prompt them for further explanation, but I preferred to allow them to talk uninterrupted as much as possible. Therefore, the

Table 3: Returned Travellers' Responses

Name	Length of first interview	Length of video diary	Nature of video diary	Length of other interview/s	Length of time between first and final interview
Kylie	75 minutes	6 minutes	Ten different 'scenes' with commentary and an additional three minutes of eight films, in which she forgot to speak to the camera	Ad hoc visits + final interview of 40 minutes	4.5 weeks
Simon	68 minutes	3.5 minutes	Commentary on five different scenes	1 hour	3 weeks
Dillon	1 hour, 25 minutes	52 minutes	15 minutes of 25 scenes, both with and without commentary, and an additional 37 minutes of 26 video commentaries, whereby Dillon was facing the video camera. The average length of these direct commentaries is 1 minute 40 seconds, and include some descriptions of scenes that he had filmed earlier and had not commented upon at the time of filming.	1 hour	1 week
Teresa	2 hours and 15 minutes	4 hours, 42 minutes	Four hours of fourteen video clips of Teresa speaking directly into the camera, the longest of which lasted for one hour and 25 minutes, with Teresa speaking uninterrupted into the camera. The average length of these direct commentaries was 17 minutes, with six of the videos running for over 15 uninterrupted minutes. In addition to these video diaries, Teresa chose to film 28 'scenes' (of which 13 scenes were of the same festival), with a combined duration of 28 minutes.	2 hours, 30 minutes	4 weeks
Margaret	1 hour, 32 minutes	13.5 minutes	9 'false starts' as she worked out how to use the camera, and 11 'scenes' with an average length of 1 minute and 20 seconds.	1 hour	3.5 weeks

Note: All names are pseudonyms.

interviews were, in the words of one returned traveller, more like therapy sessions than conversations.

This approach could be viewed as disadvantageous due to the ‘messiness’ of the text that is produced compared to a more structured interview and the subsequent difficulties that arise with analysis and interpretation. However, the richness of the stories that emerged through the unstructured interviewing approach undertaken in this research outweighed the ‘disadvantage’ of more difficult interpretation, and the unstructured approach also allowed me to build rapport with participants through the active listening and empathic understanding (Brownell, 2002) that was inherent in the process.

Indeed, I tried to listen attentively and empathically to participants in a non-judgemental way. I also shared my own experiences when asked to do so, to demonstrate my empathy with their experiences of return. “Empathic listening allows the researcher to reduce emotional tension by providing a supportive response and endorses the informant’s feeling of value” (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995, p. 102). Therefore, I allowed participants to dictate the direction of the conversation, and responded to their thought processes with clarifying and prompting questions, rather than worrying about my own research ‘agenda’. Moreover, I showed sensitivity to the participants’ opinions as well as their problems, by making empathetic and understanding noises at appropriate times and not interrupting the flow of their story, which enabled me to build trust and rapport with them. This trust and rapport became evident in the deeply personal stories that returned travellers shared with me.

My attitude towards participants and their stories was also an important part of the building of rapport. I wanted to hear their in-depth stories, I appreciated the time they were willing to offer me, I was open to their perspectives and I anticipated these being different to my own. These attitudes enabled me to listen more attentively. While some of this ‘active listening’ approach was consciously implemented, my open-minded, inquisitive and understanding nature also inevitably enabled rapport to develop. The kind of information fieldworkers get

often depends on the nature of their relationship with participants (Sorenson, 1976; Ergun & Erdemir, 2010) and not every researcher would be able to conduct this type of in-depth and personal research. Thus, by clearly explaining the in-depth and personal nature of the research, using an unstructured format, and demonstrating active listening, sensitivity and open-mindedness, I was able to build rapport throughout the research process.

My relationship and the level of rapport I was able to successfully develop with returned travellers and their significant others differed among the participants, leading me to fluctuate between feeling like an ‘insider’ and an ‘outsider’ in terms of understanding their experiences and constantly negotiating my position in relation to them (Browne, 2003; Ergun & Erdemir, 2010), as elucidated below. As Acker (Acker, 2001) notes, “none of us are always and forever either insiders or outsiders. Our multiple subjectivities allow us to be both... simultaneously, and to shift back and forth” (p. 109). Thus, despite my partial ‘insider’ perspective in terms of the returned travellers’ experiences (having lived and worked abroad and then returned myself), I was continuously moving between empathising and needing to clarify in terms of my understanding of returned travellers and their significant others, as differences and commonalities in our experiences emerged.

In particular, various factors contributed to my varying position in the relationship, both in terms of my overall relationship with the individual and in terms of my position throughout each interview (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner, & McCormack Steinmetz, 1991; Ergun & Erdemir, 2010). Indeed, I connected with people on different levels based on our commonality of, for example, age, ethnicity, stage in life and marital status, profession, level of education and nature of long term travel experience. For example, I felt I connected in more depth with the returned travellers and their significant others who had also travelled or lived and worked abroad. In contrast, I was fascinated by the comments from significant others who had not travelled, and tried to reiterate their position to demonstrate the value of their contribution to the research, but I did not ‘connect’ with them because we did not share a lack of travel experiences and felt I had to be honest about my own experiences, especially when asked directly whether I

had travelled myself. In some cases, this ‘honesty’ may have reduced our rapport, because they viewed me as an ‘outsider’ rather than someone who shared their perspectives. Nevertheless, the commonalities along these dimensions tended to be emphasised in the interview setting, much as they would be in a ‘natural’ (as opposed to a research based) conversation, whereas the differences were down played by both the participant and myself, thus building trust and improving the rapport I developed with each participant.

Funnel questioning techniques, such as beginning with general overview questions and moving to more specific, clarifying questions, allowed participants to form opinions on their concepts of home while they were thinking. For example, general overview prompts, like, “Tell me about what it has been like for you to return to New Zealand” initially set the context and encouraged participants to reflect on their experiences of return. I then asked clarifying questions regarding a particular theme or topic to capture data regarding behaviours, attitudes, and opinions, based on the research objectives, for example, “How does the way you made yourself comfortable overseas compare with what you do now to make yourself feel comfortable here?” and “Right now, do you feel like you belong or do you feel a bit lost?” These questions regarding (dis)comfort, (un)familiarity and (not) belonging were derived from theories of ‘home (lessness)’ derived from the literature, whereby ‘home’ is associated with feelings of comfort, familiarity, belongingness, an ability to express oneself and to have that expression accepted by others (Tucker, 1994; Rapport & Dawson, 1998). Thus, by reflecting on what made them feel comfortable and uncomfortable and what was familiar and unfamiliar to them, participants were able to explore their concepts of ‘home’ within the context of their return. The questions regarding who had helped or hindered their return and how their relationships had changed were important to set the context of the significant other interviews, and the responses to these questions provided me with interesting insights into the nature of the returned travellers’ interpersonal relationships.

3.10.2 Video diaries

The initial interview with the returned travellers was followed by a period of video diarising, whereby I loaned the participants a video camera and asked them to record visually and verbally scenes that reflected their ‘home(s)’. I asked participants to narrate their video diaries to explain the scenes they chose to film or to talk directly to the camera as and when they felt appropriate. Returned travellers were given no directions as to the length of footage required, and retained the camera for a period they deemed appropriate to capture their concepts of home (ranging between one and four and a half weeks). The length of video diaries differed among returned travellers. Table 3: Returned Travellers’ Responses (page 86) details the diversity of the video diaries, whereby the shortest video diary was 3.5 minutes comprising commentary of five scenes and the longest was 4 hours and 42 minutes, comprising a combination of scenic footage and ‘confessional’ type filming, as the participant spoke directly into the camera. This diversity in the video diaries is further reflected upon in Section 3.12.1 - Video versus more traditional methods (page 106).

I gave participants a ‘flash card’ with video prompts, to help them reflect on their interpretation of ‘home’ in their video diary (Appendix V – Video Prompt Flash Cards, page 336). The video prompt flash card was printed double sided to A6 size and laminated for participants to use as a guide on what to include in and how to film their video diaries. Based on the connection between concepts of home and comfort, belongingness and an ability to express oneself (for example, Tucker, 1994; Rapport & Dawson, 1998), the video prompts included, for example, taking shots of what/who made the returned traveller feel comfortable or ‘at home’, things/people that were familiar or made the participant feel like they wanted to settle here, things that they could identify with, that represented who they were, or that enabled them to express themselves. These things may have included friends, family, mentors, things that represented their culture, a particular geographical location, a political system or organisation, a memory of their old home, something else from their past or something that fitted with their vision for the future.

In contrast, I also asked participants to consider what/who made them feel uncomfortable or 'homeless'/not 'at home', things/people that were unfamiliar or made them feel like they wanted to leave again, things that they could not understand, that conflicted with who they were, or that prevented them from expressing themselves. Participants were also asked to compare and contrast here (in this case New Zealand) and overseas whenever it seemed relevant to them.

The reverse side of the flash card guided participants on filming techniques like talking to the camera, not removing unwanted scenes, asking permission of third parties prior to filming them, and recording scenes from an in-depth and personal perspective. Rather than trying to 'film everything', I asked participants to use a combination of opportunistic and programmed sampling techniques to record their experience (Sorenson & Jablonko, 1975). Firstly, participants were encouraged to take spontaneous, first impression and intuitive shots based on partially formatted ideas of 'what feels right'. This more impulsive approach was deemed important to revealing the nature of 'home(s)' as it reflected the interests, inclinations and personality of the returned travellers (ibid).

Participants were also asked to undertake programmed filming, whereby the author decides where, what and when to film, and explains why he/she has chosen those locations, times and scenes. The nature of the perspective with programmed sampling is less important than the explanation of the scene. Theoretically, this approach breaks the 'egocentricity' of opportunistic sampling, as it is more ethnocentric and based on culture, background, learnt concepts, ideas and values (Sorenson & Jablonko, 1975). Moreover, while still capturing the interests and inclinations of the participant, this approach takes advantage of the accumulated and articulated perspectives of the filmer and imposes a "comprehensible structure [in the form of explanation and narrative] over the often hard-to-grasp vagaries of human inclination (ibid, p. 155). The approach is limited to preconceived ideas of what is important, which in itself provides insight into the participant's perspective. Therefore, by encouraging both opportunistic and programmed sampling, it was expected that each method would skew the sample in a different way, but that together they would balance and increase the informative potential of visual records.

3.10.3 Interviews with significant others

While the returned travellers were creating their video diary, I interviewed some of their ‘significant others’, friends and family chosen by the returned traveller as being important to them and/or as having influenced their experience of return. I gave each significant other an information sheet (Appendix II, page 326) before our interview began and asked them to sign a consent form (Appendix III, page 330).

The interviews with significant others were more structured than those with the returned travellers, in an attempt to focus the discussion on their relationship with the main participant in the context of the traveller’s return. On average, the significant other interviews lasted for 70 minutes, with the longest being 3 hours and the shortest being 42 minutes. Appendix IV (page 332) outlines the questions that guided my interviews with significant others. The interview questions were designed to obtain an understanding of the significant others’ perspectives regarding the travellers’ experiences of return and their perceived concepts of home and to explore the depth of empathy the significant others might have had for the travellers’ experiences of return.

In particular, I asked significant others questions like what it had been like for them to have the travellers return into their lives, whether they noticed any changes in the returned travellers, what they thought about those changes, and what steps they felt they had taken to help or hinder the traveller’s return. I also asked questions to explore the depth of empathy the significant others might have had for the traveller’s experiences of return, for example, by asking what it was like for them to return from their most recent holiday and how they thought their own return might compare with the traveller’s experiences of return. For example, if they had experienced distress on their own return from holiday, they might have more easily empathised with the returned traveller’s experiences. Exploring this depth of empathy was important for me to gain an understanding of the nature of the relationship between the returned traveller and their significant other. Demographic questions also identified whether the significant others had

themselves lived and worked abroad, or indeed whether they had travelled abroad at all, in an attempt to anticipate the extent of understanding or empathy that the significant others might have had for the returned traveller's experiences. I also asked questions to gauge the degree of understanding the significant others had of the returned traveller, by asking questions like, "How easily do you think [name] settles in a new location? How easily has [name] found it to settle here? Why do you think it has been easy/difficult?" and "Where or what do you think is [name]'s ideal home / lifestyle?"

3.10.4 Follow-up interview with returned traveller

Finally, I conducted a follow-up interview with the returned travellers, whereby I presented a mind-map based on the previously collected and summarised visual and audio data to the participants as a framework from which to build a shared understanding of their concepts of home. The mind-map approach aligns with philosophical hermeneutics, whereby a shared understanding is sought through dialogue between interpreters (in this case, the participant and the researcher). As Kinchin *et al.* (2010) suggest, mind-maps may be used during research interviews to "stimulate further (or deeper) responses and to correct any areas of misunderstanding... [and the] interview process will cease to be productive at the point where interviews are not yielding additional concepts or links" (p. 64-65). Therefore, this mind-map approach was utilised to more deeply conceptualise participants' concepts of home and to clarify any misunderstandings that might have arise from the initial interview.

On average, the follow-up interviews lasted for 74 minutes, with the longest being two hours and 30 minutes and the shortest being 40 minutes. The follow-up interview took place between one and four and a half weeks after the initial interview, depending on the length of time returned travellers needed for the video diarising. In most cases (except Dillon's where logistics dictated a shorter timeframe), participants decided when they had finished with the camera. Table 3: Returned Travellers' Responses (page 86) outlines the length of follow-up interviews and the length of time between initial and follow-up interviews with each returned traveller. Demographic information was also obtained at the end of

the follow-up interview for explaining potential findings of the results and for categorising the profile of participants (Appendix VI, page 337).

I presented the mind-map to the returned travellers with an explanation that this was a simplification and summary of the interview transcripts; that it was by no means a complete representation of their home, and with a reiteration that the main aim was for the travellers and I to come to a shared understanding of their concepts of home within the context of their experiences of return. I invited the returned travellers to move, change, delete or add any items on the mind-map to better represent their concepts of home. Following this introduction, I was silent allowing the travellers to digest and reflect on the interpretation presented, and provide feedback in their own time. This absolute silence was an important part of the active listening process and enabled participants time to reflect on my initial interpretation of their 'home(s)'.

Appendix VII (page 339) presents an example of a mind-map that I presented to one returned traveller on the basis of the follow-up interview. The mind-maps were part of the process of shared understanding, rather than outcomes of the research in themselves, thus, the other mind-maps have been excluded from the thesis so as not to detract from the detailed stories presented in the next chapter. I did not ask the travellers to develop their own mind-maps from conception, as I felt I had already troubled them enough with asking for at least two interviews, contact with significant others, and the video diary. I felt that asking too much of them would damage the rapport I had established and felt it was my responsibility as the researcher to tend to the extent of their input (Ely et al., 1991). I also wanted to ensure the mind-maps represented a broader picture of home(s), rather than a possibly inevitable spatial conceptualisation. Thus, although my knowledge of the 'home' literature in terms of wider conceptualisations of home, beyond mere spatial representations, contributed to my interpretation of their home(s) in the mind-maps, the mind-maps themselves were created primarily to represent the returned travellers' 'stories' of 'home' based on my initial interpretation of the conversations with returned travellers, interviews with their significant others, and where logistics allowed, the video diaries.

All participants made editions to the mind-maps, from removing or adding whole stickers to adding or deleting a term or a phrase, to adding connecting lines between stickers or adding punctuation, like a question mark. The editions participants made to the mind-maps illustrate the situated nature of research. Many of these changes occurred not as a result of my misunderstanding and therefore misrepresentation of the participants' home(s), but rather as their concepts of home had changed over the sometimes relatively short course of the data collection process and as they had reason and time to reflect on their experiences. Thus, the concepts of participants' home were not static, but rather fluid and transitional as evidenced by the changing nature of their responses from the initial to the follow-up interviews. Therefore, the mind-maps were viewed as a tool that enabled 'home(s)' to be discussed, rather than as a stand-alone representation of a definitive 'home' for each returned traveller.

After discussing the mind-map, I asked participants how being involved in the research had affected their thoughts and feelings, and I asked them for a final reflection on what 'home' meant for them. Appendix IV (page 332) provides a copy of the prompts I used in this part of the follow-up interview, with questions like, "What is most important to you right now, and why?", "Has anything changed for you through this research?" and "What does 'home' mean for you, and why?" Such prompts were designed to clarify their concepts of home and ensure I had understood their meanings. Therefore, this part of the interview was more purposeful than the initial interview with returned travellers.

Thus, the research process contributed towards their final reflections on what 'home' meant for them. As they may have found describing their concepts of 'home' in the initial phases of the first interview difficult (based on their presumed questioning of home, as described in the previous chapter), I preferred to allow them to iteratively formulate their concepts of home over the course of the data collection period. By discussing their experiences of return, what made them feel (un)comfortable and whether they felt they 'belonged' in the initial interview, their conceptualisations of 'home' were initiated. This was then elaborated upon in the video diaries, as they reflected further on what made them (un)comfortable, what felt (un)familiar, what they did or did not identify with and

what enabled them to or prevented them from expressing themselves. In the follow-up interview, we discussed a shared understanding of their home(s) (with reference to the mind-maps), and I asked them to finally reflect on what ‘home’ meant for them. As they had had time to reflect on these questions of belonging, I felt they were more able to answer these questions towards the end of the research process than if I had asked them at the beginning, and this assumption was evident in their responses.

Thus theoretically, with the initial interview the circle of hermeneutic interpretation commenced, with the participant doing most of the talking to avoid researcher-led discussions. In the initial interview with the returned travellers, through my questioning, I also guided the participant towards conceptualisations of home, thereby enabling them to start the next phase: The video diary. As ‘home’ is revealed by previous research to be a complex, subjective and value-laden construct, the benefit of the video diarising aspect of this methodology was generating understanding by offering participants the opportunity to represent their own reality through visual methods. This method also provided me with the context to accompany interview conversations, and privileged the participant’s perspective, which is a fundamental component of philosophical hermeneutics and integral to the ‘fifth moment’ of qualitative research philosophy. With the follow-up interview, the hermeneutic circle of interpretation became clearer for the returned travellers as they moved towards conceptualisations of ‘home’ within the context of their return. Although they had not reached a definitive concept of home by the end of our conversations (and indeed this was not the purpose of the research), their questioning and reflecting had led them towards a clearer understanding of what was important to them, what made them feel comfortable, and like they belonged and could express themselves at that stage in their lives. However, for me, the hermeneutic circle of interpretation was only just beginning as I moved into the data analysis stage of the research process. Although the individual participants’ concepts of home had become clearer to me, the wider meanings and interpretations had yet to be ruminated upon.

3.11 Data analysis

Some researchers take a rigorous, organised and systematic approach to data analysis, while others prefer a more imaginative and speculative approach, relying on “the interpretation of data through the imaginative reconstruction of social worlds [and emphasising] the unique rather than regularities of incidence or pattern” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 7). Thus, the meaning and techniques for data analysis are contested by qualitative researchers, as qualitative data analysis is flexible rather than rule-based. Nevertheless, Tesch (1990) argues that qualitative data analysis shares common characteristics, namely, that it is a cyclical reflexive process that is comprehensive and systematic but not rigid, that data is segmented into meaningful units while retaining connection with the whole, and that these meaningful units are derived from the data themselves. Far from being ‘sloppy’ as some critics would suggest, qualitative data analysis incorporates a careful balance of creativity, imagination, reflexivity, intellectual rigour, structure and method (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). My approach began with the more imaginative and reflexive approach as I considered the themes that occurred in the data, and was followed by the coding, indexing, sorting, retrieving or more systematic, methodological and rigorous approach in order to establish the categories and the content of each theme. Therefore, rather than following a classic thematic analysis approach, which is more akin to content analysis (Patton, 1990), I took a more flexible approach in my creation of the themes that seemed important to returned travellers. This approach aligns with the hermeneutic philosophy presented in the thesis, as it attempts to foreground the participants’ interpretation of their own experiences, rather than imposing a researcher-derived interpretation onto the data.

By the time I finished the data collection phase of the research, I felt I had become quite ‘close’ to the returned travellers in terms of my understanding of them, and indeed felt ‘embroiled’ in their individual stories. Thus, I initially found it difficult to view the stories as a whole and see themes within the data, and instead was focused on each person and the individuality of their story. Perhaps this was because I felt it was important to retain and ‘represent’ their individual stories. However, I obtained some much needed ‘perspective’ from the data through

physical and temporal distance from the returned travellers and their stories. Once my constant contact with them had ceased after the end of the data collection phase, I was able to read and interpret their stories from a wider perspective. This 'perspective' enabled me to ask myself, "What were the returned travellers telling me?", and "What was important to them?" (Wolcott, 2001), and thus aligned with the hermeneutic philosophy of privileging the participants' own interpretation of their experiences. The answers to these questions emerged in the form of themes.

With inductive thematic analysis, themes identified are strongly linked to the data themselves (Patton, 1990) and may bear little resemblance to the questions that were asked of the participants (Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, with inductive thematic analysis, the themes are not derived based on the researcher's theoretical perspective, but rather are data-driven. However, I also acknowledge that it is impossible for researchers to entirely free themselves from their theoretical and epistemological views, as data cannot be coded in an "epistemological vacuum" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). Indeed, the idea that findings and theories emerge inductively, "much like mist rises from a meadow" (Dupuis, 1999, p. 48) has been challenged by scholars, who argue that findings are drawn out from the data by those who collect it, and that knowledge is constructed, or at least co-constructed, and not found (Geertz, 1973; Daly, 1997; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this view, "participants are not so much repositories of knowledge – treasures of information awaiting excavation - as they are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 4). Thus, some scholars describe a hybrid approach to thematic analysis, with themes being derived through a combination of inductive and deductive approaches (for example, Patton, 1990; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006), while others take a more philosophical approach, arguing that all knowledge is produced co-constructively through mutual interpretation and interaction between the researcher and the researched (for example, Geertz, 1973; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Dupuis, 1999). Either way, researcher reflexivity is arguably an essential component of philosophical hermeneutics, as the researcher acknowledges her positioning, in terms of the research itself and also the participants, in her attempt to give voice to others

(Hall, 2004; Feighery, 2006). Thus, this thesis attempted to respond to recent calls for more reflexivity in tourism studies research (for example, Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b; Ateljevic et al., 2005; Feighery, 2006; Ateljevic et al., 2007). Such reflexivity was an important component of the analysis process because of the hermeneutic philosophy that underpinned the research design.

“Analysis is a cyclical process and a reflexive activity” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 10) and this cyclical process is evident in the various iterations of data analysis I considered. In the first few attempts at data analysis, I ‘imposed’ what I knew from the literature onto the data, to establish distinct categories that could then be discussed within the literature I had read. For example, I initially categorised each response under the headings of “essence/home”, “transition/lifecourse”, “mobilities”, “identity”, “relationships” and “social/New Zealand”. In a later attempt, I discussed the data in terms of “co-interpretations of home”, “interconnectedness of life and travel”, and “re-negotiations of home”. At one stage, I considered discourse analysis and thought I could discuss the traditional discourses of ‘home’ as a place of security, familiarity, comfort and belongingness and contrast this with discourses of mobility, tourism and globalisation. I thought about conducting a comparative analysis as the returned travellers compared ‘here’ and ‘there’ (i.e. New Zealand versus their recent place of residence). I also considered analysing the stories in terms purely of “understanding the returned traveller” (in terms of their personal story, their worldview and their relationship with others). With this approach, I considered presenting only the video diaries in order to present only their interpretation. However, although these considerations informed my final analysis of the data, I deemed each of these approaches too ‘imposing’ and deductive in themselves, and their consideration reflected my need to stand back from the data and separate my own positioning from the co-constructed process. Instead, I took a ‘step back’ from the data in order to view it as a whole, and considered what I thought was important to the returned travellers themselves, as detailed in the next section.

I also considered content analysis as a data analysis method. However, it is argued this approach leaves little room for reflexivity, and is limited in its capacity to discursively critique or analytically deconstruct held meanings, as

researchers seek ‘validity’ and ‘trustworthiness’ of data through the ‘rigorous’ procedure of constant comparison of conceptual categories (Jennings, 2001). In contrast, thematic analysis is a more flexible method that “can be applied *across* a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches” [italics in the original] (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 78), and enables reflexivity to occur. Narrative analysis and discourse analysis were also considered; however, I felt that there was more to the stories than the language they used, and that what they said was more important than how they said it. Instead, I took Coffey & Atkinson’s (1996) advice:

Our task as qualitative researchers is to use ideas in order to develop interpretations that go beyond the limits of our own data and that go beyond how previous scholars have used those ideas. It is in that synthesis that new interpretations and new ideas emerge. The point is not to follow previous scholarship slavishly but to adapt and transform it in the interpretation of one’s own data (p. 158).

Thus, I chose thematic analysis for its flexible, reflexive approach, and this fitted with the philosophical underpinning of the thesis because it allowed me to identify at a conceptual level what was important to the returned travellers while reflexively considering my own positioning within my interpretation of their stories. Nevertheless, the necessity of interpretation raises questions of researcher power and voice. While I preferred to let the data speak for itself through the individual stories of return, I inevitably had to offer an interpretation of these stories, thus reasserting my own voice over theirs. However, I openly admit that mine is but one possible interpretation of these stories, and refrain from enforcing this interpretation as an ‘expert truth’. Thus, I attempt to balance the returned travellers’ voices with my own in the thesis and hope the result engages and provokes the reader to create his or her own interpretations.

3.11.1 The thematic analysis process

The themes I identified were based on the questions “What were the returned travellers telling me?”, and “What was important to them?” As I reflected on these questions, I realised that the detailed context of the returned travellers’

stories (their personal histories, their perceptions of their own personalities and perspectives, the detail surrounding their specific experiences) seemed important to returned travellers as they described their experiences to me. Secondly, the emotions they expressed, as they considered what was important to them and what made them (un)comfortable, were clearly visible throughout the research process and shaped the way they told their stories and the stories they told. Thirdly, the dissonance or “disjointed”-ness they felt at interpersonal and wider social levels emerged strongly in their transcripts as they relayed their experiences of return to me. Finally, the transitional process they were experiencing at the time of our interviews seemed important as they were considering what they wanted from their lives. Thus, I identified four themes of context/worldviews, emotion, dissonance and transition in the initial conceptualisation of what was important to the returned travellers.

Once I had established these themes on a conceptual level, I revisited the transcripts to refine the themes and establish categories. I highlighted (with colour coordination) passages that related to these broad ideas of what was important to the returned travellers. Many passages in the transcripts crossed multiple themes, but not many passages related to none of the themes. I then established categories as I re-read the transcripts and coded these categories, as the following table illustrates:

Table 4: Initial Thematic Analysis Categories and Codes

Theme: Emotion		Theme: Dissonance	
Eu	Uncertainty	Rsn	Resistance to social norms/assumptions
Ec	Confusion	Rsb	Resistance to social ways of being
Ef	Frustration	Rc	Conformity
Ed	Desperation	Ro	Other
El	Loneliness	Theme: Transition	
Eh	Freedom, happiness	Np	Negotiating personal identities
Em	Mixed	Nr	Negotiating relationships with others
Eo	Contentment	Ns	Negotiating social identities
Eb	Boredom	Nw	Negotiating new/different ways of life
Eg	Guilt, regret	No	Other
Eo	Other		
Theme: Context/Worldviews			
Sp	Personal history		
Si	Interpersonal history		
Sf	Forestructure/worldview		
So	Other		

At this stage, I also established a categorisation of the returned travellers' constructs of their 'home(s)' and indications of 'homelessness', in terms of what they felt made them (un)comfortable, what was (un)familiar and what made them feel like the (did not) belong. I highlighted passages in the transcripts relating to these constructs and wrote notes against each passage in the transcript to identify how it related to each of the categories. I changed the categories and established new categories as I read and re-read the transcripts in order to better represent the stories of return. Figure 1 (page 103) provides an example of this thematic analysis.

However, I later decided that the conceptualisation of 'constructs of home and homeless' were 'imposed' by my research objective, rather than being something that was necessarily important to returned travellers, and was thus not 'data-driven'. Rather, these categories reflected more broadly experiences of return. Moreover, each category within these constructs also overlapped with the themes outlined above, as Table 5: Home/Homeless Categories and Codes (page 104) details.

Thus, the original categorisation of the themes was adjusted to incorporate these constructs of 'home' and 'homeless', but instead of 'imposing' them as constructs of 'home' and 'homeless', they were incorporated into the more inductive themes of context/worldviews, emotion, dissonance and transition that represented travellers' experiences of return and thus comprised the content of each theme. Constructs of 'home' and 'homeless' were therefore discussed in conjunction with these themes, rather than being imposed as themes within themselves. The theme names were also changed to better reflect the categories they comprised, as Table 6: Revised Thematic Analysis Categories and Codes (page 105) specifies.

I then revisited each transcript (with the coded categories highlighted) again as I interpreted their stories of return, drawing examples of each theme from the data and further refining the categories and content of each theme throughout the process. Thus, throughout the data analysis process, I undertook an "ongoing reflexive dialogue" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82) before 'deciding' on the themes and categories that formed the thesis. I reiterate here that this is but one possible

Figure 1: Example of Thematic Analysis

didn't get back to me at all and it does make me feel a little bit more distant from them. You know, a bit disappointed in them really. These are friends that I went to university with in the early nineties and I guess in reality we have moved on in different directions depending on our respective careers. We still meet up every week or so though. Most of them are working in central Wellington, so we meet up once a week, once a fortnight and have lunch together. You know, some of us don't do it every week or fortnight, but whenever we can. At the end of the day everyone is different, I guess, and we are all a product of our experiences. They chose to go down their particular path and I won't hold that against them. I do sort of feel a little bit more distanced from them, because I chose quite a different path to what most of my friends have.

We don't know where home is or where it will be, I mean obviously with [redacted]'s family in Columbia and my family here, there's always going to have to be a lot of traveling involved, wherever we decide to settle down permanently. I mean for me, I slipped back into the routine so to speak pretty quickly. I was working for an organisation I worked with before, they'd offered me a temp job before I even arrived in the country. This apartment we are renting from my parents, we were living here before. So we kind of came back to a place we were living in earlier, like, working for a place I was living in before, which is nice. But it, sort of feels like after those twenty odd months away that I hadn't progressed anywhere, which is quite hard to take. I'd learnt a lot during that time, but still, coming back here, I was back where I was when I left or even I'd taken a step backwards from the position I was in. And the bank balance as well wasn't as healthy as could have been or should have been. But it was also nice with the Latin American community that we became heavily involved with, we slipped back into that as well, which was nice. And also because of my experience with immigration New Zealand and with education agencies and training organisations, a lot of people within

Hf - people - meet up bc we
once close

Hs - shared history until
despite diff worldviews
now bc diff experiences

Lm - missing relationship as it
was before

H - routine
- familiar lifestyle

L - no progress
- step backwards

Hd - helping LA community

Nr - moved on in
different directions
- diff experiences =>
diff worldviews

Np - chose different
path to peers

Rsb - reset friends
worldviews

Nw - don't know
where home is or where
it will be

Rc - need to progress
- social construct

4

interpretation of the returned travellers' stories, but one which I felt represented what was important to them. Finally, I identified an 'encompassing statement' or quote from the data in order to represent each theme and used these quotes in the headings of each section of my interpretation.

Table 5: Home/Homeless Categories and Codes

Construct: Home		Related theme/s	
Ha	Pursuit of meaningful activities	Np, Sp	Negotiating personal identities, Personal history
Hr	Close personal relationships	Nr, Si, Rc	Negotiating relationships with others, Interpersonal history, Conformity
Hg	Personal growth	Np	Negotiating personal identities
Hf	Familiarity	Sp	Personal history
Hfp	Familiar places	Sp, Np	Personal history, Negotiating personal identities
Hfc	Familiar communities/people	Si, Ns	Interpersonal history, Negotiating social identities
Hfs	Familiar situations	Sp, Nw	Personal history, Negotiating new/different ways of life
Hfe	Familiar events, doing familiar things, routine	Sp, Nw	Personal history, Negotiating new/different ways of life
Hk	Comfortable with self, knowing oneself, what one wants	Np, Sf	Negotiating personal identities, Forestructure/worldview
Hd	(Opportunity to) do what they want to be doing	Np, Nw	Negotiating personal identities, Negotiating new/different ways of life
Hl	Like-minded people (includes spending time with)	Np, Nr, Sf	Negotiating personal identities, Negotiating relationships with others, Forestructure/worldview
Hs	Shared experiences with people (includes reminiscing about)	Nr, Ns	Negotiating relationships with others, Negotiating social identities
Hh	History with place, people	Sp	Personal history
Hm	A place to call 'my own', do what I want in it, put my own stuff in it	Np, Nw	Negotiating personal identities, Negotiating new/different ways of life
Ho	Other		
Construct: Homeless		Related theme/s	
Li	Impossibility of a desired way of life	Nw	Negotiating new/different ways of life
Lm	Missing relationships	Nr	Negotiating relationships with others
Lcr	Unexpected changes in relationships	Nr	Negotiating relationships with others
Lco	Unexpected changes in other things / no change	Nw	Negotiating new/different ways of life
Ld	Dissonance with presumed familiar culture/society	Rsn, Rsb, Sf	Resistance to social norms/assumptions, Resistance to social ways of being, Forestructure/worldview
Lc	Dissonance with someone who 'should' or used to be close	Nr, Rsn	Negotiating relationships with others, Resistance to social norms/assumptions
Le	Want to be doing something else	Rsb, Np, Sf	Resistance to social ways of being, Negotiating personal identities, Forestructure/worldview

Lw	Unfamiliar ways of being	Rsb, Sp	Resistance to social ways of being, Personal history
Ls	Unfamiliar situations, places	Sp, Nw	Personal history, Negotiating new/different ways of life
Lo	Other		

Table 6: Revised Thematic Analysis Categories and Codes

Theme: Historicity	
Sp	Personal history - Pursuit of meaningful activities - Familiar places - Familiar situations - Familiar events, doing familiar things, routine - History with place, people - Unfamiliar ways of being - Unfamiliar situations, places
Si	Interpersonal history - Close personal relationships - Familiar communities/people
Sf	Forestructure/worldview - Comfortable with self, knowing oneself, what one wants - Like-minded people (includes spending time with) - Dissonance with presumed familiar culture/society - Want to be doing something else
Theme: Emotion	
Eh	Positive emotions - Freedom, happiness
Eo	- Contentment
Eu	Negative emotions - Uncertainty
Ec	- Confusion
Ef	- Frustration
Ed	- Desperation
El	- Loneliness
Eb	- Boredom
Eg	- Guilt, regret
Em	- Mixed
Eo	- Other
Theme: Resistance	
Rsn	Resistance to social norms/assumptions - Dissonance with presumed familiar culture/society - Dissonance with someone who 'should' or used to be close
Rsb	Resistance to social ways of being - Dissonance with presumed familiar culture/society - Want to be doing something else - Unfamiliar ways of being
Rc	Conformity - Close personal relationships
Theme: Negotiation	
Np	Negotiating personal identities - Pursuit of meaningful activities - Personal growth - Familiar places - Comfortable with self, knowing oneself, what one wants - (Opportunity to) do what they want to be doing - Like-minded people (includes spending time with) - A place to call 'my own', do what I want in it, put my own stuff in it - Want to be doing something else

Nr	Negotiating relationships with others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close personal relationships - Like-minded people (includes spending time with) - Shared experiences with people (includes reminiscing about) - Missing relationships - Unexpected changes in relationships - Dissonance with someone who 'should' or used to be close
Ns	Negotiating social identities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Familiar communities/people - Shared experiences with people (includes reminiscing about)
Nw	Negotiating new/different way of life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Familiar situations - Familiar events, doing familiar things, routine - (Opportunity to) do what they want to be doing - A place to call 'my own', do what I want in it, put my own stuff in it - Impossibility of a desired way of life - Unexpected changes in other things / no change - Unfamiliar situations, places

3.12 Methodological reflections

The following section reflects on the findings, challenges and limitations of the methods employed in this research. In particular, it offers a reflexive discussion of the video methods compared with more traditional methods of data collection, such as interviews, and suggests alternative analysis techniques that may have been employed. This section also reflects on the representation of returned travellers in terms of the difficulties I faced in interpreting their stories, and summarises the aspects of the stories that were excluded from the thesis. The voices of significant others are also discussed, and reasons are given for their explicit exclusion from the thesis, although they are implicitly incorporated into the stories of return in the following chapter.

3.12.1 Video versus more traditional methods

A discussion of the video methods specifically is pertinent in terms of the methodological reflections of this thesis, because the video methods are relatively unique within tourism studies approaches to research. Many of the key points in the following discussion on video methods were published in Pocock, Zahra and McIntosh (2009). However, this article discussed on a more conceptual level what was done methodologically, rather than describing the methodological findings, challenges and limitations as outlined below.

In this research, it was hoped the methods of video diaries and conversational interviews would offer a detailed, subjective and personal insight into returned travellers' experiences. The visual data with accompanying narration was intended to supplement the interview data, while providing a richer, sensory understanding of the returned traveller's experiences. Although visual records arguably offer a greater depth of understanding and 'richness' of experiential representation (Collier & Collier, 1986; Flick et al., 2004), verbal descriptions are needed to make sense of these visual records, as visual methods alone are not enough as they do not 'reproduce reality' (Flick, 2006). Therefore, I asked participants to narrate the scenes they were filming and supplemented the video diaries with a series of interviews. Certainly, context was important with this participant-driven methodology, especially as I was not present while the recording was taking place. I may have prompted with questions in the flash cards, to set the context and help them explore their interpretations of 'home', but the participants decided what to capture within their video diaries. Therefore, the participant's voice was dominant at this stage of the research process, and mine remained a guide (Ruby, 2000; Pink, 2001), as per the hermeneutic philosophy that underpinned this research.

However, asking returned travellers to video their personal reflections may have been asking too much. Indeed, the deeper reflections sought in this research were better captured through conversations, through which I explored and clarified the participants' thoughts. The scenes in the video diaries, while offering a depth of perspective in themselves, did not always obviously extend the deeper personal experiences that were discussed in the interviews and may not have been as meaningful without the interview data to accompany them. For example, some participants shared deeply personal experiences in the interviews, such as difficulties re-establishing old friendships, the challenges of deciding what they wanted from their lives and their frustrations with their local culture, and some participants chose to elaborate on these experiences in their video diaries. More specifically, some returned travellers filmed a place where they grew up while narrating their dislike with what that place represented for them now, while others explained these deeply personal experiences directly to the camera. However, other participants preferred to film and discuss more generic scenes in their video

diaries, for example, their garden, their favourite beach or park, their pet cat, or their sewing studio and chose to explain why they were meaningful to them on their return. These participants discussed their deeper personal experiences with me in their interviews, but chose not to elaborate on these in their video diaries. I perhaps could have asked them to re-narrate their video diaries while we viewed them together, with me being physically present to probe, clarify and encourage greater reflection. However, the video diaries were intended to be used as a mechanism to enhance the interview data and deepen my understanding of the participants, rather than providing the stories of return themselves.

Furthermore, the returned travellers' ability to capture the personal depth and reflection depended on the length of time participants had with the camera, their technical ability, and degree of confidence with a camera. For example, some participants needed more time than others with the camera to reflect on their concepts of home or to film their 'home(s)' within a logistically busy lifestyle. Other participants were not normally openly reflexive people, and thus their reflections of 'home' emerged in more detail in the interviews with my prompting and clarifying than in the participant-driven video diaries. The level of rapport and trust I had established with returned travellers may also have influenced their motivation regarding their video diaries. Some participants preferred to talk directly to the camera, and in one instance to read aloud to the camera from a personal diary, while others preferred to remain behind the camera, filming scenes that reflected their concepts of home, including a-day-in-the-life-of type footage. Moreover, some participants chose to ignore the 'guidance' of the flash cards I had given them and filmed how and what they felt like, resulting in a rich array of diverse video diaries across the sample. Indeed, as video dairies capture the emic (Noyes, 2004), a diversity of content, structure, and depth emerged among the video diaries. Of course, such diversity reflects the qualitative richness of social research and may be viewed as a strength rather than a limitation. This diversity of content and structure is evident in the video diaries presented in Chapter 4 - Getting to Know the Characters (page 122).

Critics of video methods are concerned with the subjective nature of film, as the choice of scenes depends on the film maker's personality, selectivity, objectives

and desires and may therefore be deemed 'unscientific' (Sorenson, 1976). Censorship may also occur in terms of the author leaving out significant information, either deliberately or through poor filming techniques, like inappropriately deciding when to start and stop recording, moving while recording, or selecting an inappropriate focal length or optical focus (Flick, 2006). However, in any research investigation, human selection plays a decisive role. Indeed, "to film at all is to film selectively" (Sorenson, 1976, p. 254). As credibility and 'trustworthiness' are key with social research, "some degree of control... by a person behind the camera is essential if rich visual data are to result" (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 148). Moreover, films need not be artistic to be effective, indeed the character of a film may be lost if the camera is operated by a professional film-maker. For example, "we do not demand that a field ethnologist write with the skill of a novelist or a poet... it is equally inappropriate to demand that filmed behaviour have the earmarks of a work of art" (Mead, 1975, p. 5). Indeed, "the white middle-class Western eye, conditioned by its culture and the intricate technology and tradition of Hollywood and the television screen, is in danger of losing sight of the beauty and vitality of the film produced simply and under the control of the filmmaker for personal expression" (Worth & Adair, 1972, p. 261). Therefore, I reminded participants that the importance of deep personal reflection overrode the technical aspects of filming, and assured them that their interpretation was more important than stylistic decisions. The 'amateur' status of participants in terms of filmmaking ability is evident in the video diary extracts within this thesis and adds to the 'richness' and 'authenticity' of the returned travellers' stories.

Moreover, the researcher's observations, research questions and questioning techniques may be more important than the quality or content of the film produced. Video may sharpen our vision, but "insight is a product of acuity of human perception" (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 207). Indeed, the video diary may add a deeper, more nuanced insight (Scarles, 2010), but the interpretation cannot be made on the diary alone. Thus, analysis is an important part of the research process. Video diaries with accompanying interviews may have been analysed using a vast array of approaches. Indeed, the lack of genuine analytical procedures that directly related to images has been deemed a limitation of the

video diary method (Flick, 2006). For example, the question has been raised as to whether coding, categorisation and interpretation should be conducted on the material itself or in transcriptions, dialogues and contexts after transforming visual to text (ibid). Certainly, in terms of video analysis and the subsequent presentation of video footage, no one technique dominates and indeed there is “no method of interpretation for [video] material which deals directly with the visual level” (Flick, 2006, p. 241), as films are understood as visual texts and analysed as such. Due to this lack of ‘approved’ (Flick, 2006) and definitive analytical method, and because I wanted to approach the data as a whole, rather than separating the visual and the audio, the visual material in this study was converted to text through descriptions and transcripts, and analysis was conducted primarily on textual material. Similar to the extracts produced through interview material for the purpose of sharing the travellers’ stories of return, video extracts have also been chosen to represent the returned travellers. These extracts of the video diaries have been included in this thesis in their video format in order to provide the reader with a deeper understanding of the returned travellers.

To analyse the textual material, I could have used, for example, a quantitative approach and counted the number of times a word, like ‘home’, appeared (or indeed was missing) from the video and interview transcripts. However, this approach would be seeking ‘a truth’ rather than acknowledging the subjective complexity of multiple realities. A narrative analysis (Kohler Riessman, 1993) might have led me to explore the story-telling, confessional nature of the video diary (one participant talked for one hour and 25 minutes in one uninterrupted scene into the camera) and interviews. A metaphorical analysis (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) might have enabled me to examine the meaning of shorter films of, for example, hobbies, people, places and pets in the social constructions of ‘home’. Instead, I took a hermeneutic approach by viewing each participant’s interpretation holistically (that is, by combining their video data with their interview data) to present a ‘story’ for each returned traveller. This approach enabled me, through thematic analysis, to deliver an interpretation of the returned travellers’ concepts of home. The thematic analysis approach is further described in Section 3.11 - Data analysis (page 97).

A limitation of visual methods pertains to the traditional presentation of academic material in printed formats, which precludes more interactive and ‘insider’ interpretations via multi-media formats, such as blogs, documentaries and video diaries. In the current academic environment, the presentation of video diaries may be limited to such approaches as film strips with accompanying transcribed text. Arguably, these approaches lose the depth and richness of the video diary which the methodology originally sought. For example, Simon’s sarcasm in his video “A happening place” (Figure 10: Video Diary “A happening place”, page 158; Video F10 A happening place) is diminished in the filmstrip format as the original footage more clearly illustrates the deserted atmosphere in the pan of the beach scene he was discussing and the sarcasm could be heard in his tone as he narrated the scene. Therefore, the video material is presented and should be viewed as a priority over the film-strip and narrated text approach within this thesis, as it is intended to deepen the reader’s understanding of the participants and their experiences of ‘home’ in the context of return from long term travel, by allowing the reader to hear, and in some cases see, the returned travellers.

3.12.2 Representation of returned travellers

In keeping with the hermeneutic philosophy that underpins this thesis, I have used verbatim transcripts to represent the stories of the returned travellers. This approach enables the returned travellers to ‘tell’ their stories in their own words, and thus allows the reader to ‘get to know’ the returned travellers. My first draft of these stories contained 140,000 words. Thus, the stories needed to be limited to meet the word count requirements of university regulations. I have edited these stories only in terms of reducing repetition for ease of reading and selecting passages most ‘relevant’ to the objectives of this thesis.

It was very difficult for me to reduce and edit the returned travellers’ stories, as I felt that if I left something out that was important to them, I was ‘letting them down’ in terms of my representation and interpretation of their experiences. This dilemma reflects Denzin and Lincoln’s (1998) crisis in representation, which questions the “privileging of the researcher’s own judgement” (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004a, p. 16) and purports “the purposeful use of personalised accounts

and participants' voices to illustrate 'real', lived experience" (ibid, p. 17). However, as mentioned earlier, as the themes emerged it became clearer to me which aspects of the stories needed to be included, and which could be excluded.

The excluded aspects of the stories consisted, for example, of Teresa reading from the personal diary she wrote when she first returned, which comprised a number of hours of her video diary. The personal diary extracts added insight into Teresa's personality and her experiences in the initial phase of her return. However, this thesis, and the stories from other returned travellers, were more concerned with the six to nine month phase of return, when the initial 'shock' of return had passed and broader questions of 'home' and belonging emerged (Black & Mendenhall, 1991). Therefore, this aspect of Teresa's story was deemed not as 'relevant' to the thesis objective as her discussions regarding her 'immediate' experiences at the time of the interview process taking place. The returned travellers also often repeated an aspect of their story as they reflected on their experiences and developed their thoughts (and their concepts of home). This repetition has been consolidated within the stories. Some returned travellers also spoke in more length about their experiences while abroad, which added context to their experiences of return (and are thus included in some instances), but were not as 'relevant' to the themes and objectives of the thesis as some of their other passages. Thus, the personal stories of return have been included, albeit in briefer format than the original transcripts, to reduce repetition and longevity of their accounts, while still maintaining the 'main' messages contained in the stories and thus portraying the aspects of return that were important to the travellers.

I also considered returning to the field in order to 'validate' the returned travellers' stories, as many scholars have suggested (for example, Ely et al., 1991; Patton, 2002; Decrop, 2004; Tracy, 2010). However, the stories evolved and were edited as the themes emerged until the final version of the thesis was produced, and it would have defeated the purpose of 'validation' if I had asked them to 'approve' a story, which I later re-edited. I was also reluctant to re-arouse the emotions they had experienced up to two years prior to the time I would have sent them the stories. The two year time period reflects the 'temporal' distance I needed to obtain from participants in order to interpret their stories. It was not a

pre-defined period, but simply the amount of time that lapsed between when I had seen them last and when I had finalised their stories of return and my interpretation of these stories. I assumed they would have ‘moved on’ from this turbulent and transitional phase of their lives, and was recalcitrant to ask them to revisit this emotive phase of their lives. This decision reflects my responsibility as the researcher to ‘care for’ the participants (Flick, 2006), as is elucidated in Section 6.2 – My emotional dilemma (page 291). Thus, I preferred to ensure the trustworthiness of the data by using their own words in the form of individual stories, as presented in the next chapter.

3.12.3 Representation of ‘significant others’

The voices of significant others have also largely been excluded from this thesis, as the anonymity I had promised them could not be guaranteed. In many cases, their views and perspectives would have been easily recognised by the returned travellers as belonging to that particular significant other. Moreover, in some cases, returned travellers were wary of me talking to their significant others, especially if the relationship was strained. For example, Teresa was reluctant for me to talk to her sister and mother due to the tensions she was experiencing in her relationships with them. Similarly, Simon was initially reluctant for me to meet his mother and brother because of their vastly different perspectives compared to Simon. However, when I explained it was important for me to obtain a diversity of perspectives in order to better understand the returned travellers, and as I reiterated the confidentiality and discretion with which I would treat the significant others’ perspectives, they were more open to allowing me to undertake these interviews. It is a further sign of the trust and rapport that I had built with the returned travellers that they allowed me access to these significant others. It is important to me to maintain that trust that returned travellers had in me in terms of my own integrity, and I have largely chosen not to incorporate the voices of significant others in this thesis, particularly where tensions arose between participants. Instead, I intend to publish these perspectives separately, in a later publication in which the returned travellers themselves will not be identified. However, as this thesis presents such a depth of returned travellers’ stories, I deemed it inappropriate to also incorporate much of their significant others’

perspectives within the same published document. Therefore, I felt uncomfortable including the detail of most significant others' voices for ethical reasons. Where significant others' voices have been included, no identifying information has been included to compromise their identities.

The diverse nature of the significant others' voices in this research also posed a significant challenge in terms of representation. I interviewed eleven friends, three mothers, a father, a sister, a brother, a husband and a wife, as people chosen by the returned travellers as being 'significant' in their lives or in their experience of return. Thus, the nature of the relationship with the returned traveller contributed towards the differences between the significant other voices and the way they 'understood' (or 'misunderstood') the returned travellers. Moreover, the travel experiences of the significant others themselves, whereby some had lived and worked abroad, some had travelled for a shorter period, and some had never left New Zealand, contributed to the diversity among the significant others' 'understanding' of the returned travellers. Thus, the 'voice' of significant others as a group was complex, diverse, 'messy', confused, and certainly not unified or singular, which made representing their voices difficult. I attempted initially to draw together the significant others' voices into one narrative; however, this became impossible as I realised just how diverse their perspectives were.

Furthermore, many of the questions, such as "How easily has [name] found it to settle here?" and "Why do you think it has been easy/difficult?" were difficult for significant others to answer. This difficulty in answering questions may have occurred partly because the significant others may not have noticed a significant change in the returned traveller compared to the person they 'were' (or were perceived to be) before they left. Perhaps the difficulty arose because they often felt uncomfortable representing or speaking for the returned traveller.

Alternatively, perhaps significant others had not considered their own return from holiday in comparison to the traveller's return, although when I asked them to make this comparison, they often found their reflections enlightening. In contrast, significant others seemed to find it easier to talk about their own experiences, for example their own experiences of travel and return, rather than those of the returned traveller. This made it difficult to stay 'on topic', but nevertheless

contributed to the richness of understanding I developed regarding the returned travellers.

Indeed, the significant others' voices are included at a more subtle level within this thesis, as they helped me to understand the returned travellers and to interpret their concepts of home(s). By meeting the people that were important in the returned travellers' lives, I was able to better understand them. Similar to the rapport that a researcher feels with a participant who has shared a similar experience, meeting the significant others gave me a greater understanding of the returned travellers and their concepts of home. Therefore, the significant others' voices have been implicitly incorporated into the stories of return in terms of the passages I chose to include in the individual stories and in the way I interpreted these stories, rather than being explicitly presented as a separate set of voices themselves. The approach taken in this thesis, rather than viewing the returned travellers and their significant others as dichotomous or in 'binary opposition' to each other (Campbell, 2002), views the significant others as potentially influential in the participants' experiences of return and concepts of home. Therefore, despite their voices not being explicitly represented, the significant others' perspectives are nevertheless incorporated through my understanding of the returned travellers themselves. This omission of significant others' voices should not be viewed as a thesis limitation in terms of 19 fewer transcripts being analysed and interpreted, but rather as an important albeit 'hidden' contribution to depth of the returned travellers' stories. In addition, the objective of this thesis was to explore returned travellers' concepts of home within the context of their experiences, and therefore, focussing on the perspectives of the returned travellers was arguably more important. The dilemma I faced in representing significant others is further ruminated upon in Section 6.3 - The ethical messiness of research (page 295).

3.13 'Trustworthiness' of the research

Credibility or 'trustworthiness' of the research project was established on a number of levels (Wearing & Wearing, 2001). Although no agreed criteria exist with which to assess the trustworthiness and credibility of qualitative research,

this section attempts to ‘validate’ the research approach taken by drawing on markers for quality, which seem to be common across many qualitative research projects (Decrop, 2004; Richardson & Adams St Pierre, 2005; Tracy, 2010). Firstly, the level of researcher reflexivity reflects the honesty and transparency with which I have written this thesis. My motivations, biases, vulnerabilities and mistakes are frankly explained in order to illuminate the reader’s understanding of the research process I undertook. In addition, methodological challenges, such as interviewing significant others in order to deepen understanding of a primary participant and limitations of visual methods, are discussed to provide transparency to the data collection methods.

Secondly, the prolonged engagement with research participants and the use of the participants’ own words in their stories enable ‘thick’ descriptions to be presented. These ‘thick’ descriptions contain concrete and explicit detail, which illustrate the complex specificity and contextual situatedness of the data (Tracy, 2010). Therefore, such descriptions create plausible and persuasive findings to be reported. Moreover, ‘thick’ descriptions show rather than tell readers what to think, thus allowing readers to form their own conclusions, and thus align with the philosophy that underpins this thesis.

Thirdly, triangulation or ‘crystallisation’ (Richardson & Adams St Pierre, 2005) across data, methods, and theories also established the credibility of this research (Tracy, 2010). More specifically, the use of a variety of data sources, including multiple interviews with the primary participant over time, videos, field notes and mind-maps enabled a richer and therefore more credible interpretation to emerge. Using multiple methods, such as interviews, video diaries and interviews with friends and family of the primary participant overcame the limitations of each individual method to create more dependable information from which an interpretation could be drawn. Although limitations of the video diary and significant other interviews are discussed in Section 3.12 - Methodological reflections (page 106), these limitations did not effectively devalue the thesis content, but rather enriched the thesis through the reflexivity that ensued. Indeed, the flexibility in research approach enhances the credibility of the research, as the methods offered a different contribution to what was originally anticipated. More

specifically, the original methodological design was perhaps too concerned with finding a definitive truth or concept of home that could be represented by a video diary and enhanced by the returned travellers' significant others' perspectives. Instead, as the data emerged, a more accommodating approach was undertaken, which valued the individual story over the search for (definitive) concepts of home. Such flexibility in research accompanied by honest and transparent reflexivity is necessary to ensure the credibility of the data presented (Ely et al., 1991). Moreover, the use of multiple theories and perspectives, such as theories of mobilities, migration, identity, place attachment and repatriation, from a variety of disciplines and fields of study, such as geography, psychology, sociology, intercultural studies and communication studies, created a more credible interpretation of the data and therefore enhanced the trustworthiness of the thesis.

The multivocality of data also enhanced its trustworthiness (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Decrop, 2004). Multivocality of data means seeking and attending to multiple and varied voices, and in particular, exploring viewpoints that differ from the majority or the researcher's own view. Section 6.1- My 'entanglements' in understanding returned travellers' historicity (page 285) reflects on the discrepancies and discords I felt with participants, which contributed to my understanding of their experiences and interpretation of their stories. Such reflexivity enhances the trustworthiness of the thesis as it shifts from "studying them to studying us" [italics removed] (Tracy, 2010, p. 844).

The significance or contribution of the research also enhanced its credibility (Tracy, 2010). The worthiness of the topic in terms of relevance, significance and interest or 'resonance' with the reader (Decrop, 2004) was established in Section 3.6 - The research setting (page 72) in terms of the extent of long term travellers returning to New Zealand and the importance in New Zealand society of understanding their experiences of return. The methodological contributions of the thesis were discussed in Section 3.5 - Methodological contributions to tourism scholarship (page 67) in terms of interviewing significant others in order to understand a primary participant, utilising visual methods to understand subjectively constructed concepts of home and relinquishing 'control' to participants, thereby allowing them to interpret their own experiences. The thesis'

conceptual contributions are outlined in Section 7.2 - Contribution of this thesis (page 310), particularly the contributions to philosophical ‘framings’ in tourism studies (Tribe, 2009) in terms of moving beyond dualistic concepts of ‘home’ and ‘away’ and exploring instead the social and emotional aspects of subjectively constructed home(s).

Finally, the ethical reflections apparent in the thesis enhance the credibility of the research. Indeed, the adherence to University of Waikato ethical procedures, such as ensuring confidentiality and offering participants the chance to withdraw from the research, leads to more credible data. Moreover, the flexible approach to reporting the findings, and in particular the difficult decision to not expose the significant others’ voices, reflect a situational ethic (Tillmann-Healy, 2003, p. 735). This situational ethic recognises that each circumstance is different and that researchers must reflect on and critique each decision made (ibid). Therefore, I questioned the potential harms of certain reporting methods and decisions, and reflected on how to expose the data for each situation. The inclusion of video diaries and the stories told in participants’ own words also reflect this situational ethic. Furthermore, the relational ethic that is particularly reflected upon in Section 6.2 – My emotional dilemma (page 291) illustrates the caring, emotional and connected nature of my relationships with participants. With relational ethics, researchers are “mindful of their character, actions, and consequences on others” (Tracy, 2010) and therefore respect and reciprocate with participants as part of the research process. My reciprocity with participants is described throughout the thesis as I built trust and rapport with them. Thus, the trustworthiness and credibility of this research has been established on a number of levels in order to ‘validate’ the research in the readers’ eyes.

3.14 Further ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee, as this research involved human subjects. I explained to all participants that their responses and all related data was confidential. No participant’s name has been mentioned in any section of the thesis; pseudonyms have been given to each participant and names are not written on tapes or any

accompanying documentation. Participants were encouraged to share personal and in-depth experiences, within the initial message sent to potential participants (Appendix I, page 324), in the information sheets (in Appendix II, page 326) and in conversations with me. Participants voluntarily took part in the research and were offered the opportunity to withdraw at any stage up until data analysis began. Therefore, participants contributed the personal stories that comprise this thesis on a voluntary basis.

The sharing of such deeply personal experiences, however, whether through interview conversations or video diarising, inevitably raises ethical considerations in terms of the researcher's responsibility towards participants that are not covered within university ethics forms. For example, some participants disclosed negative emotional aspects of 'home' with which they was still coming to terms, and for which I felt they perhaps needed professional support, because of the unexpected nature of these aspects of their experiences. However, not being trained as a counsellor or therapist, and being a supposedly 'objective' researcher, I felt unable to offer them the support or guidance they needed. Some scholars have used poetry to explore the lived experience of conducting research (Tracy, 2010, p. 847), and I chose to use poetry as a therapeutic way to emote the struggles I faced conducting this deeply personal type of research. For example, at times, I felt I had 'failed' the participants by not being able to counsel them as the poem entitled "How can I help?" in Appendix VIII – Emotive poetry (page 340). This ethical dilemma is further elucidated in Section 6.2 - My emotional dilemma (page 291). The way I dealt with them sharing their personal experiences is also further ruminated on in Section 6.1 - My 'entanglements' in understanding returned travellers' historicity (page 285) and in Section 6.2 - My emotional dilemma (page 291). Reflections on taking a poetry approach to emote my 'dilemma' are also discussed in Section 6.2– My emotional dilemma (page 291). Questions of trustworthiness and credibility in terms of my relationships with the participants are also discussed in Section 6.1 - My 'entanglements' in understanding returned travellers' historicity (page 285).

Ethical considerations regarding video diarising, in particular, comprised the filming of life circumstances that were completely personal, the privacy of the

informant and confidentiality of data and the risk of the informant videoing third parties in private spaces. All returned travellers signed a consent form (Appendix III, page 330) to approve the publication of their video material. This consent form referred to an information sheet (Appendix II, page 326) that they had read prior to commencing the video diaries, which clearly indicated that footage may be used in film-strip like publications. Separate consent via email was obtained by the two returned travellers who spoke directly into the camera to ensure they approved the inclusion of their faces in publications relating to this research, and therefore this footage has been included in the thesis.

Authors of the video diary were also asked to ensure they obtained verbal consent from any third parties appearing in their film (excluding those filmed in public spaces), and signed a consent form to this extent (Appendix III, page 330). While they may have obtained this consent, scenes that captured third parties have been removed from the thesis for privacy reasons. In some cases, the participant's narrative remains in the textual version of the thesis, but the footage has been removed from the accompanying video.

In addition, I had no 'control' over the footage that is taken with video diaries. For example, one returned traveller chose to film herself driving a car to illustrate the importance to her of independence and freedom that driving represented. Clearly, filming while driving potentially endangered this participant, but by the time I had discovered what she had done, it was too late for me to do anything about it.

Only my supervisors and I had the opportunity to view the full video diaries as part of the research process. Returned travellers were offered a copy of their own video by me. Most accepted this offer and a DVD was sent to the returned travellers. In addition, an extensive 'paper trail' was created in terms of interview transcripts and video files, which are stored on a personal computer. A log-in is needed to access these files and the computer is stored in a locked room. Nevertheless, the data would be available for retrieval were the trustworthiness of the data to be questioned.

3.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter has specified the philosophy and methodology that informed the research design of this research. Specifically, philosophical hermeneutics, with its assumption that participants can interpret their own experiences, informed the methodological design. The methods, comprising multiple interviews with the returned travellers, video diaries, and interviews with friends and family members identified by the returned travellers as being ‘significant’ to them or influential in their experiences of return, formed the basis of the data collection. Thematic analysis was then used to identify themes and categories through which the data could be interpreted and discussed.

The detailed methods of data collection and analysis have also been described and reflected upon within this chapter, and the methodological contributions to tourism scholarship have been highlighted. Specifically, handing ‘control’ of data creation over to participants, and the use of video diaries, multiple interviewing with a primary participant, and inclusion of significant others’ voices in order to deepen the understanding of the primary participant were reflected upon. Reflexivity was also an important aspect of this research and were ruminated upon within this chapter, particularly in the representation of returned travellers and representation of significant others sections. This ‘crisis of representation’ is further reflected upon in Chapter 6 - Thickening the Plot (page 284). Whereas this chapter discussed the approach taken in this research, the following chapter introduces the returned travellers, allowing the reader to ‘get to know’ them by presenting their individual stories of return.

4 Getting to Know the Characters

This section introduces the returned travellers to the reader by presenting their stories of return in their own words, thus allowing the reader to ‘get to know’ them. Each story represents the key points that seemed to me to be important to each returned traveller at the time of our conversations. The stories themselves, while perceivably ‘rambling’ in places and not always obviously linked to concepts of home as traditionally defined, offer a richness and diversity of context that indeed informs the broader, more complex perspectives of ‘home’ discussed in Section 2.4 - Presenting ‘home’ as an important construct in experiences of return (page 36). Indeed, the obscure, confused, non-evident aspects of a story, those that disrupt the research project, are just as vital to the discussion as the more obvious descriptions of home (Cary, 1999). Moreover, the depth and extent of these stories is necessary to engage a multi-dimensional perspective, which a briefer discussion (both at the point of data collection and on its reporting) would not have captured. This approach aligns with hermeneutic philosophy as returned travellers have been ‘allowed’ to interpret their own experiences through the stories presented in this chapter. I have retained the conversational format within these stories to maintain as much of the traveller’s original script as possible, while also attempting to ensure ease of comprehension for the reader. Thus, the stories reflect the ‘natural’ flow of conversations (Wolcott, 2001; Silverman, 2006), and consequently, while the structure of some sentences may be grammatically incorrect, they remain legible.

Video diary extracts are incorporated into the wider stories of return. While these video diaries may conceivably ‘interrupt’ the detailed stories of return, they offer an important ‘richness’ to the stories (particularly when viewed directly rather than through the textual transcriptions) and enable the reader to better understand the returned travellers. Indeed, the video footage offers a depth of understanding that the textual versions of the video diaries, as presented in this chapter, fail to capture, as the reader encounters non-textual aspects of the returned travellers’ stories, for example, tone, pitch, silences and in some cases facial expressions. This is an important aspect of the philosophy of the thesis, which encourages the

reader to ‘get to know’ the participants and therefore better understand their stories. Therefore, readers are encouraged to view the accompanying video footage (by referring to attached video files) at the point they encounter each video diary extract within the written text, rather than simply reading the text itself. It should be noted that not all video diary extracts within this chapter are included in the accompanying video files, for anonymity reasons. Therefore, readers are encouraged to follow the text and refer to the relevant video files as they encounter the video diaries within each story. Alternatively, if watching the video diaries while reading the text is logistically impossible, readers are encouraged to view all video files at the end of their reading of this chapter. In total, the video diary extracts presented within this chapter last for 38 minutes, with the longest scene being 4 minutes and 43 seconds and the average video length being 68 seconds.

4.1 Introducing Kylie

The following table specifies Kylie’s demographic information as a point of reference for the reader:

Table 7: Kylie's Demographic Information

Length of time spent overseas	Date returned	Length of time back	Place of residence in NZ	Place of residence overseas	Nature of residence now
5 years	Dec-06	9 months	Auckland	U.K., France	In parents house, parents overseas
Marital status	Place in family	Job	Age	Gender	
Married	1 younger brother	Test Analyst Self-employed	31	Female	

4.1.1 “Suddenly I was living there”

I would say my favourite place that I lived was Paris. It was my favourite place because I felt really free there. I just felt I had everything there. I had my little studio which was really nice, my husband came, and we had a lot of fun there, it was just a really nice time for us. My least favourite place was Gilford where we

lived for three months when we came back from France. The work situation, managing a hotel, was not what I thought it would be and we lived in a tiny apartment in the hotel. It was really, really small and it just wasn't a good time for us. Also my husband was really ill at the time. It just didn't feel right. In Paris, the apartment was right up in the top floor and we could see the Eiffel Tower, and at night the lights from the Eiffel Tower would make a pattern on the wall and it was all, you know, the kind of quintessential experience we were having. I don't know, it was just a really good time. Then, coming back to Surrey, to this horrible hotel, it was like, "Oh my God." Also, you don't have the challenge of living in another language. I find it quite exhilarating to live in another language, and then to come back to the U.K., it's like, *disappointed* "Oh ok." I suppose it had a lot to do with George being really ill, that was really horrible. It probably just all compounded, you know, like, he was really sick, and the job wasn't good.

It was better once we moved to London. We had a nice apartment and it really felt like we had a little home. It felt like my O.E. was over. Suddenly I was living there, which I hadn't felt before. I'd always just felt really transient. Suddenly here I was, and I had these English in-laws and somewhere to go at Christmas and English friends, and suddenly it was like my O.E. was finished, I was in it. Whereas in France, I was an interloper. But in London, we were living in Wapping, my parents were just down the road at their apartment in Wapping, and that was the draw card of living, like, it's a really nice place, Wapping, and it's really quiet. That was, I suppose, another a draw card, living really close to my parents, so I felt like we had my parents and his parents, yeah, and suddenly you have got a place. Suddenly I did start to feel more permanent, so I started to buy things that I'd wanted for a long time, but I hadn't bought. I really like baking, so I brought baking equipment which is quite important to me. So when we moved to

Wapping and then I baked all the time, *laughing* I'm obsessed with it *laughing*.

We left England to come back here to start a family, you know, to settle down. We thought we might buy a house, but I suppose the big thing for me was having children, I really didn't want to do that in England, so that's probably why I came back. Then, for my husband he was really keen to come here, he had been here and really enjoyed it and he just wanted something different. But it's weird, it's really weird, because we are living in my parent's house without them being here. We live with my brother and he has a child. So we have the family, and that is another reason, I guess, for me to come back, to be with my brother. He has been on his own for five years, so it's good for him, like, it's nice to be with family. So I guess I do have family here, but without my parents here, it is weird. It's ok, it's just strange. It just feels like we are squatting in a way, and the house is not what I left, a lot of things have changed, like, I grew up here, but it's completely different. It's in a state of disrepair for one, and there's not much we can do about it, because Mum and Dad are going to gut it when they come home.

So it has taken me ages, probably until the last four weeks, until I've really started to feel like, "Ok I'm back." Whereas before, I didn't put my stuff away, we had all our stuff in boxes for about six months and I didn't feel like putting any of it away. But in the last few weeks I have gone part time at my job and I get two days a week to do my own thing, so that's is good. I can do my own business. So then I started to feel like, "Oh yeah, ok, I am actually living here now." Because that had been what I wanted to do all along, I wanted to get into my own business, but it didn't happen, and I was probably all 'angsty' about being back, and you know all that kind of thing, it just didn't happen. Then I thought, "Right,

I'm going to do something." So after I made that decision, I suddenly thought. "Ok, I live here now." Then I put my stuff away *laughing*. Then I made more of an effort probably to make our house look, to make us feel at home.

4.1.2 "I don't feel like a bonafide New Zealander"

My family are not what you might say are typical New Zealanders. My parents have never really struck me as what you'd call Kiwis, like they don't watch rugby, I don't know, we never did anything 'typical' growing up. We didn't have a bach and we didn't do this, we didn't do that. I don't actually feel like a real bonafide New Zealander in a way. My parents don't have a lot of family, so I don't have a big family network here that is all involved with each other or anything. My family is quite nomadic, we like to move a lot on my father's side. My grandmother was telling me that one of her sisters said, "Oh you Browns are all a bunch of gypsies." But it's true. So I feel like I can go other places and I can feel quite at ease. If I did, like, I do want to go back to France, and if I did go back and if I did have things that make me feel permanent, like for example my sewing machine, and all the things that I had waited until I got here to have, if I could have them somewhere else, I think I would feel fine.

Although, having said that, I don't feel particularly English and definitely in France, by the end of my time there, I was thinking I don't actually want to be French, I wanted to hold onto whatever culture it was that I came from. So I didn't actually want to assimilate, I just wanted to live there. I guess I understand New Zealand culture more, well I hope that I would since I did grow up here *laughing*. So this is probably more familiar to me, even though right now, you know, when you come back, you think, "God, you people are nuts" *laughing*. *Emotively* "Why do you

care that Helen Clark didn't paint her own picture", or "Why do you care? You don't know how good you've got it." So I suppose I am going through that now, but eventually I guess I will settle in, and I will feel like, "Yes, these are my people" *laughing*.

There's more of a community here. We are really good friends with our neighbours and these guys that are working on our road, like, every time we go out in the morning we say, "Oh hi!" Whereas, I don't think that would happen in England. But there are all these people in this area, because I've lived here since I was five years old. There is this guy Peter and he is intellectually challenged and he has lived here for ages, he used to get the same school bus as us to go to his daily program. Anyway, he stands down on the corner of the street down there, and he knows my parents' cars and he waves to them. George was like, "Oh my God, who is that", because he kept on waving at us, and I said, "Oh that's Peter", you know, he's been here for twenty-five years and everyone knows who it is in the area. You know, there's people all around and they've just been here for years and you just know them, and you see them, like the neighbour's been there for fifteen years and we know each other, and it's all very pleasant, like, I love this area. Actually I should say in the past few weeks I've just started to feel really at home here, I've started to think, "Oh, this is my community."

Like our pizza shop, we are really good friends with the people in the pizza shop. So all my dealings within this community are really pleasant. I totally appreciate it now and I didn't before at all, in fact I hated living in this area, I thought it was scummy, and I didn't want to be here. Well, before this area got fashionable, it's on the edge of the industrial area, it wasn't that nice, and growing up it was not the place to be. But now, I guess everybody wants to live here *laughs*. So, I probably spent a lot of time trying to get the

hell out of here, but now that I have come back it's like, "Oh, I can just breathe." I didn't have that and I didn't realise how much I enjoyed having community. You don't get that, like in France, everybody wants to pretend they don't know you *laughs* especially if you are a foreigner *laughs*. Whereas here, we go down to the pizza shop just to hang out, we go down to visit them. We do of course eat pizza too *laughs*, as an incidental, but it's like we go down there to have a discussion with them. The people that come into the shop, you often end up talking to the other people that come in that have been in the area for as long as you. Then, if people come in and they're not from the area, because they've had a lot of publicity because they won the best pizza in New Zealand, so people come in, and they are from Ponsonby or somewhere, and you just know. We're all like *whispering, laughing*. That's because we're the old guard. *Laughing*. So it's really nice, and I didn't appreciate that at all and I appreciate it because now I have it.

But the things that New Zealander's worry about frustrate me though. What have we really got to worry about? But all these things in the paper. Like, Mike Moore has been in the Herald lately for saying stupid things about politics and everyone is up in arms, about the slightest thing. Like, there was a letter in the Herald saying, "I saw the Prime Minister in Parnell, she pulled up in her limo ran into Trelise Cooper and bought a skirt and then she ran out again. Isn't it dandy to be a Prime Minister?" I'm like *emotively*, "Does anyone care?" "Is that all you've got to think about, that Helen Clark went and bought a skirt at Trelise Cooper?" You know, I think people are up in arms about the wrong things. I think they should be looking at family violence, which is a topical issue at the moment, and reducing our dependency on cars in face of the oil crisis. Things like our place in the world, instead of flying up our own arse with these petty, petty things that we really don't need to trouble ourselves with.

Although, in a way it is quite good, isn't it? Perhaps it's fine, perhaps we should focus on these things, because I guess it means that we are not focusing on these things that other countries have to think about. So maybe that's good. Maybe it's pretty charmed. I mean, it is pretty charmed down here. That is the other thing that I find frustrating, is that this is the most perfect place in the world to live really, you have everything. I just think we should do so much more, but I don't know. I'm not coming up with any brilliant ideas. *Laughs* I'm relying on somebody else. So, I don't know, it's probably not that much of a frustration, and probably in a little while I will be up in arms that Helen Clark didn't paint her own picture *laughs*.

I probably feel like I fit in less now though. You know like, I didn't really feel like a true New Zealander before hand and I guess I really don't feel like, I mean I do and I don't, but I guess I feel like less of a one now. Maybe because I have a English husband, but lots of people do. I don't know, we have to keep up a connection obviously with England so we are often thinking about, and talking about it, speaking to relatives. So I feel like I have been away and done some things. I don't know, it's just difficult to bring that back and do something with it.

4.1.3 “It's not the friendship it was”

I have a couple of friends where my relationships have changed a little bit. I don't feel as close as I did when I left. Probably just one friend where I feel that the relationship has changed, and I don't feel like we understand each other like we did before I left. I don't know, is that age or is it being away? This person hasn't travelled, so it's difficult. I mean she's a really close friend, of course, but I don't feel the same bond, which is difficult. But I

mean it's ok, we won't lose our friendship or anything. It's just it's not the friendship it was. Then, with my other friends, like some people I feel closer to now, like we get along really, really well and maybe we didn't see each other so much before I left or we've all been away and we've just come back, and suddenly, you've got that common bond and you get along really well with them.

4.1.4 “I need to exercise this part of myself”

I feel displaced at the moment. I expect that I will feel in a place soon, but I do feel, I mean, like probably at least once a week, I say to George “Let's go.” Because I feel like, “Is this it?” Am I just going to get into the car and drive to Albany every day to work at the ASB? Is that it for me? What am I going to do? Which is in part why I have gone part time at my job, which has contributed incredibly to my overall well being. But yeah, I just think, “Is this it? Am I going to get into discussions with other New Zealanders about how new my car is or how much my mortgage is costing?” You know, I'm just not in it. I don't really want to pay nearly a million dollars to live in a crap house in a crap area of Auckland or mortgage myself to the hilt so I can drive a really new car, you know, I just feel like I am totally not in it, I'm not part of it. I think probably if I was to quit my job altogether, because when I came back here I didn't really think I would be working in an office. I had this rosy idea that it would be really wonderful and I'd do my own business and everything would be awesome, and then it kind of, well, I was a bit lazy and didn't get off my butt and do anything. Yeah, so probably if I was concentrating on my own business the whole time, I think I would feel more a part of it.

But I hope I don't fall into that way of thinking. I mean, that's another of my frustrations with New Zealanders, wanting to own

stuff, they just want to buy houses and buy more of them, and then drive a really new car. It's really important to them. Like, we had some friends come over and all they wanted to talk about was their new coffee table, because they'd paid three thousand dollars for it and it was like, "Sorry we don't understand you." But, I don't know. But that's not everybody of course, certainly that's not the people that I mix with, it's probably just the people I encounter at work, it's not the people I spend most of my time with. Whereas I guess in your group of friends, you are all sympathetic to the same thing, you know, everyone wants to do the same thing.

I think I have decided what I want from my life, it's just taking a while to get there, but I will get there. I probably feel a bit more decisive, and I kind of know, or I have this idea or image of how I want to live. I want to live a creative life, I want to work for myself in a creative way, and I found while I was overseas that that was quite essential to me and I didn't really realise it beforehand. I had these interests and I didn't realise them. But being in the last apartment when we were in London, I really, really felt this absolute need to do something with these creative impulses that I had. So I suppose I was looking forward to getting home, because I can have a sewing machine, I can have a studio. Whereas, in a one bedroom apartment, you know, I had everything out on the kitchen table.

I think I'm on the path to what I want now, like reducing my hours at my office job, reorganising my revenue stream *laughs*, and eventually, I guess hopefully, I will work entirely for myself. I don't expect to make a lot of money. I have figured out I'm not entirely driven by money by being away. You know, I had these experiences that didn't pay me much, but I preferred them more to the experiences, like when I lived in London and made good coin, I didn't really enjoy it. I mean, it was nice, and it's nice to have

money and I do like making money, but it wasn't essential to my being. Whereas when I had these other jobs, that enabled me to live the way I want to, I didn't really care about how much money I had. I wanted to spend it less. You know, whereas when I am making it, I just want to spend it.

Also, I realised I want to put things away and I want to arrange things, like I have this house-wifely aim of mine *laughs*. When we have our own place I have this image of how I will be able to bust out all this stuff that I have got. That's my little dream, like, wherever I live, whether it is here or in the U.K., you know, I would have to be able to get my home-making groove on. It's funny, because I would really like an ex-state house, just like this one of my parents' *laughing*. It doesn't have to be huge, but something where I can put all our things. So I guess I am quite a home body. I am not ashamed of it, I used to feel like it was really naff, but now that's just me *laughs*. I'm out *laughing*. I want to be a housewife. I always thought I would be transient and I would never put down roots or that I would never actually find anywhere that I wanted to stay and I would never need a house, *laughs* because I would just be so awesome and nomadic. But now, after we went back and lived in London, I just realised, "Oh, I really like having somewhere that I don't have to move out of, and I really like having this full kitchen and being able to bake whenever I want." I just realised that, "Oh", like, I probably am nomadic, but I do need some place to go back to. I need to exercise this part of myself.

4.1.5 "It didn't happen as smoothly as it has for me in the past"

I would say wherever my parents are is normally a very comforting environment for me. I make it sound like I can't live without them, but that's not the case. It's just that the four of us are really close,

because I guess it's always just been the four of us, because the lack of family, we are the only family we've got. I guess now that I have George, I feel really comfortable. I mean, it does make it easier, even if I whinge at him all the time about living here, I do feel, as long as he comes with me, it'll be alright. I guess in a lot of ways he is what makes it home for me, and if I wasn't here with him, I just couldn't imagine that. I do want my parents to come back, but I am not upset about it or anything. It doesn't affect my life. I've got this family and I just know they are always there. I don't have to worry about it. I feel like it's easy for me to go out into the world, because I have these people behind me. So if I was to go somewhere by myself, it doesn't bother me. I suppose it's just coming home and not having them here is really just weird.

I have never found a problem moving. It's easy for me in a way. I suppose I just love the exhilaration of the new, you know, you get somewhere and suddenly you have to get yourself sorted out and that's quite exciting to me. So I've never had a problem getting a job, not fitting in, but you know, I can get myself sorted. I guess when you are overseas and you have to settle in somewhere, it is all really exciting and it's all new, and you come back here and I flailed for a bit probably. I did give myself three months without working. I thought, "Ok, I'll just come here and not feel the pressure of doing anything." But I guess it didn't happen as smoothly as it has for me in the past. I got a job really quick, as soon as I wanted one. But I was a bit demotivated to actually try as hard as I would have in a foreign situation. Which is crap isn't it? It's like with family, you try the least with your family, but you try hardest with your friends. You try the least with your home country and you try the hardest with this new place.

Even now I am walking down Queen Street and I think, "What the hell am I doing on Queen Street?" Like, "How did I get here

laughing?” I mean, it’s not bad, like I don’t have a horrible life by any means. I really have an absolutely charmed life. I am doing exactly what I want to do. I have an income, I have two days a week to do whatever I want, I have nowhere I have to be. I am totally free here. Much more than I probably have been anywhere else, but I just don’t appreciate it at the moment. I have really exciting times ahead of me and in this country if I want. I mean I will have a good time, but it’s just difficult for me to think, “Ok, I’m going to stay.”

When I got back, I felt quite excited and a little bit scared, because I didn’t know what it would be like, and now I feel a bit flat, I guess. Yeah, I don’t know. I thought I would come back and have a child and that hasn’t happened for me. So that is probably another big factor, you know, I’m like, “Well if I came back to have a child and I am not going to have one, I might as well go and party, I might as well go somewhere, or I might as well leave.” So, I guess it’s just all bound up with that too. Yes, so now I feel quite flat about it. But I feel excited about what I am going to do. But just about being here, it’s like, “Well, maybe I should go to another country and do it.” I feel like now I don’t need to be in New Zealand to do what I want to do, because I may not have a child. If we had children I would want to raise them here and have them here, but until that happens, I could go somewhere else and go do something else. The reality is it may not happen. So that is a lot of how I feel, I should have mentioned it before, but yeah, how I feel is bound up in my inability to have children.

4.1.6 Kylie's Video Diary

Figure 2: Video Diary "A shadow of its former self"



This is my home; this is where I have lived since I was five years old, apart from when I've been away. It's kind of a shadow of its former self, as you can see, with detritus everywhere. So it has contributed to this weirdness of being home. Coming home to a house that is not how I remembered it, and also, my parents don't live in it, so it's kind of strange coming home without your parents to be there to welcome you.

Figure 3: Video Diary "I really love baking"



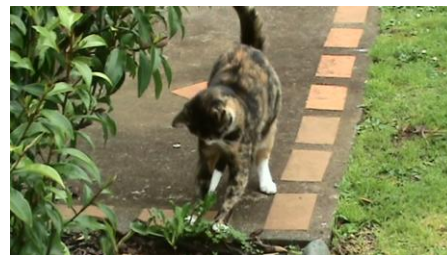
This is my mixer, I use it probably once or twice a week. I guess I have filmed it, because baking is something I really love to do, and when I lived away I really wanted a mixer, and now I've got it. I really love baking, I find it so relaxing and kind of centring, and yes, my mixer is representative of my love of baking, something I couldn't have when I was travelling.

Figure 4: Video Diary “This space, it’s all mine”



This is my studio, I moved in here when we came back from the U.K.. It’s really important to me, because it’s where all of my creative epiphanies take place. I should mention also that my studio space is really important to me because it’s another thing I couldn’t have when I was away, and I really wanted it. I used to work on a kitchen table in London and it just wasn’t enough, so this has been something that has really helped me come home, the fact that I can have this space and it’s all mine, and I can create.

Figure 5: Video Diary “We have our little cat”



This is my cat Wingshing. Mine and George’s cat. It appeared on our doorstep about a month after we got back. And it has helped the place feel more like home, because we have our little cat and it doesn’t seem like we’re travelling so much. And this is our other cat. So even though I’ve never really been a cat person, ever since I’ve come home, I’ve really enjoyed having pets. It’s helped to make me feel more at home in my own country.

Figure 6: Video Diary “I feel a bit disjointed”

Picture and video on DVD omitted for anonymity reasons. Video shows a still photograph of Kylie’s parents on a side table.

These are my parents. My Mum was 14, my Dad was 15 or 16 when this picture was taken. It’s the only picture we have of them on display, and of course they are not here right now, which is weird, as I said before, it’s their house and to come home without them. But they are a big part of, I guess when they are here I really feel secure and like, "Ok, I’m home, it’s fine." When they are not here, I feel a bit disjointed, I guess, just because, it’s strange to be in your home country without your parents, if that makes sense? It’s not that I totally need them to be here, but it would feel more like home if they were here.

Figure 7: Video Diary “It’s not the home I left”



I’ve chosen to film this piece of ripped wallpaper because it totally bugs me. I just feel like we’re living in this kind of run down shack, we’re just sort of squatting here and it’s not a nice home anymore. When I left all the walls were intact and it was looking nice, and now I’ve come back and it’s not, I don’t really feel like it’s my home, or it’s not the home I left, it’s totally different.

Figure 8: Video Diary “Desolate Wasteland”



This is where I work, in this kind of desolate wasteland. I filmed this because I drive here every day and it's something that makes me want to leave New Zealand again, because I think, "I came back here to drive 25 kilometres a day out to Albany and work in this aircraft hanger." Anyway, it's not what I envisioned for myself when I got home. Well actually, I don't know what I envisioned for myself, because I kind of had this idea of a country that doesn't exist, so yeah, so this is where I come every day and I really don't like it, but most of the time, I just try to think of the money.

Figure 9: Video Diary “My niece”

Picture and video on DVD omitted for anonymity reasons. Video shows Kylie's niece smiling at the camera and drawing pictures in Kylie's studio.

This is my niece Shelly. *Laughs.* Put on your normal face, *laughing.* Not your stage smile. We like to do art together in the studio, don't we? Yes? What art are we doing today? *Shelly: Painting and drawing.* And we're about to do some spelling aren't we? Yep. That's great.

Kylie also took a shot of a photo of her and her husband at their wedding, but it is not included here for anonymity reasons and because she forgot to comment on it as she filmed it.

4.5 weeks later

4.1.7 “My life is different now”

In two weeks I'll be working for myself and it makes me feel really good, like, free, completely free *laughing*. You know, I feel much better about living here now that I'm not doing this thing that I don't want to do, and not going to this job in this horrible part of Auckland, and I couldn't really see for what end. You know like, if I was going to work in Albany, I might as well move to England. So I feel like my life's different now, now I'm here, and if I'm going to be here, I'm living a totally different life, you know? I'm not working in an office, you know? It's like, ok, I came home, but I came home to change my life, so I feel like I've done that now. But I'm not living the life I thought I was going to live. I mean, that is part of the children thing, I thought I was going on one track and my life is completely different. I really feel as though I am making plans now to live a life that is totally different. At this stage, I may yet have a child, I don't know. I am undergoing medical treatment, so maybe it will be successful. So maybe I will be able to. I mean, that's just a recent development in the last couple of weeks. So I suppose I still feel quite displaced. I mean everything is going great, I've made this decision to quit my job and live this other life, I still feel a little bit displaced here. I think that would probably change in the next few months as I get more and more settled and my parents come back.

4.1.8 “Why I feel like I don't fit in here”

I've been thinking about why I feel like I don't fit in here. I feel like I don't have many ties, I could just pick up and go. I mean, but the thing is, I say that, “Oh yeah I could just pick and go”, but I still have ties to this area, because this is where I grew up and this is my community, and I feel really part of it, because I have been

here for so long and it's really familiar to me. But at the same time, coming from a very disjointed family that doesn't necessarily get along, we don't have these big family gatherings, like, this is it. I have my parents and I have my brother, but then my family moves, well my parents do, they don't stay in one place. The rest of my extended family are weird *laughs*. My parents I don't think feel very, they probably didn't grow up feeling that either. My mother was adopted so she doesn't really have anything. She is just a little thing on her own.

I mean, like, what have we got? We are urban dwellers but if you are an urban dweller in New Zealand, if you grew up urban, your experiences almost aren't respected in the same way. It's like, "Oh well, if you don't grow up going to the beach or don't grow up doing this, then", I mean, it's not that your experience isn't valid, it's like, "Oh well, where's your tie? So what beach did you used to go to every summer?" We could be from any city, what is there to distinguish us? We know what distinguishes us, I suppose, or distinguishes our experiences growing up, but it never makes it into wistful histories, or wistful reminiscences of growing up in New Zealand. I totally acknowledge that many New Zealanders grew up on farms, but I didn't see a sheep on a farm until I was nine years old. I saw a sheep in Cornwall Park, that was my experience in rural life. I don't have this relationship with the land, I mean I do, in that as I have these places like the park and things that are really special to me, but that's not reflective. It's like, to be special, it's got to be rural or it's got to be coastal. It can't be urban.

I can say that I grew up here, my parents grew up here, they went to the same school, they met at the school down the road, we are totally this area. But at the same time that doesn't give us any identity. Whereas, I feel if you are from a smaller place, or from a

distinctive place that you can recognise, it gives you more of an identity, or you are perceived as having more of an identity. So there are all these local, really really local experiences. But when you are urban, you are just 'out there', there is no tie to one single place.

I think I am searching for some kind of identity, or some kind of tie. If I had a family, I would want to have that. At least my kids would have grandparents that they got along with, or that really loved them, and it would be totally different.

Our dream is that we would have either that house or that house *pointing to neighbours houses* and have some kind of family commune going on, much like we do now but we need to spread out *laughing*. I would really like a big family home where the doors are never closed and everyone can just wonder in and out, and just be really together. So yeah, if that were to happen, that would be pretty good. I mean I think we will probably always stay close together, have a family group, well I hope we do. I mean I think that it makes sense for us and plus I think you need the support of your family, well I do.

It's like I love it when my brother comes around with his wife and Shelly comes around in the weekend, I really enjoy that, I love having family around and it's like, "Oh yeah we can have this, it does feel like we are permanent." So I guess I am looking for that and that's what I would want to create that if I had a family. I want to have that feeling of, "This is where we are from and this is what we like to do" and that kind of thing. I would want to stay in this area whether we remain living here or whether we move to a house in the area, I do want to stay here. This is where I feel ok, this is where I am from. So, we have ties but don't really have the ties, they are not ties that you would be out and proud about.

But when I think about buying a house in another area, I think, “God how could I do that? What would I do? How could I suddenly be from somewhere like Glen Innes or something like that?” I couldn’t. I don’t sound jingoistic actually, I don’t want to sound like, you know, “This is my area and I love it so much, I never want to leave.” I suppose it’s just that I do feel really comfortable here. It’s not that I don’t like other areas, I mean I absolutely love other areas of Auckland, I can’t see myself living there, that’s all, but I do like to go there. If I live in New Zealand, I want to live in Auckland and in this suburb. If I don’t live in Auckland and in this suburb, I will live anywhere else, I will live in another country, that would be fine. But I think if I am going to be here, I am going to be here rather than somewhere else. But who knows? Maybe in a little while, I would feel like moving somewhere else, it’s probably that I just enjoy the security of this area, I enjoy the familiar feeling which I have not had in so long. But maybe in a little while, I may be ready to pick and go to Wellington or something *laughing*.

4.1.9 “I am appreciating things more”

I reckon it’s been really helpful talking to you actually, Naomi. I really started thinking about what it was that made this home for me. I suppose I started feeling more involved, when I thought about it. I think it is such an intriguing topic, I am totally behind you in this, because, I think that it is so interesting! After I started talking to you, then coincidentally we started having more family involvement and then it was like, “Oh yeah!” I started thinking about what was really important to me about being here, yeah, it just really got me thinking I guess, and now I feel like, “Ok I feel more comfortable” *laughing*. I don’t feel so distant I suppose. Yeah. Of course then I quit my job and now I feel great. I’ve stopped saying, “Let’s go” to George over the last couple of weeks.

I don't feel so ready to pick up and leave now. I do think about it, but then I think to myself that if I go, this is what I would lose. I would lose this connection I have with my family here; I would lose this space that's my own. Even though it's a pit *laughing*, it's mine and this is where I am conducting my business. I have all these things. I would lose these good friends I have in the area, like, I was at school with them and now they live up the road. You know, we all get together and I hadn't realised how much I missed it. You know, you just have friends and you help them out and they help you out, it's a nice symbiotic relationship. I have missed that a lot. So I think about what I would give up, which now it would be a lot. Whereas I thought, "Oh yeah, I could go and leave tomorrow", but now I've just realised, "Oh no, I would have to actually give up heaps." So, after I talked to you, I started looking around more and I really started to look at things, like when I went to the park and thought, "Why is this so important to me?" Then, I don't know, all these things just started to come out at me. I suppose I am appreciating things a lot more. Yeah. I am just looking at stuff instead of letting it pass me by.

4.2 *Introducing Simon*

The following table specifies Simon's demographic information as a point of reference for the reader:

Table 8: Simon's Demographic Information

Length of time spent overseas	Date returned	Length of time back	Place of residence in NZ	Place of residence overseas	Nature of residence now
9 months	Mar-07	8 months	Auckland	London	Flatting
Marital status	Place in family	Job	Age	Gender	
Single	2 older brothers	Trade insurance underwriter	29	Male	

4.2.1 “Returning was quite a mixed bag of emotions”

Returning was quite a mixed bag of emotions really. I think, when I got off the plane, the first thing I thought was, “What have I done?” I think, yeah, for maybe the first two months I didn’t think a whole lot about it, because you are so busy getting a job, finding somewhere to live and just getting your life back in order. But then, once that finishes, then you realise all the things that you probably miss about the U.K. and travel and the people that you meet along the way. But it is a little bit, yeah I think the shock comes in a little later, or it did for me. I found it quite interesting to see the friends of mine who haven’t gone and travelled. They are just like, “Oh, you’re back”, and they don’t seem to really ask a lot. Then, my friends that have gone overseas and travelled were very interested in what my experiences were like and I have probably found since being home, that I’m more drawn to that group of friends than my friends who haven’t done an O.E., or any amount of decent travelling. So yeah, you get to the stage when you get back into the routine and then you think, have I made the right decision? Should I have come home?

I think there are pros and cons in everything at the end of the day, but I think you start to see things from a different perspective and you realise things. I think wherever you go when you travel, like working in the U.K., they really see the big picture. They don’t really sweat the small stuff. Everyone is an individual. You come back to New Zealand and we really are like sheep. We all do tend to follow the crowd. Individual people are almost frowned upon. Whereas I think the U.K. has got a more big picture. A bit more liberal. New Zealanders are just so conservative. Very fixed ideas. You know, you should be getting married and having the whole 2.5 children and the mortgage and everything and I think there is a lot more to life than settling down so young. You know, you’ve got to make the most of it while you are still able.

I came back because, well, my dad and my step mum had been in the U.K. for five years and they nagged me to pack my bags and go and do an O.E. I just got to the stage of my job where I thought “I will go”, but then I got over there, and my step mum got diagnosed with cancer. So between my Dad and I, and between my travelling, we were going through chemo with my step mum and having to, you know, organising to pick her up and getting her home from hospital, and doctors appointments etcetera. Then her cancer got so bad that the doctors recommended that she come back to New Zealand. So, my stepsister was in the U.K. at that stage as well, she had come over and it was just agreed that we would all come back. So yeah, that was the reason for coming home. I didn't really feel ready to come home, but I was more coming home more for my parents, I think, than anything. Yeah, so, it wasn't really planned, but these things happen. I am quite lucky that I have the right of abode and I can just come and go as I like. So, they are in Wellington, but for me for work, there were more opportunities back in Auckland so that's why I came back to Auckland. She's had chemo now for a year and the last scan was the first scan where it hadn't spread any further. So it has stabilised at the moment. Now that everything is back into a routine, and certainly Amanda's health is stabilised, my Dad's in the U.K. at the moment.

But I mean I was quite lucky, I came back and I got a job within a few days and I had sussed out a flat mate to get a flat with within a week, and everything was very easy coming home, like, it wasn't hard. But now that I am back in a routine, I am already trying to suss out if I can get a transfer with my job back to the U.K. So, I am definitely looking at opportunities to go back overseas. Just to broaden my horizons again. I feel there are more opportunities in the U.K., or maybe even in the U.S. I suppose I love travelling. Also, for my sport there are more races and there are more

competitors, it's just everything is on a bigger scale than what it is in New Zealand. It's just a lot more exciting I think. I don't really think I am really ready to settle down for the quiet New Zealand lifestyle.

4.2.2 “I need a mixture of things to make me comfortable”

I need a mixture of things to make me comfortable; a mixture of having a job that is going somewhere and heading in the right career direction, and definitely sport, as that plays a big part of my life outside my work. Probably, I hate to say it, but probably my friends more than my family. My family drives me insane *laughing*. My Mum is a very mellow person and she is from London herself, they emigrated when she was very young. But she's not a traveller or anything and I don't really feel she understands my need to travel. I've got two older brothers, that haven't travelled, they haven't even left New Zealand. They all live near Wellington, I don't even know if they have even been to Auckland so, they never ask me about my travels or anything like that and they say to me, “So when you get to work, what do you do?” They don't understand, they've never worked in corporate, they've been more labourers. So, yeah my family is quite different.

I'm into duathlons and am going to try to qualify for world championships this year. But you go running around the streets in London and you get home and you blow your nose, and it's just black soot and you are like, “Oh my God” this is all going into my body, you know. I mean, I really missed the thought of being back in New Zealand and cycling out to Clevedon where it's rural, you know, nice clean swimming pools *laughing*. All of those sorts of things that you take for granted. So an active lifestyle was a lot harder over there. But I think that where there is a will, there is a

way, and if you really want to do something, you will find a way of doing it.

My career is more important to me than sports in some aspects, because with doing endurance sports you get to a stage where your body starts to wear out and that kind of thing. So my career is going to pay the bills and provide me with travel and you know, buy a house and insurance. My job here is really good. Really good. They have been a fantastic company to work for; I think it's maybe a bit more to do with my manager. My manager is quite into balance in life and it's the sort of job where I don't mind getting up and being in the office at seven o'clock in the morning and because I know at three thirty if I want to go home and go for a run, I will just hop up and leave. No-one will bat an eyelid or say anything. It's very much swings and roundabouts and give and take.

But in the U.K., you get exposed to a lot more than you would in New Zealand. In the U.K., I was being a senior risk analyst and I was doing auditing. I would have never got that role in New Zealand, because I am not qualified for starters. But in the U.K., they could see what I could bring to the role. They were not so caught up on what degrees and qualifications I had. So I feel in those terms there're more opportunities in the U.K.

4.2.3 “We do not need to be so strict with these ideas that are drummed into us from an early age”

I have got a few friends in the U.K. and I think as New Zealanders we are received very well overseas. I was very lucky in the office that I worked in; there were a couple of hundred of us and our average office age was 27, and so a lot of people my age. So I made a lot of friends through them and am still in contact with a lot of them as well. I hope to go back over for a holiday next year.

So, that would be good to catch up with them. But I do feel that they are more on my wavelength than a lot of my friends here. I just think with the people that you meet, you meet a lot of other travellers from around the world, a lot of other Kiwis and Aussies, and you are all more of the same sort of mind set. You are doing and living the same experience and so you make friends quite easy and quite quickly because you are in the same boat at the end of the day. You all want to do the same things and have those same experiences.

People overseas are more outgoing. It is very clicky in New Zealand and people settle down so much earlier as well. You know, in the U.K., I did have friends that were a lot older than me, but in some ways were a lot younger than me. Because from when you are born in New Zealand, it's like there is almost a set programme of where you should be by a certain age throughout your life. In the U.K., people are just everywhere and getting promotions and going off to Hong Kong to work and it's just crazy. There isn't so much of a, well from what I could see, there wasn't so much of a pressure to settle down and to live a quieter New Zealand type lifestyle. I look at some of my friends and I think, "Shit you are so old! *Laughing*. But you are only 28! *Laughing*." It just drives me insane. I think we are changing a little bit. But nowhere close to what it is like in London. Nowhere close at all.

Whereas I think everyone should travel, yeah. People get me onto the subject and I just go on and on *laughing*. I just feel sometimes that some people don't want to hear and other people want to hear and if anyone has ever got photos, I could just look through the photo album after photo album, because I just love looking at people's experiences and just talking about it with them. So yeah, I always say to them, "Go and travel" and if any of the good deals

come up, I email it out *laughing*. I am like, “Ohhh, five hundred return to Shanghai” *laughing*. I just can’t help it. They’re just like, “Yeah, ok, we’ll just take out another credit card” kind of comments. But they are like, “We are going to a concert” or “We went out and spent \$200 on alcohol” and I am thinking, I get back on one trip and I am planning my next trip. I just got back from Singapore and KL three weeks ago and I am already thinking, “Ok where do I want to go next?” I don’t want to go waste my money on alcohol or copious amounts of alcohol, when there is somewhere else I can go and travel. I think I will always be like that. I just love it. I just love experiencing a different culture; it’s just exciting. I hope by the time that I die I will have travelled everywhere. You know people say that if they won Lotto they would buy their dream house and furnish it and get the nice cars and everything and I am like, “Hell, I’d be gone” *laughing*. I’d be on the next plane out of New Zealand *laughing*. They are just like, “Oh ok.” So I wouldn’t care because the experiences would be, to me, more valuable than a nice house or a flash car.

But then I also think it’s location as well, we are so far from everywhere that well, what else is there really to do, to a degree? But we need to not be so strict with these ideas that are drummed into us from an early age. Like, I think just general comments from friends and just if they saw someone that dressed a bit different or looked a bit different and just the comments that my friends would make about them, because they were not like us or what we perceive to be normal. I found that so frustrating.

I also found a lot of the recruiting agencies very frustrating because they just try and pigeon hole you. They are like, “Ok well you have eighty percent of your experience in credit risk, so this is the only area you can possibly work in.” It’s like Uhhh *sound of frustration!* You know, it’s like I do bring more to a table than that

set of skills. But that's all they could look at. But what I noticed the most was that they were like, well without saying it in such blunt terms, "Oh well, you're a white New Zealander so you will get a job just like that." I just thought that was so racist. So many New Zealander employers don't want to take on immigrants. Some of them are so highly educated and they have such fantastic skills and yet they are a taxi driver, just because we can't get qualifications from New Zealand or an institute that they recognise, and I just think it's crazy. So crazy.

When you go to the U.K., I mean I worked with South Africans, Nigerians, you know, right across the board. You just realise that it doesn't really matter where you come from in the world, you can still bring something to the table. New Zealanders seem to be very fixed on, they want a New Zealander. Another comment was, "Oh well, you have done your O.E so now you are settled", *laughing* Yeah right! If you only knew what I was thinking, *laughing*. I think it's just a lot of those fixed ideas which is very frustrating, and New Zealanders being very closed minded, and not really seeing the big picture.

4.2.4 "But you've got to pick your battles, I think"

But I don't really vocalise these thoughts to anyone. I haven't really expressed a lot how I've felt since coming home, I have just got on with things, so they may not have realised how I have felt about coming home. But I definitely find with some of the people, I don't have a whole lot of time for them. They are still friends and everything, but I'm just not as close to them as probably I was before I went overseas. Just because they are still very fixed on their ideas and they are not willing to see other people's ideas. So it's just one of those things when you go overseas, you're just

exposed to so many different things, and so many different people, that you just become a lot more open to a lot of things.

But I think a lot of those relationships with my friends haven't changed, just because I haven't gone on about with what I am thinking. Because in a way I don't like to, rubbing it in is probably not the right word, but you know, you don't want to go on and on about your time overseas, to a degree. But then I think a lot of people don't ask questions about it all together. So it's like, "Are they not interested or are they jealous because you've gone and done it and they haven't?" Is that a bit weird? I think if I was being really honest, maybe sometimes I would have a joke along with them as well, because sometimes things are funny. But I think otherwise, I probably wouldn't say much to be honest, unless I feel something strongly about it. I certainly wouldn't say that I am certainly not afraid of rocking the boat by any means. But then sometimes, what is the point of having confrontation about something that isn't hugely important at the end of the day? You know they're just closed minded really. It's like banging your head against a brick wall, I think.

But I also think the way we are as a nation as well, to a certain degree, it's not really harming anybody, I don't think. I mean, well, yeah, it is probably harming some people. But I just think, "Well, God, if I really forced my opinions on everyone I know then I'd probably know no-one" *laughing*. You've got to pick your battles I think. I might not agree with some of my friends' comments on different races or whatever the case may be, but they are not nasty or vindictive people or anything like that. They don't hurl abuse at people. You know, it might just be a slight comment at someone, when someone's not within ear shot. So, I just think, well they are not directly hurting anyone, it's just really their own ignorance in

the end of the day. You can't blame them for that. I think well if you went overseas and you travelled or stepped outside the square then you'd see things from a different perspective. So I think in a way, you can't blame them, because they don't know anything different.

4.2.5 “I think the experience has made me a lot more open-minded”

I think the experience has made me a lot more open-minded. I think if you are more open minded, more opportunities will come your way. I think if I see someone who is a bit different, and if they came up and spoke to me, I would talk to them. Probably before, I wouldn't have given them the time of the day, because they weren't really the kind of person who I would usually associate with in New Zealand. Like, when I was in the U.K., we had a HR induction, there were five of us on this induction, and one of the guys was a Nigerian and he was so black. You know, I had seen black black people like that on T.V. but not so much in New Zealand. There are a few now, but we ended up becoming really good mates. I said to him, “If I saw you in New Zealand I would probably hop on the next carriage” *laughing*. He was like, “Why's that’?” and I said, “Because we just don't get people like you in New Zealand.” He just thought it was so funny. Interestingly enough, him and his wife went to Hong Kong two weeks ago and he sent me an email and he goes, “I can't believe how everyone wants to come up and touch our skin to see if it rubs off.” I said, “You've got to realise that even if you came to New Zealand, you would get a lot of stares as well because we just don't get people like you over here. In Hong Kong, they would be just thinking, ‘My God, you are from another world.’” He just thought that it was just so comical. But what I found really weird was that, here he was being this Nigerian, and he had this booming English accent, and I thought *laughing*, “That's not right!” *laughing*. I think if a Nigerian person came up and started talking to me, I

would just talk to them like they were just another person. When before going to the U.K., I probably wouldn't, I'd be polite, I'd never be rude to people, but I certainly wouldn't go out of my way. So I think I have changed a lot like that.

4.2.6 “My U.K. experience was the best of times and the hardest of times all rolled into one”

I reminisce with my dad and stepmum about all the places we went, because we did a lot of travelling in between chemotherapy and that. Which was really cool. So it's nice to have had those experiences with your parents, because a lot of people don't have those experiences. Like, we went to Cardiff once for the rugby. We got to Cardiff at nine o'clock in the morning and we were all sitting in the pub *laughing* at ten o'clock drinking bourbons *laughing*. I was sitting there and thinking, “Wow, there are not many parents that at ten o'clock would be having bourbons with me at the bar” *laughing*.

My dad had just changed so much from when he lived in New Zealand and he would just do things that he would never had ever done in New Zealand. Like going to the opera or going to shows or stuff that before he would never have ever considered. He changed a lot so it was actually quite cool to see. But my stepmum has always been very social and into experiencing everything, so it was more her decision for them to move to London than my Dad's and my Dad just followed suit really. So when Amanda got diagnosed, my Dad was more of a wreck than what my stepmum was. So that was quite hard to deal with, because I have never seen my Dad get so emotional before. So that was pretty difficult. So yeah, it was an interesting experience in the U.K., because it was like the best of times, but also the hardest of times all rolled into one especially at the end.

But Dad is in the U.K. at the moment, they had quite a few issues with their marriage. I think with the cancer and the treatment and the whole process put a lot of strain on them. So Dad is in the U.K., so that's all up in the air at the moment. I haven't told a lot of people about what had happened with my Dad and Amanda, just because I didn't really want to go into it. I mean, they have been married for twenty one years, so Amanda has been in my life since I was about three. But I think I didn't hear from Dad for about six weeks and I think he was annoyed, because all of our family had continued to support Amanda. I think Dad to a degree wanted the family to beeline her. You know what I mean? But that hasn't happened at all. So it's been a bit of a shock for Dad so I think that's why he is still in the U.K. Because I think in Dad's mind, he thinks that his family has chosen Amanda over him. Which is completely stupid, but that's how Dad is thinking about it so. I mean, I have said to him, "What is the point of staying in the U.K.?", as there is no point. When we left the U.K. it was probably at its height, so to speak, and it was very hard, because Dad put pressure on me to maybe go against my judgment or that's not really quite the right word. I just don't think Dad was seeing the bigger picture really. He was maybe thinking a little bit selfishly so. But they had had problems over the years, but it's suddenly never got to this stage, but I think just the stress of the cancer. So I thought a lot of people wouldn't understand how my Dad could be the way he was with Amanda's health being the way it was. A lot of people probably saw my Dad as being a real prick, and he's not. I think until you are in that situation, and living that situation, you can't really pass judgment. So it was interesting. There are still a lot of people that don't actually know. I think also maybe to a degree, I was slightly ashamed of my Dad for his decision, and it's certainly one that I haven't really been able to fully understand from his point of view. Family *laughing*, you can't choose them.

4.2.7 “I wanted to come home, but I didn’t want to come home, it was just so hard”

Actually, to be honest, Dad didn’t come back to New Zealand at all. When they broke up, we all agreed to come home. It’s such a munted story. Dad was the one who instigated that we were all going to go home. Then we all booked our tickets and then Dad cancelled and said “No, I’m not going home.” By that stage Amanda was like, “I am going anyway”, and obviously my step sister was going and I had already made plans. I had set up agency interviews, I had paid my flights, I had sussed out a friend to go flatting with. I am a great planner and everything was ready to go, you know touchdown, let’s go, sort of thing.

There were so many mixed emotions going around and I just thought, “I just don’t want to stay in the U.K.” The last month was really really hard and I just wanted to come home at that stage. I wanted to come home, but I didn’t want to come home, it was just so hard. It was, yeah it was very hard to make up my mind. I wanted to come home because I think I wanted just to get away from it all, but I didn’t want to come home because I still really like the U.K. and I liked my job to a degree and the travelling and everything. That’s how we all sort of ended up where we are.

The thought of going back to the U.K. is, I want to go back, but I am not too sure I want to go back when my Dad’s there. I think because my Dad is still quite bitter about it and I don’t want to have to deal with it again. I don’t want to be the only one that he has got to, that sounds really selfish. I don’t want to have to be the only one that he can talk to about it, because in a way I don’t really want to, it’s not the reason why I am in the U.K., I’m not in the U.K. to deal with other people’s shit. I am in the U.K. to, you

know, have a good time and to travel and to meet people. So yes, there is a little bit of uncertainty about going back to the U.K. if Dad's there.

I was, like, right in the middle of it all. Obviously Amanda was very weak, so I would go home from work and cook dinner and make sure she was ok and all that kind of stuff and Dad had moved out at that stage. So I felt very burdened. I didn't mind doing it by any means, you know, I was more than happy to do it, but at the same time, it was like, "This is not what I am here for", you know? "I am not here to be in the middle of Dad and Amanda and their marital issues", sort of thing. Having cancer, it's like a double whammy *laughing*. I think at that stage I really really missed my closest friends, because even though I had made friends, I didn't really have those people that you could really just go and say, "Oh this happened and that happened." So that was quite a hard thing. I think that's also why when we all initially decided we would come home, I thought, "Well I am going to go too." I think also at that stage, because the doctors in the U.K., painted with such a negative picture and had said that she was terminal, it was like, "Well, I am probably going to have to go home soon eventually any way. Umm, worst case scenario."

But I don't know if Dad's initial suggestion of going home was maybe to jolt Amanda into going back to him in some way, I am not sure. Because he almost seemed quite surprised when we caught up one day for a drink and I said well the tickets are booked and dadadadada, and he was like, "Oh", quite surprised by that. I don't actually think he thought that Amanda would go. The day she had her final scan, that was quite a hard day actually, because that was like D-day so to speak. She didn't want anyone to go with her, she wanted to go alone and then she came home, she said to

me and my step sister that it had spread even further and that the doctors had said it's time to go back to New Zealand. You know, spend the rest of your time with your family and friends. That was hard because I had to break that news to Dad as well. Dad didn't obviously, I mean Dad was just an absolute mess when I told him. So, yeah, it was a lot of things that I experienced in my later parts of being overseas, so it was an interesting time.

I mean, I think maybe also you think, when you've been married for 20 years that they would figure it all out, but yeah not so much *laughing*. I just kept saying to Dad, "You guys need to talk about it." He was like, "No, Amanda's really stubborn and she won't talk about it until she wants to talk about it" and then Amanda would say to me, "Oh your Dad is so stubborn." I was pulling my hair out with them. Then when Amanda had the news, and I said to her, umm, "What do you want me to say when Dad calls or do you want me to call Dad?" She said, "I'll tell him eventually, but you know, but I just need to make some plans and everything." Of course then Dad called me and I was just like, "Oh, shit how could I not tell my Dad?" I will never forget telling him, it was just the most horrible thing. I think of what doctors must feel when they have to go out to the waiting room and say that someone has passed away or whatever. That's what it almost felt like to me because there was silence, and I was like, "Are you there?" Then he just broke down. It was quite tough. Then he came around to the house and Amanda was like, "You weren't there when I needed you the most." That was really the clincher. Dad just put me in so many positions which I didn't want to be in and it was just, yeah it was just really hard. I think, you know, to a certain degree maybe I am still quite angry with Dad for putting me in those positions. Yes, maybe I am still not quite ready to see Dad and talk about it, if at all at the moment. Yeah. So that's that really. So I think if he came back to New Zealand, I probably would be more keen to go

back to the U.K. *Pause.* But I mean we still talk, on email and everything, but we don't talk about everything that happened. My closest friends knew what was going on, because I'd emailed them you know sort of thing. So I think, maybe this is why I haven't thrashed my opinions down my friends' throats, of what I perceive to be their closed mindedness about certain things, because I value them for the support of everything that I went through in the later part of my O.E. So maybe that is, wow, it's all falling into place.

4.2.8 Simon's Video Diary

Figure 10: Video Diary "A happening place"



Right now you're at Waikanae beach which is an hour north of Wellington and in front of us is Kapiti Island and this is where I spent the first 20 years of my life. As you can see, *sarcastically* it's a pretty busy day on the beach. There are about five people in the distance. That's pretty much what it's like Monday to Sunday, seven days a week, 365 days a year. All the same though it is actually quite a nice place and it's a place that I will always call home, but at the same time it's a place that I could actually never really live again. Well, not at this point in my life, I mean it doesn't really fulfil anything that I sort of need or want, but yeah, Kapiti coast, *sarcastically* it's a happening place.

Figure 11: Video Diary "Hopefully one day I'll get a transfer overseas"



This is the XYZ centre the building that I work in in town. I work for ABC Insurance. The frustrating thing I found when I came

home from living in the U.K. was actually dealing with the agencies over here. They didn't really seem to appreciate the experience that I gained in U.K. and seemed to reflect more on my experience before I left. Consequently I ended up finding my job myself. The best thing I ever did really. The biggest thing I was looking for was a global company and ABC has fifty five offices around the world and hopefully one day I'll get a transfer overseas. Certainly my job here in New Zealand has made coming home a lot easier just because I suppose I can potentially go back overseas and that's one of the key things that I wanted when I came home.

Figure 12: Video Diary "Everything is relative to population"



Auckland city on a Sunday, not very many people about really. I used to think Auckland was a really big city; now I think it's more of a large town. Especially now that I've lived in a cities like London and been to cities like Barcelona and Paris and Bangkok etcetera. I suppose at the end of the day everything is relative to population so you know, it's a big city for us, but in terms of the world, it's a very small city.

Figure 13: Video Diary “There is no comparison really”



Vector Arena. Supposedly a big asset for Auckland. I was here three weeks ago for the Lincoln Park concert which was pretty cool. A lot of people from my work commented about how big the actual arena is, and I actually thought myself that this is very small. But then the last stadium I went in was in Cardiff in Wales and you compare that to Vector, well, there is no comparison really. Again, it's just another example of everything being relative to population and to demand. So for New Zealand it is a big stadium.

Figure 14: Video Diary “It's just a good lifestyle”



This is Mission Bay in St Heliers in Auckland. It's definitely a place that I call home at the moment. It's a really good spot. It's got the beach, there's a 10k run along the flats into town. Heaps of the triathlon squads do their training down here which is pretty good for me. It's definitely a place that I feel probably the most settled when I'm in Auckland. Just because the city's there and the beach and it's just a good lifestyle. Certainly something you don't get when you're living in a place like London.

Three weeks later

4.2.9 “I don’t think I’ll ever get my ideal home”

It’s been interesting doing the videoing. While I enjoy the space that we have for my sport, I just wish the city was bigger and a bit more livelier and there were more career opportunities. But I’ve probably realised now that I’m not going to get that, it’s going to be one or the other, and one of them is always not going to be where I want it to be. I know that when I’m in New Zealand, to achieve my sporting goals, it’s the place to be and the career’s ticking along nicely and I’m learning new things so that’s all cool. But I know that once I’ve hopefully achieved my goal and gone to the world championships, I’ll be like, “Ok, now it’s time to really grow my career again.” I don’t feel I’ve completed that journey, so to speak. So it’s hard to say at this time whether, once I’ve hopefully gone and done World’s, whether it will be the end of that or if I will carry on.

But I’m finding that now that I’ve got a coach and I’m training twice a day, seven days a week, and I’m going out training with new people and, you know, it’s becoming quite a big part of my life. So maybe just by associating with those people, I’ll be more inclined to stick with it. Maybe after I’ve achieved that goal and set a new goal, I might stay. But I suppose, I know that I can only take my career so far in New Zealand before I’ll have to look at going overseas again. So whether that’s in a year or two years, who knows? So yeah, there’re a few question marks.

But I don’t think I’ll ever get my ideal home, because I want the big city and I want space so it’s always going to be a trade-off, and it will always come down to where I am in my life and what I want to achieve at that time. But because my job is good, and my job is flexible, it allows me to do my sports, and my hours are all over the show at the moment, so I’ve got to balance the two. But if it was

swayed one way or the other, the sporting wouldn't be enough for me, I'd have to have the career, I've always been so driven that way. So yeah, I feel at the moment that I've got the best of both worlds, but definitely – long term – my current job wouldn't fulfill my career objectives.

But I went up to the bay and took a shot of the bay on the video and I was just like, "That's so beautiful", like the beaches and the cafes down on the waterfront. I just love going down to the waterfront and doing my training and it's just, you know, that is just fantastic. You just don't get it in a place like London and I just thought, "Wow, this is brilliant", you know? I think a lot of people that are living overseas and are making a lot of money in their careers and everything will one day think, "I want the quiet life", but maybe they'll get back and think, "Hmm, it's too quiet." Who knows? I suppose it just depends on what's happening in their life at the time.

4.2.10 "I'm undecided"

I can probably take back that I won't go back if Dad's still there, because we've had conversations this week. So I'm more comfortable about going back if Dad's still there, but maybe I can't deal with him alone. *Audible out breath, chuckle.* We've had a few emails lately, which made me feel more comfortable about what he's thinking I suppose. Then I got one from my stepmum which was quite interesting, because she said in her email that they'd been speaking, and she also put in her email that maybe she didn't want it to be over, which was quite interesting. So I suppose maybe that changed how I feel about Dad at the moment.

When I told Dad that I was going to try and qualify for World's in Italy, he replied back and he said that if he was still in London he'll come over and be my support crew. I was quite surprised, because I didn't actually think he would. I don't know, I didn't know if he would or not or if, or if he even offered that, if I would be happy to accept that offer, but when he did say it, I naturally thought that would be quite nice.

So I think I could go back to the U.K. But I wouldn't live with Dad, I would just move straight into a hostel or go to a flat or something like that. Maybe I can't deal with Dad on my own, but I think I could live in the same city *laughter*. But maybe one-on-one could be a little bit hard. Yeah, I'm undecided on that one. But I think that's just because everything is so up in the air, I mean, if they got back together, it would almost be quite weird I think. I'd be happy if they got back together, but if they got back together without resolving a lot of the issues that Dad has, then it would just be a matter of time before it all happened again. So yeah that's a bit of a sticky one.

I definitely feel scared if I stay here too long I'll just end up going through the motions. I'm very undecided whether I will, if I went overseas, if I would live in New Zealand for the rest of my life. I'm really, really undecided about that, because I feel I learn and grow, just grew so much in my job in the U.K., and I haven't been really challenged like that since getting back to New Zealand. So I'm just not sure if I will settle in New Zealand long term. But that's weird, I suppose unsettling really, because so many people around me are settling down and you do feel a little bit like the odd one out, because a lot of people are buying houses and really putting down their roots and I'm thinking, "Will I stay here longer than a year?" you know? That's odd, yeah that's quite weird. I

mean I feel at the moment that I'd be quite happy to go and live in the U.S. for three years, maybe go to Hong Kong for a couple of years and almost just float around. Maybe I'm just not the kind of person that's going to settle down easily, so I guess I've got to get a few more things out of my system before I can really make that decision. Maybe if I do go overseas and work in the U.S. or in Asia or whatever, maybe I'll get burnt out and I'll think, "Ok, New Zealand is the place that I want to be, because it's a bit more of a lifestyle choice." But it depends on my goals really. So yeah, long term New Zealand, I'm really not sure.

4.2.11 "It's made me think"

When I agreed to be a subject, I didn't think I would come to a lot of the conclusions that I've come to so far, like about living in New Zealand. I think it's just made me think about, maybe, where I want to be and what I need in my life for that to happen. I suppose it's made me realise that New Zealand isn't such a hole as maybe what I thought it was, and I really have realised that there are a lot of good things about New Zealand, but everything is just relative to the size of our population. That is what it's like. We're not going to have the public transport system that you have in London, and we're not going to have those cheap flights to Paris or whatever, so yeah, I've just come to realise probably, what I do actually like about New Zealand. I think since I've been back I've probably focused more on the things I don't like about New Zealand and that it's a bad place to be, but maybe it's just not the place that I want to be. So it's just helped me figure things out a bit more. As time goes on and you do get into your routine, and you actually have time to sit back and reflect and look at where you are now to where you were before you left. I am definitely more focused with my goals and what I want to do. Probably a lot more comfortable with who I am; a bit more confident.

It's definitely been an interesting process, probably just because of the way I am, what I need in my life, I just naturally go out and do it, I don't really think about what I need in my life, and this process has definitely made me think about what I need in my life to make me feel comfortable. So it's just made me probably realise where I want to be in my life and that New Zealand isn't going to fulfill all of those requirements and that I will go back overseas to search those things out and tick those boxes. One day I think, "Who knows? I might come back when I'm not quite so career-driven and want a slower pace of life." Yeah it's definitely clarified a lot of things. It's changed my perspective of New Zealand. It's not quite a hole, it's just an island *laughs*.

4.3 *Introducing Dillon*

The following table specifies Dillon's demographic information as a point of reference for the reader:

Table 9: Dillon's Demographic Information

Length of time spent overseas	Date returned	Length of time back	Place of residence in NZ	Place of residence overseas	Nature of residence now
20 months	Apr-07	7 months	Lower Hutt	Colombia	Renting
Marital status	Place in family	Job	Age	Gender	
Married	2 brothers, middle	Public servant - education	34	Male	

4.3.1 "Coming back has been quite mixed"

In a way, coming back has been quite mixed. In some ways it's been really easy and in other areas it's been quite difficult. It's been easy because we had things established here, we had our cars, furniture for the flat, somewhere to live. My wife, Maria, knew her way around New Zealand, and the lifestyle here, and I had some temporary work to come back to. But also it was quite difficult,

because a lot of the things were still the same. I was going back to the same neighborhood I grew up in, going back to work for an organisation I had worked with before. So it was the same routine that I had been doing for two years earlier. In some ways it was nice, but in other ways it gets a little bit boring.

Because in New Zealand, on a global scale, nothing really happens here, and it's just not so exciting, you know, it's very, very quiet, relatively peaceful. In the scope of the world affairs, we like to think it's important, but in reality we are not really, we don't make a huge impact in a world. It's quite boring, nothing happens, small population and it's not quite as exciting as obviously living overseas, in a country like Columbia, where not many New Zealanders go to, with population a *lot* bigger than Lower Hutt or even Wellington, even New Zealand, and so many interesting things happening all the time. I guess in a way, being over there I didn't have the pressure of having to work, find a proper job so to speak. I could do something I enjoyed a bit more, had time to meet people and see things, and explore the area. Whereas coming back to New Zealand, it's working full time and not having as much time to do other things. But then in some ways it's really nice knowing that I could go to work and not have to worry about a bomb threat for example. Last week there was the hīkoi coming into Wellington and when I was walking through Lambton Quay, I just stood right next to it, and you know, the police were there just wandering along with them, no problems at all. The same thing happens in Bogotá, but the riot police would be out with tear gas and water cannons. So the safety aspect is quite nice.

We say in New Zealand we don't know how lucky we are, and we don't, because New Zealand is, you know, relatively calm, people are really free to express themselves. We don't have major

problems with poverty, unemployment or hunger, insecurity and things like that, which are all great things. But also I think it makes people a bit complacent, you know, how things are here and what we should be doing to help other people. I think internationally, really, making people in New Zealand aware of how things are in other parts of the world and how relevant they are to New Zealand is important. I think because New Zealand is so isolated, people think, like, the tsunami in Indonesia, that was so far away, it's not important. Whereas, it is, because, one, they are human beings and two, New Zealand has a reasonably significant Indonesian community here. It's a part of the world where New Zealand is focusing its trade. Latin America, which is of course one of my current interests, in the last five years or so, may be even longer, definitely since Helen Clark became Prime Minister, our connections with Latin America have become stronger. People don't really see it as being relevant, but when Pinochet staged the coup, New Zealand took in a lot of Chilean refugees, which is something we don't really hear about, and I think that's a really interesting part of New Zealand history. So I think to make the need to help internationally relevant in New Zealand is really the key. You know, people say we should look after ourselves, but in reality New Zealand has done a pretty good job of looking after itself. Since the Second World War we've really had to. I think it's time New Zealand can go out and really, really look at what we can do in the international community.

Most of my friends have a slightly different perspective though. Most of them are reasonably well travelled, mainly to the U.K. and trips to Europe. I remember a comment a couple of friends made when there was a tsunami in Indonesia, they said, "Uh well, I would like to donate money, but we don't know where the money will go to." Then, last time when I was in Columbia I was doing a bit of social work, and I was trying to get a bit of money together to help some social work I was doing, and trying to buy resources,

I sent an email to all my friends saying, “Look, put your money where your mouth is, here I am in Columbia, Maria and I want to do something for this community, for this project. This is what’s happening, these families don’t have money to buy school books and clothes or anything.” Of all of my friends from university, I think I got about fifty dollars maybe, and a guy I used to work with, who I’d met two days before I left, he sent me a cheque for a thousand dollars. That was the difference in attitude, that my friends were saying that they would like to help out, but when they get a chance and they could be secure knowing that the money would go to a good cause, they didn’t do it.

Some of my friends explained that it wasn’t a good time for them to actually give money, some of them had just started a family, bought a house, gone back to university or polytech and that’s fine. Ironically the ones that are lawyers and computer programmers, they didn’t get back to me at all and it does make me feel a little bit more distant from them. You know, a bit disappointed in them really. These are friends that I went to university with in the early nineties and I guess in reality we have moved on in different directions depending on our respective careers. We still meet up every week or so though. Most of them are working in central Wellington, so we meet up once a week, once a fortnight and have lunch together. You know, some of us don’t do it every week or fortnight, but whenever we can. At the end of the day everyone is different, I guess, and we are all a product of our experiences. They chose to go down their particular path and I won’t hold that against them. I do feel a little bit more distanced from them, because I chose quite a different path to what most of my friends have.

We don't know where home is or where it will be, I mean obviously with Maria's family in Columbia and my family here, there's always going to have to be a lot of travelling involved, wherever we decide to settle down permanently. So, I am always torn between being here and being there, which is really hard. But for me, I slipped back into the routine, so to speak, pretty quickly. I was working for an organisation I worked with before, they'd offered me a temp job before I even arrived in the country. This apartment we are renting from my parents, we were living here before. So that is nice. But it also feels like after those twenty odd months away that I hadn't progressed anywhere, which is quite hard to take. I'd learnt a lot during that time, but still, coming back here, I was back where I was when I left or even I'd taken a step backwards from the position I was in. The bank balance as well wasn't as healthy as could have been or should have been. But it was also nice with the Latin American community that we became heavily involved with, we slipped back into that as well, which was nice. Also because of my experience with immigration New Zealand and with education agencies and training organisations, a lot of people within that community were asking me for advice and to help them with information or to get information, which I could do in Spanish most of the time, which was really good, it was a big step for me. Something I didn't realise I was doing earlier, which was quite important for a community. So the basic things like work, assets, somewhere to live, it was all simple. I guess the difficult things were the reverse culture shock, and the getting older to middle age, coupled with coming back here, which makes things a bit stressful at times.

4.3.2 “I may be ethnically Chinese, but the only nationality I have is New Zealander and culturally I am a New Zealander too”

It took me probably about two months really to get used to listening to New Zealand English again. I found it very difficult

for the first two months. When I was listening to people speak, I found it difficult to understand them. When I was in Columbia, I was teaching English, so I was used to listening to people with English as a second language or third language, thinking about grammar and sentence structure. When I came back here I was thinking, “Wow, we speak English really badly.” It’s absolutely shocking how New Zealanders speak English, and I mean, in a way I find it funny that quite often people look at me and expect me not to speak English, whereas I used to teach English. Especially my knowledge of grammar is reasonably high. I was sitting down at a café, reading I think it was the women’s weekly or some crap magazine like that, eating chips, which you can’t get more kiwi than that, and a woman sitting next to me, looked at me and said, “Do you understand everything in that magazine?” I said to her, “Yeah, why shouldn’t I?” She said, “Oh well, I thought you were a Chinese student here learning English.” I said, “No, I’m a New Zealander, I was born here.” So she proceeded asking me questions about my family history, which I’m sure if I asked her the same questions, she would have been offended. Which it happens reasonably frequently, it’s happened more than once. I mean Pākehā don’t have these sort of questions asked of them.

So my concept of home is New Zealand, New Zealand is where I was born. I was born in the hospital just across the fence there. Yet Pākehā can’t comprehend that me being ethnically Asian and New Zealand as my birthplace and the birthplace of my mother and grandmother, you know, my brothers and my uncles and my aunties. It made me feel pretty pissed off actually, but also quite sad that New Zealanders still can’t see that New Zealand history is not just the British colonial history and it’s not just history of the Tāngata Whenua, but the Chinese community has been here for over a hundred years, there’s been Latin American families for three generations, there are a lot of people from southern Africa here as well, a lot of people from other parts of Asia and the

Pacific Islands of course. Yet, the common conception of New Zealanders is either, well I'll use the term 'white' or Māori. I think people get confused with the term New Zealander as a nationality for example, or Chinese as a nationality, or Japanese as a nationality, and they get it confused with the term Chinese as an ethnicity or Samoan as an ethnicity. I may be ethnically Chinese, but the only nationality I have is New Zealand.

I mean culturally, let's do it culturally, whatever the New Zealand culture is. I went to China for a day trip in 1990. My parents took us on a trip and we were in Hong Kong and we went into China, and that was the country I had the biggest culture shock in. Just that one day, I just couldn't cope with it. Probably because it's something that I should have been able to slip into, something that should have been familiar to me, but it was completely alien. So when I say culturally, I am a New Zealander, you know, I love watching rugby, I've got an All Blacks shirt, I love eating fish and chips, these things are very, very kiwi. So culturally I am a New Zealander, although that said, within my family we do have some traditions or practices, which have strong Chinese influence. Not necessarily overtly because we are Chinese, but because that's just part of how we grew up, like the food we eat, the way we treat other family members. If we go into a Chinese restaurant I think a lot of the things we will do will come very naturally to us. We haven't thought about them and it hasn't been until reasonably recently when the family has expanded to include people who are not ethnically Chinese, those people haven't been questioning what we do, but asking why we do it. So it's been, I guess, a way for us to explore why we do these things in our family that we just take for granted. So in a nutshell, culturally I'm a New Zealander, normally if I'm filling in a survey or an application form that asks which ethnic group do you closely associate with, I find that a very open question, I'll tick New Zealander or whatever it is, Chinese,

and also put other, Latin American, because I do associate with that ethnic group now.

In Bogota, I'm very comfortable, despite the insecurity. I can go there jump on the bus or whatever public transport to go to wherever I need to go to, quite happy going to the super market, going shopping, going to the government department or whatever. Which really surprised me, finding myself really, really comfortable with the life in Columbia. Probably the main reason is Maria's family being there and being really, really supportive of me being there. Obviously without Maria and her family I wouldn't feel the same about Columbia at all.

But if I was going to be really, really honest, I'd have to say I feel most comfortable here in New Zealand, more specifically here in Lower Hut in Wellington, mainly because I guess things that I've taken for granted growing up, I can just do them. You know, going to the bank and changing the conditions of my bank account, for example, is no problem, whereas in Columbia it's a process and a half to do. Being able to just jump in the car and go wherever I want to is very comfortable for me. Even though I love public transport, it's not possible to use it here to get around. Yes, to be perfectly honest I feel more comfortable here in Wellington, but if it were possible economically and security-wise as well, I would quite happy living in Bogota.

I think it is important recognising that New Zealanders originate from so many different parts of the world, but we are all here, we may be different but we're here, we all have a vested interest in New Zealand as a country, as an entity. The only really unique aspect of New Zealand culture is Māori culture. We are still, I think, forging what it is to have a New Zealand culture, otherwise

there's nothing really that stands out as New Zealand culture. Within some specific areas of New Zealand, what is culturally New Zealand is quite important. I guess there is New Zealand culture in agriculture, I mean, if you go to London there are thousands of young New Zealanders there, whose idea of portraying New Zealand culture would be going to a pub with other kiwis and aussies and South Africans, watching the rugby, speaking in a strong New Zealand accent, going over for weekends on the continent and getting drunk. Doing a very, very disrespectful version of Ka Mate outside a pub or something, which in reality doesn't paint a very positive picture of New Zealand culture. Here, New Zealanders wouldn't do that. You don't get many Pākehā performing a haka in public. Most Pākehā would feel very uncomfortable going on to a marae. I know a lot of my friends have never been to a marae at all, which I think is appalling. Maria's been here four years in total, I think, and she's been onto at least three or four marae, and taken part in a pōwhiri, which a lot of New Zealanders haven't done. For me an important part of who we are as New Zealanders is the Tāngata Whenua. But here in New Zealand, there is a lot longer history of immigration. New Zealand is a nation of immigrants; everyone is a descendant of an immigrant here. It's quite different in Finland than here. I've been thinking about these sorts of things for quite a few years.

4.3.3 “The concept of a global citizen, I feel quite comfortable with that sort of a label”

The concept of a global citizen, I feel quite comfortable with that sort of a label. Not necessarily belonging anywhere in the world, but being able to survive and learn about wherever I am, which I think is the most important thing. Not necessarily feeling comfortable, but learning about where I am. Yeah, I'm comfortable now I guess, compared with five years ago or ten years ago, especially when I wasn't comfortable with being in New

Zealand or being a New Zealander and I didn't know who I was. Then I realised that it didn't really matter. I grew up in Lower Hut and at my primary school of about three hundred students, there were me and a Samoan boy and the rest were Pākehā. I didn't think anything of it at that time, didn't think it was strange, but now when I think about it, it's quite weird really, because I obviously looked different, I stood out, and I still do. I don't speak Cantonese at all, just a few words and that's it, I speak Spanish and my German is not so good now, but I don't speak any Cantonese.

I do need a place that I come and say, "This is my space. This is where I belong; I have control over what I do in this place." But whether it's located here in Lower Hut, or in Bogotá or in Helsinki or in Germany or North West Germany, I think I can cope with those places wherever it is, as long as I have my space, my personal space. But having a whole country of people who have the same outlook of life as I do, I think would be horrendous, I don't think I could cope with it. But I need a place I can come home to, relax, read a book, talk to friends, family of course. Somewhere that is primarily safe, where I can have the things that are important to me on show. All of the art work here in the flat, these are all my wife's work. For me that's important that her work is on the wall. That makes me feel comfortable, having it here. Having my little corner in the bedroom where I throw all my crap after a days work. That's the sort of thing I need, and that's what I call my space, my home. But in a greater sense of saying that New Zealand is the only place I could live in, or New Zealand is the only place I will ever live in, I can't see that. I think that would be very narrow minded of me to think that.

I guess my family, as in my parents and my two brothers, we are really close, but we don't have to be physically close. I've spent

the last ten to twelve years all around the place. My older brother spent the last ten or twelve years in Australia and he had spent quite a few years before that in the U.K. as well. My younger brother is heading off to Australia next year to live; my father was born in Fiji and has been out here since the sixties, so we don't have to be physically close to be close. I mean that said, it's be nice to be able to jump in the car and drive five minutes to my Mum and Dad's place and just do nothing, just hang out and chat and help Mum and Dad out with different things around the house or whatever. Give them a call and ask them for advice, or they can ring me and ask for advice or whatever. Then, of course there's Maria's family in Colombia, who I'm also very, very close to, that's a different relationship of course, but they are incredibly important to me. One of the most important people is Maria of course; I should have mentioned her first, and my grandmother, who is the last of her generation here. No, we don't have to be physically close, but we are emotionally very close, very tight. I don't know if that's because of our Chinese culture, but you know, we are really really close.

4.3.4 Dillon's Video Diary

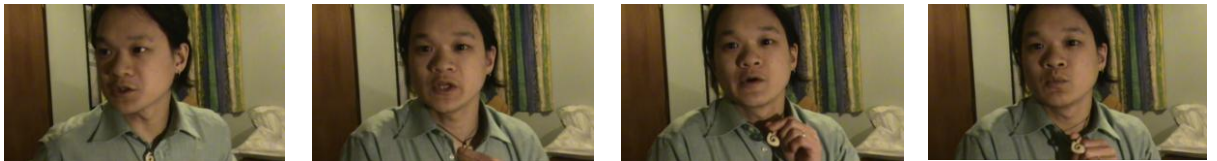
Figure 15: Video Diary "Stand out from the crowd"



I was just sort of thinking about the clothes that I wear, when I was travelling, especially in Colombia, I would quite often wear this shirt, or this one here, or this one here. Very sort of obviously New Zealand, sort of thing. Don't really wear it when I'm at

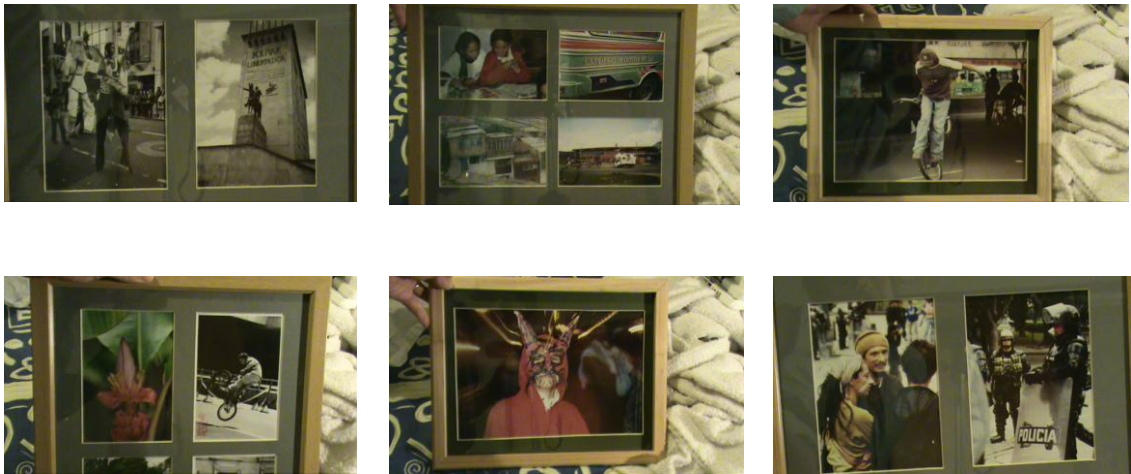
home. Well, when I am in New Zealand I am more likely to wear this from my time in Germany, the town I lived in, or say, something from Colombia, this one my mother in law made, or this one here with traditional designs, or this one here. You know, it strikes me as a little weird, maybe it's just sort of like wanting to stand out from the crowd, who knows?

Figure 16: Video Diary “Symbolism is very important”



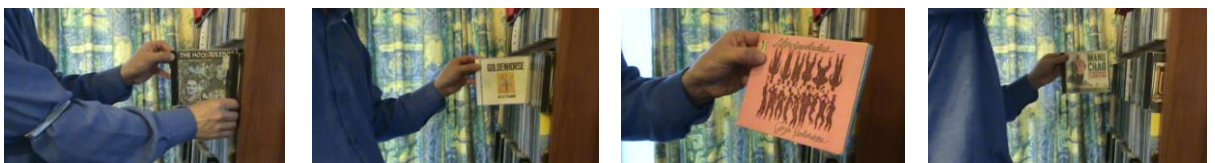
When I was out for my lunchtime walk today, along Lambton Quay, I noticed a lot of people wearing a bone carving or pounamu or similar and it was really cool that people have taken these traditional Māori symbols and feel really comfortable with them. I am not sure if it has become cool or hip to wear them or if people really feel that they are important symbols for them as part of their identity as a New Zealander. For me, I really feel that the symbolism is very important and the idea that it's a gift for someone, it's something that moves on through the generation or through friends. I think a lot of people just like the designs or are travelling and they want to have something different to identify them as not being from the country that they are travelling in.

Figure 17: Video Diary “A big influence on my life”



These photographs are sort of parts of my daily life in Colombia and some of the things I quite miss, especially doing social work and working with kids with really nothing. Most of them would have to wear their school uniform seven days a week because they have got no other clothes. They don't even think about cellphones and internet, computers, game boys, playstations, nothing like that. Even the mad buses there, I miss them, and in some respects, looking at those photos made me feel sad a bit, because things that were important to me have had a big influence on my life.

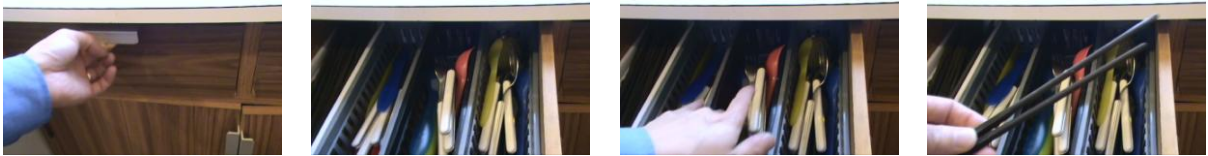
Figure 18: Video Diary “The music makes me feel at home”



I guess any culture can be defined by the music and for me, I have been a New Zealand music supporter since the early 90's, when I was still in high school. For example some of my collection. Mutton Birds, I have got plenty of the Mutton Birds. Slightly more obscure bands maybe Holy Toledos, Gardening Angels, Front Lawn related to Mutton Birds of course, Mellow Thumb quite a variety including MCOJ Rhythm Slave, pretty main stream Golden Horse, of course stuff from the Finn Brothers, The Feelers, Dance

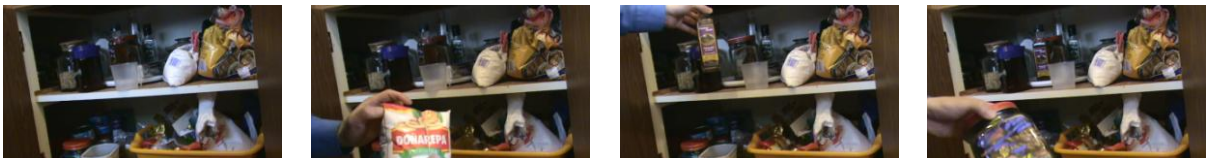
Exponents, Dave Dobbyn, Chris Knox, Let Planet, the Magic Heads. But for me also other music from places I have lived in are important. Let's find a good example with this band from Colombia Tessa Polados, very important for me, love them to bits, and Manu Chao a French group, sings Spanish, Fobia, things like that. So the music makes me feel at home where I am, part of me.

Figure 19: Video Diary – The kitchen, food indicates what's comfortable #1



The kitchen, food, something that I find really important and a good sort of indication of what's important to me, what's comfortable, what's familiar. If I open my cutlery drawer for example along with the knife, fork, and spoon, I have got chopsticks as well.

Figure 20: Video Diary – The kitchen, food indicates what's comfortable #2



Also we have got a lot of things from Colombia which make us, and me, or especially Maria feel quite comfortable, special. Flour from Colombia, there's a flavoured vinegar here, Colombian chocolates.

Figure 21: Video Diary “The sea provides a lot of balance for me”



Earlier on I took some footage from my office window over the Wellington harbour. For me the water, the sea represents something very special, something very familiar, something very calming, and when I live in areas away from the sea I feel quite lost. For me the sea is something that helps me navigate, find my place, where I am right now in relation to the sea is quite important for me, especially Wellington harbour which is a beautiful harbour, it gets a bit choppy, bit rough, but I feel quite close to the sea even though I'm not very good at swimming, the sea provides a lot of balance for me, a lot of reassurance, that's why I took the footage of the harbour.

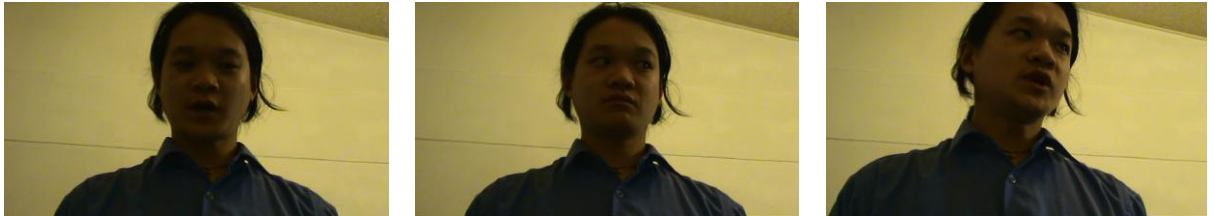
Figure 22: Video Diary “Struggled with identity”



I have struggled with my identity quite a lot as a New Zealander, growing up here, being born here, I am really starting to come to terms with being a world citizen, being aware of the world and not being so precious about being a New Zealander, what is home. I think that's become really, really important to me and I really think that I could feel reasonably comfortable anywhere else in the world, obviously being here in New Zealand, where I grew up,

would fit or it feels like home the most, but that could be despite the many experiences I have had both good and bad here.

Figure 23: Video Diary “I can’t really think of anything that would force me to leave”



I can’t really think of anything that would force me to leave, nothing external anyway, you know, any decision I make to leave New Zealand will be purely on a personal, probably for family reasons, rather than a sense of not belonging or feeling unwelcome. In New Zealand we have a lot of rights, a lot of protection for the individual to be different or not be part of the mainstream, which is something I guess, a lot of people take for granted or ignore or deny, which is quite hard, but I guess as a New Zealander in New Zealand we have to take the good and the bad, and live with it, and in general I think we do an ok job at that, could do better. C+ probably.

Figure 24: Video Diary “It is always nice to come home”



Every time I do return to New Zealand it is always nice to come home, usually to my parents’ place. One of their showers has a particular quirk, it just has a particular point where the water is absolutely the perfect temperature and I can just reach into the shower, switch it on, just flick the wrist switch it on, and I know the water will be a perfect temperature for me when I get in. Just

having I guess my stuff here is really comforting after living out of a suitcase or having to cram everything into one or two suitcases to take onto the plane to bring here or take over there, just being able to spread out, put things where I want them, have things where I want them or in a way that's logical for me. In a way that's familiar and also nice. Even though the change, the movement, is really interesting really exciting, this feeling of familiarity, this is mine, this is my space, these are my things, this is what I like to listen to, this is what I like to eat, this is where I like to put my shoes, these are really, really comforting for me.

One week later

4.3.5 “My lego family... all the little blocks fitting together”

I really like the term whānau, which I think as a concept is closer to what I feel in our family as in the extended family, including aunts and uncles and childhood friends of my parents, who we called aunt and uncle and call them cousins even though technically they aren't. It also fits in with Maria's family. So in that term, Maria's family and my family are quite similar, in this idea of the extended family. Being a blood relative is not as important, it is important, but not the only thing. It could be a family friend, it's really an emotional bond rather than necessarily a blood bond.

I must say that I do have a strong bond with Maria's family. Actually there's another phrase that I thought of when it comes to family, as it does apply to both my family and Maria's family. A lego family. I thought of this phrase during my older brother's wedding. We'd met suddenly his in-laws and his future wife, the day before the wedding, and we all got on like a house on fire, including Maria, everyone. During the reception, everyone was

getting a bit emotional and talking about growing up and things, and especially my older brother and I, when we grew up, our favourite toy was lego, all the little blocks fitting together. Seeing my Dad talking with my older brother's mother-in-law like they had known each other for ever. Sitting down and having a Chinese meal with them, and we were using a non formal way in the way we were eating. I was looking at all these things and seeing Maria talking to my sister-in-law's sister and the children, and my younger brother taking to my older brother's stepfather-in-law. I just thought, it's like a lego family, it doesn't matter which and what shape the bit is, and what colour the bit is, and which set it came from, it all fits together. It is the same with Maria's family. It does fit in. It has taken me a bit longer to realise that all the bits fit in and where they fit in. I think with her family, it's a little more structured, but maybe that's just my interpretation of it. This phrase of the lego family, I brought it up at the reception, and it does describe the families that I'm part of quite well.

Also, when Maria first came to New Zealand, she'd met my parents who'd come to visit us in Colombia, but no one else. But my aunts and uncles, grandmother and my brothers were like just like, "Yep she's part of the family, no problems." That was really important to me. I think that was the difference between the reaction between my friends and my family. With my family it was like, "Yeah well, she's a part of the family." With most of my friends with the exception of my really close friends, most of my friends said, "Who is she? She has to prove herself to us." Which I didn't really appreciate. But my really close friends, they weren't like that at all. My really close friends were the ones who just had no problem with it, just took her under their wing and helped her out when needed, and I still see them, not as often or as frequently as I should, but that is a part of getting older and having different priorities. All the other ones, I don't see them as often anyway, it

hurt me a bit that my friends were not as welcoming as I expected them to be for her. It was their ignorance towards Colombia. Rather than asking her questions about Colombia, they would make statements based on information they'd seen on television, or in the movies or read on the internet, which is not the most accurate information. Whereas my really close friends, they asked her questions, and my family were asking her questions about Colombia as opposed to making stupid and offensive comments about Colombia. Part of my relationship with my friends, we are getting older now and having families and buying houses, and having to move to other parts of the country and the world, for work and whatever. That's part of it, part of getting older and growing up, and I'm fine with that.

4.3.6 “I feel the pressure of growing older”

The pressure of growing older, of should I buy a property or should we buy a property or not, family or not? The normal things that people like me in their mid thirties should really think about, but I don't really want to right now. It's not really possible right now. I am turning 35 in a couple of months and as I think back to when I was starting university and where I wanted to be at 35, it's quite different to where I am now. A lot of my friends are buying houses and having babies, very cozy and family orientated and very settled. I'm thinking, should I do that, or should I carry on with how I have been for the last ten years? I know for me professionally, going away and coming back, having to start all over again with my career, was a bit tough, and financially it is not the best thing to do. One of my cousins just had a little girl about a year ago and it was the first of the next generation. Part of me was going, “Yeah, that's quite a nice idea.” I also spent a few years looking after my nephew in Colombia as well and it was a nice thing to be involved in, but I'm not sure if it's the right timing for me right now, it's just numbers. Getting old, five years off forty.

It's just the perception of where someone in their mid thirties should be or could be. So it's more of an external pressure than an internal pressure, or society's perceptions of where I should be, not necessarily my own values, although I'm definitely having to think about laying the foundations for the future. Economically speaking, we are renting, but where is the money going? Could it go into something that will end up being ours or something we have to give back at the end of it? So even though working for the same organisation is good, it is also a bit of a hindrance, because I feel like I'm not really progressing career wise. I mean it's a completely different job to what I was doing before, but it hasn't been a move up, it's been a move sideways. Really having to start on my career from almost step one and build up my relationship with people again, build up my reputation. It's really a matter of time. Having to do the hard graft, waiting for the right opportunities to move upwards. That's the biggest hindrance of returning here.

4.3.7 “Home for me is not one physical place, it's more of an emotional concept of home”

The reason I wanted to take part in the research was because it is something I have thought about quite a lot. For me, who knows, the next place I go to, wherever that is, it may be just home here in New Zealand, in Lower Hutt or whatever. I might buy the house around the corner, or it might be in a completely different country that I could conceive of as being home. It could be when I die and if I'm thinking about what is home when I'm in the afterlife, it may be something I have already experienced or something I've yet to experience. I think this just adds to the pressure of growing older and not sure whether I want to buy property or have children or really start climbing up the career ladder seriously. So I don't know what is going to be ahead of me. But home for me is somewhere where I can express myself, not necessarily verbally,

but emotionally or physically. Having the space and the mechanisms to be able to do that. It's probably not necessarily a physical place for me, it's not *one* physical place. It's more of an emotional concept of home. As a physical place, it could be here in my house now, it could be a place I buy in the future, it could be my parents' place, or it could my in-laws' place. It could be with the families I lived with in Finland or Germany, so it's more of an emotional concept of home for me.

4.4 *Introducing Teresa*

The following table specifies Teresa's demographic information as a point of reference for the reader:

Table 10: Teresa's Demographic Information

Length of time spent overseas	Date returned	Length of time back	Place of residence in NZ	Place of residence overseas	Nature of residence now
2.5 years	Sep-07	6 months	Auckland	U.K., Germany	Living with parents
Marital status	Place in family	Job	Age	Gender	
Long distance relationship	2 younger sisters	Project Coordinator	26	Female	

4.4.1 "I never really planned it"

I was away for over two years, living in the U.K. and travelling around a bit. Just before I came back, I was staying in Germany with my boyfriend, Mattias, for five months. I was doing a language course, learning German for a bit and just wanted to live with him for a while. He's from Germany. I met him in New Zealand in 2004 and I was still studying and he was over here for a year, but I met him about three months before he was leaving, and I didn't really know what was going to happen or anything and I wanted to finish my degree. But then in the middle of that year he went back to Germany, and I was just finishing. So after I finished

university, I was like, "I don't really know what I want to do." All my friends had gone overseas and come back and I didn't really want to get a job, so I was like, "Ok, I'll just save up and go and visit him." I originally planned to stay in Germany, like, three weeks and I stayed maybe three weeks longer. I can't remember. But I was just not ready to go and I didn't really know what I was doing and had few contacts. It all turned out really well in the end, I was really settled in the U.K. and everything, but for a while I was just like, "God what am I doing so far away from everyone?" Leaving Mattias was hard as well. I was pretty depressed and didn't really want to, but then I just had to get passed it.

So, yeah with Mattias, we had an agreement, when I was living in London, that we could see other people and stuff, and that we would tell each other. That sounds really crazy, but it worked out better that way. Then I tried to break up with him a couple of times, just because I didn't want to go onto the whole long distance thing, I was just like, "It's just too crazy," and also I wanted to feel settled when I was in London and not just be missing someone and just do what I wanted.

This is my big secret that I haven't told my employer. I have told some people who I work with about him, but I haven't told my manager and I think that she would freak out. I could say, "Well, Mattias is planning to come to New Zealand", but the thing is, if he wants to work with cars, it's pretty hard here. So in a while I might be going back over that way. In terms of my relationship with Mattias, it's like solid and stuff, which is all very crazy. But I never really planned to go for that long. I thought, "I will see, I will work out whether things work out in London." I thought my friend was going to be there, but I never really planned it. So actually I never planned to do an O.E. that everyone does.

Everyone sets up base and there are, like, so many kiwis and aussies and they all live in disgusting kiwi/aussie houses in Shepherds Bush, and I was like not keen on that. I just wanted to get some experience and just do my own thing, but then I felt like I wanted to come back for a while.

I've got some really good friendships here that I really really value. As well as for my family, like I say, "Oh I really miss my family", but now it's just like grrr, "Why did I say that?" Also I came back because I was just poor all the time. Especially if you were going to make the most of things and go to gigs and travel around Europe. I felt quite unhealthy in London as well, from drinking, eating crap food, not affording things and the pollution.

I feel like I ran off when I left. In 2004, in the middle of the year, my friend Zana had like a bit of a breakdown. But I was just so busy with other stuff and with Mattias leaving and all that sort of thing that I didn't really pick up on the signs until I visited her and realised that she was actually sick. It was the night before one of my exams and then I had to try and get hold of her Mum and, really long story. But it was very hard and it freaked me out quite a lot as well, because in the past I had relied on her so much, she was like my rock, you know, especially to do with my ex-boyfriend and all of a sudden she really needed me, but she needed rest and it was all really weird. I think sometimes I felt like I left her. It was still nine months or something, but I just felt sometimes I wasn't there for her anymore, because she really missed me and I missed her as well, but I was having all these mental adventures with boys and stuff. But she's really good now, she's got a boyfriend. When I came back for a visit she was really looking forward to it and we tried to spend heaps of time together and we got really emotional as well, but I don't know. But she is amazing,

she is just such a good friend to so many people so. I just didn't want to be the person that splurged all my stuff to her and then went away.

4.4.2 “I love being back in the normalness”

Kastl, where I was staying in Germany with Mattias, was not the most exciting place. Definitely not an international city, and lots of the discourse about otherness and stuff was just depressing. They have a documenter art exhibition there every five years. It was like the biggest deal and they get 20 million pounds funding from the Federal Government and everyone, the whole art world converges in Kastl. It was very interesting in relation to the work I do now to see how they do an event. But one thing was that one artist bought 1000 Chinese people to the city and they were like an art exhibit. But the way it was talked about in the media and how, like, people would come and ask Mattias if I was one of them and stuff. People go on about diversity in New Zealand and sometimes I can believe that it's true that, you know, it's really multi-cultural in Auckland, but sometimes I'm really depressed about how it's all facile and not very deep, but other times its just like, “Wow there are places in Germany where it's just so backward.” There's just like racist ads on TV, I am really highly attuned to that sort of thing and some of the things I studied at uni to do with representation in films and TV media and stuff. Over there it's just like, they can't really seem to grasp that I'm from New Zealand and I'm born in New Zealand and the reason I can't speak German is because I speak English. I don't know, if you're Chinese-looking in Kastl, it would be like you are either working in a Chinese restaurant or you are an international student. Some of Mattias' friends, even they just assumed I was an international student, or there are just instances sometimes where I'd hang out with some of his friends and afterwards I would just be so upset because they say really stupid things. Sometimes they don't mean

it or they say they are just joking. Like, at their flat, the boys were just watching football, soccer, an inter-country game, and sometimes I heard it in German they referred to this guy as thick lips or something. I just really hate it when people think that I will be on the white man's side and things like that, that it's ok to be offensive about black or Māori people in front of me; I think that stuff is just really awful.

When I was in London I was still keeping in touch with all the news and I was quite good at emailing my friends and reading the news and then finding out about Auckland having 20 or 25 per cent of Aucklanders are of Asian origin. It was like, "Oh cool." But that was how I remembered it anyway. In London even I felt a bit sometimes exotic, there's not as many oriental Chinese or Asian people there. Well, certain communities, but they obviously talk about Pakistani and Southeast Asian and Indian. So when I came back, I was like, the face of the city has changed a bit like that. But I just love just being back in the normalness of having Pacific Island people and Māori people and everyone pretty much gets on. I don't want to be too idealistic about it or anything, but it's a different mix in London, it's a different life in Germany.

4.4.3 "I've had a little bit of up and down since I've been back"

I've had a little bit of up and down since I've been back, but mostly I'm feeling quite good about it. Really busy with work, so just feel like I'm going to keep plodding on and my manager is really hard. She kind of scares me a bit, because she talks about things years in advance. I'm not sure I would like to stay for all that long, but we definitely do plan for more than a year in advance. So that's a little bit scary, because it's commitment and I obviously feel guilty about not telling her about Mattias. But I've heard that if an employer can keep you for a year that's great and if

they keep you for two years that's fantastic. So I've been going on that premise. I think one or two years is what a lot of employers might think, but I think with council they think, like my manager, Sally, she's been here for 14 years.

I am the project co-ordinator for creative industries and events. It is a really unique position, and I am really pretty happy, because it combines creative stuff as well as organisational things. So my creative output is just mostly writing stories at the moment, and communications and marketing which is fine, I quite like doing that, but especially in a local government setting, there are limits as to how exciting you can make anything. A lot of stuff has to be formal. Taking this job was a decision between whether I was going to go down that more creative film TV route or follow my legal interests.

When I left, pretty much all my friends were single and now I have come back and everyone has coupled up and that's like, "Uhhh" in a quite self-deprecating way. It's like, "Uhh, I don't have a job, don't have a car, don't have my boyfriend and this, that and the other", but actually my friends have been really cool and I have pretty much gotten back into the swing of things. They make time to hang out and I've felt well-settled in that way. Especially Dennis, who I was really close to before I left. We just get on really well. It's really hard to explain. It seems to happen, I have had quite a few really close guy friends who I get on with really well. Sometimes the language thing is sometimes, like cultural things, I think Mattias doesn't understand in the way that me and Dennis get each other. But I am really totally in love with Mattias, and there are so many other reasons why I love Mattias. It's really cringy that I've actually gotten to this stage. But yeah and physically and stuff I just belong to him.

4.4.4 “It’s been brewing forever”

I have two younger sisters, Katrina is two years younger than me and Sarah is turning 21 in April. Katrina lives in London at the moment, she moved there a couple of weeks after I left, but we did a couple of trips and stuff and when I was in Germany I went to visit her. We used to hate each other’s guts, but now get on quite well, which is really cool. Then, my youngest sister Sarah, who I used to get along with, but I think maybe partially because I left, she had just finished school, so I missed all those development years at university, which is so crucial, and so I felt like I didn’t really know her very well. She came over to London to visit for a bit. Me and Katrina were just like, “Wow, she doesn’t want to come out and have a drink.” It was so weird and she gets all upset about this and that. I don’t know, she is a performance musician. She is studying cello. Sometimes I think she is an airy fairy musician, which is just a stereotype, but sometimes also being the youngest child there are a lot of things that she just doesn’t get and she just had sorted out for her. She doesn’t have that adventurous mindset that me and Katrina have.

Then, my parents, they have been separated, but living in the same house for the last 10 years. My Mum sleeps in a room upstairs and my Dad has all his stuff downstairs. Almost 10 years ago they thought they might split up, I’m 26 now, that was when I was 16, and I don’t think that went very well for me, because I have in the past been closer to my Dad rather than my Mum, but then getting both sides, you know how it is. Then, my sister Katrina has been traditionally more close to my Mum, and I have had quite a bad, not really bad, but just I’m not close to my Mum really. That’s just been brewing forever, like, they won’t ever actually split up and part of it is for us, the children, but part of it maybe culturally, like,

not very acceptable or whatever, part of it is just they don't really want to deal with it or they have tried or whatever.

But then recently since I have come back, I have been hanging around the house heaps and talking to my Mum quite a bit, and I felt like we were having a better relationship and stuff. Then she started to tell me heaps of stuff about my Dad being real mean, and I've seen him being real grumpy, and basically be really depressed for ages, but then I still got along with him better sometimes. It was weird. So I thought they were going to split up and there has been lots of talk about that, but it's been really one sided. I have only talked to my Mum about it. I talked to Katrina a bit about it, but Sarah has no idea, until a couple of weeks ago when I told Mum, "You have to tell her. Otherwise Katrina is just going to tell her." Then, I haven't really talked to my Dad about it really. I do think with some of his stuff he does or says is really unreasonable so, yeah.

4.4.5 "I have no say"

My younger sister, Sarah, she has got her boyfriend living with us at the moment and I don't like John. There's nothing wrong with him and I feel really mean and bitchy, but I also think that it is a really bad idea at the moment, when I thought that my parents might be splitting up and that he has no idea. He is about 21. Why would you want to live at your girlfriend's parents' place when they are breaking up? Then my parents are on good behaviour when he's there and it's just not normal. He has been home schooled since he was eight, and I may be really judgmental, but I do think that he assumes everything is there for him, so I don't think he's like a grown up guy. He is not responsible for things and he doesn't have any balls. He doesn't have any guy friends and part of it is a floaty, airy musician sort of thing, but I feel really

cringed. Especially when I first got back, he was living in my room for a bit while I was away, and when I came back I got my room, but he has moved into Katrina's room, which Katrina isn't very happy about.

Then, he would just tell me about how this and that worked at the house or whatever my Dad's favourite restaurant was, and I was just like "Ooh, gross." It's just really cringey. He doesn't really get stuff. It's going to sound really bitchy, but just over Chinese New Year he went back to Wellington for a bit, partly because we were getting the house painted and stuff and he left. I came home and there was a bunch of flowers on the bench and a card and I was like, "What's this?" I looked at the card and it said, "Dear Mary and Larry" brackets, "Mum & Dad, and Teresa." I was like, "Ahhh!" It was like so bad, he's like, "Thank you so much for having me here, it's so great to have such a great Auckland family", because he's from Wellington, and he's like, "I love learning about your Chinese traditions." He's a whitey. He is half American. He has got a weird accent and can't pronounce his R's and stuff. But it's not just gross, it's as if he's telling me what my family is like, like he knows everyone, when he doesn't know about all the bad stuff that's going on. I just feel like he gets to have this lovely nice relationship with everyone, whereas my Mum and Dad are both bitching to me about each other or whatever. It's like my sister is in charge of the house and everything revolves around what she wants and she doesn't even know it. She doesn't even appreciate it or understand that at all.

Yeah, he moved out of his flat, because he was going to move back to Wellington, my Mum thought for a few months, but he actually just went down for a week or a couple of weeks and then came back, and then left all his stuff at our house, and so it was like, he was at our house. I was like, "That's nice that I got told and

whatever.” So he formally asked my Mum whether he could stay until the middle of the year and Mum was like, “Oh well, I have to ask the other people.” So she asked me about it and I just talked to her for like an hour. I set the time aside when I could have been doing other things to talk to her about all these issues that she’s having with my Dad and how I really think that she should talk to a counsellor, because she was just telling me stuff and not taking on board any of my recommendations, and I said, “It’s just really hard when, I can’t feel that much sympathy, when you are not actually doing anything.” Then, I thought we had resolved that it was really bad timing, because they are on good behaviour when he’s there, and also because it’s not the Chinese way to have your daughter’s boyfriend there all the time either. His parents are really Christian and I don’t know what they imagine. Also because they are really young, and it’s quite a big deal to my Mum.

So I thought we agreed that I didn’t think it was a good idea and we had an agreement, I thought we had an understanding, and then the next day she is like, very casually, “Oh Teresa, I have something to tell you. I came home and Dad was already telling Sarah that it was fine,” so I was just like, “Oh my God, what is even the point of asking me? Now you have just made it like, I don’t give my consent and you have gone against what I have actually said, and I have no say”, and he didn’t talk to me about it at all, he just assumed or whatever, and then my Dad is doing it because he wants the family to stay together, and he doesn’t want to move out. So it’s annoying in that sense, but I can understand he just wants to welcome him or whatever, but I was just really not happy.

I haven’t really talked to my Dad much since I got back, like, I really feel I talked to them much better when I was away. In a

way, I felt really cringed about the whole thing and with what was going on with my Mum and I didn't want to talk to him about anything, because he was pretty rude to me at some stages as well, and in my family no one ever apologises, no one ever resolves issues; it's just underlying tension that you are supposed to forget about it.

4.4.6 “I had a big fight with my Mum”

I had a big fight with my Mum Thursday night last week and by Friday when I came home she was, “Hey, hi Teresa, ra ra ra.” It was this big fight, am just trying to remember how it came up, just because we were getting the house painted and the carpet done and I was just having a breakdown, because I was just like, “How am I going to pack up everything I own in this weekend, when I am going away for this wedding, which I have to do heaps of stuff for, and I am actually busy every night during the week. You've given me just over a week's notice.” A couple of weeks ago I was helping with the international cultural festival for the Saturday and Sunday, and I have been having migraines and been stressed and blah blah blah, and it was like, “Ok so you couldn't choose another date, because that's the way it is, but couldn't you have let me know earlier,” and she was just saying sorry, but quite sarcastically and didn't really mean it. I know she can't do anything about it now, but I just felt like it's another thing where I don't get told or get consulted, and sure, I can just move out and not deal with it, but I felt like I was making the effort to reengage with my family and, you know, try and work out what my parents are doing, maybe be a stabilising influence, because my Dad was being pretty aggressive some times, not bad, but just really unreasonable sometimes, and making really mean comments and stuff. Then she said, “Well you're not even committed to this family.” I was like, “What? What did you just say? Can you say that again so that I can just let it seep through my brain and into my body and my

heart, that is soo hurtful and so unthoughtful” and then she was like, “I didn’t mean that, I meant that you are not committed to this country, you said so the other day,” and I was like, just really upset and so I just started to bawl and I punched the door. Yep. I know, a bit psycho, but yeah, and she just seems to have forgotten or whatever that she said that, because when I say I’m not committed to this country, I joke all the time, so it’s not like I don’t care about being here or I’m just doing it for fun or for monetary reasons.

I got really insulted, and I said to her, “Do you think I am living here without my boyfriend for fun? Do you think I am just staying at home just for the food or to save money? Do you think I don’t care about how things happen with my family and want to be involved? What do you think, John is committed to this family then? Are they going to get married and all that?” I don’t know, I just got really angry and upset and didn’t want to have blue knuckles and puffy eyes for work. I ended up talking to Dennis, but then I had to come into work on Friday and get heaps of stuff sorted, because Sally was going away. I was just having a tough morning trying to cope, and then getting emails from my Dad trying to make me feel better and saying you don’t have to be committed to this family and this country, you’ve got your own life. He’s gotten into writing really cheesy emails, and I was just trying to deal with it and tell him, “I don’t want to talk about it and I am really upset and I have heaps of work to do”, and then it got to the point where I was like, “I can’t”, and I sat in one of the meeting rooms and called Mattias and cried.

What I have realised, through being with Mattias, is that that is the most important thing to me. It’s just hard as well, because part of the decision for me, if I go over to Germany is like I am putting that above any sort of career options really. I don’t know what

kind of opportunities I might be able to find there, but sometimes I think it's not very feminist. Then I think, "Well, I should just want to be happy" and obviously that's just the beginning of stuff and I don't know how it's going to go, but I know that I want to be with him and so, I guess since I sort have felt settled and committed with him, I have felt much more spiritually settled or something.

4.4.7 "What are these made up ideas of home and family?"

So moving forward and stuff, I would like to live in the same place as Mattias. Like, my sister Katrina and her friends, they all went to schools like Auckland Girls' Grammar and they are quite privileged middle class, and they do go overseas and stuff, but they always intend to come back. New Zealand is definitely their home, whereas for me, I feel like, yeah New Zealand is my home, but I am not really sure how much. Sometimes I can get a bit like, "Oh whatever, I don't care, I don't care if you don't want me, I don't want you either," to the country. So when my Mum said the other day, "Oh you are not committed to this country and this family" and stuff that was really hurtful in a way that it makes me feel quite floaty, that I don't have any time for anything. Why did I even bother to come back? What are these made up ideas of home and family? Why did I even pretend that it was that important to me, when it didn't really work that well before? You know, I guess it's a little bit teenagy that you just think, "If you don't want it, then I don't want it either," but I think just from a more international perspective, I don't really know where I will end up, you know? I might get a job in America or Italy or Australia, I don't know, but I think I like adventure, so we'll see.

I think what home means to me is just fluid. I think it is too easy and doesn't take too much thought or steps to just say, "Oh I'm homesick." Like, when people leave here and they are in London,

it's like, "I'm really homesick and I miss home" and blah blah. But well, there are certain things I miss like, you know, going to a festival, or the food especially, or the ease of getting around and going to the beach or whatever. But then when I am here, I really miss London and the buzz and the media and the gigs on all the time and getting drunk. I don't want to say that people don't really feel it, that you just always want what you don't have, but if you are going to whine about it that much, then why do you just put up with it? Why don't you just do what you want? It's almost like an excuse to not really deal with what's happening and take control of your life. So, I hope I don't complain too much. As much as I maybe complain about my family, I could just move out, I am just a bit lazy and want to save some money and I bought a car and I haven't paid for it yet.

But having to deal with your parents' stuff, when isn't my stuff enough to deal with? It feels sometimes like me and Mattias, even though we live thousands of miles away, it's like we have a more normal trusting healthy relationship and my parents live together and they can't stand each other sometimes. I don't think we really ever had happy family type things before. While I was a teenager I think I was probably actually depressed for a lot of the time, and I didn't really talk to them about it, or if I tried to, they just gave me really crap solutions. Obviously I probably could have talked to counsellors or whatever, but I think a lot of the time when I was growing up, I was just really aimless and I didn't know of people who were older than me that could help me out with what was going on. I have always wanted to have a bit of distance in a sense. Maybe part of that might be feeling a bit disappointed or something, that I don't feel I could have relied on them in the past, now it's that I don't really want to.

My younger sister Katrina, the whole birth order thing and the middle child is most likely to want everyone in the family to get along. So she makes efforts to email all of us together and say how's it going and all that. Not this year, but the year before, we had a big family Christmas and New Years over in Europe and it was nice, but it was a bit fake because my parents got along. But Katrina's boyfriend Sean came along as well as Mattias, so we all met up. It was all quite cool, but also family, you realise that is not all rosy. I don't know, sometimes I feel like it would be nice to hang out sometimes, but really I can totally imagine living really far away from them.

So New Zealand is my home, but in a way it's just set up like that. Sometimes I think that my parents don't have that really strong family bond with our extended family that sticks together and meets up for lots of stuff. Compared to like Mattias' family, whenever its someone's birthday, then they all get together for coffee and cake like four generations and that sort of thing, even though he doesn't know his Dad, but he has got his Mum and his half brother and his aunt and uncle and granddad and grandma and great-grandma. They all hang out together and it's really nice. Personally for me, the whole idea of "Yay, happy family", I'm not bothered or anything by it, but it's not really real in a sense. But I still believe in the importance of close relationships like your family, even if it doesn't work out, and friendships definitely. That's just a core part of what makes life.

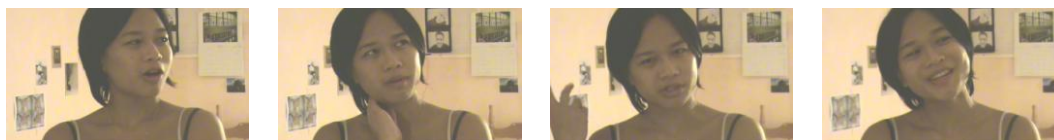
4.4.8 Teresa's Video Diary

Figure 25: Video Diary "Home is driving"



Don't be scared. I just wanted to say that home is driving around; I really missed it when I was in London and in Germany. I didn't really feel confident driving a manual and on the wrong side of the road and all that sort of thing, so yeah, I think one thing that I really needed was to come back and get a car, drive around. Anyway, I'm going to stop now.

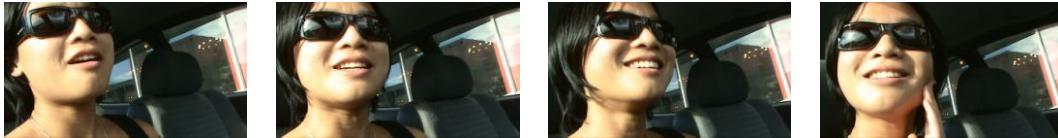
Figure 26: Video Diary "BFM's a large part of what I consider home"



I should probably say that like BFM's [radio station] probably a large part of what I consider home to be, because I've listened to it pretty constantly since I was 16 and then while I was at university I was volunteering for them and also sort of working part time and even though you sort of see it go up and down and stuff it's still always there. I think I'm probably one of those obsessive people who needs input all the time or whatever and also can't really make decisions about what I want to listen to all the time. Like, in terms of picking things or like putting CD's on, so even though I've got tonnes of CD's (I spent quite a lot of my student loan on them), it's just nice to listen to music all the time, whether BFM provides that or not is another question. But yeah also when I was away

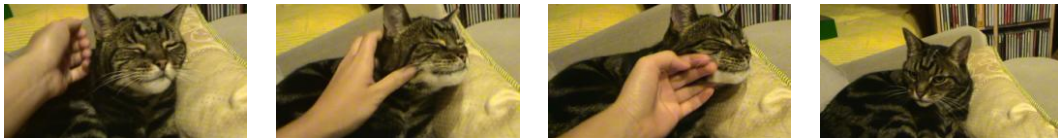
because you can listen to it online, that was really cool. Being able to hear kiwi accents again and just hear the gigs that are on.

Figure 27: Video Diary “The Rialto has always been a great place since I sneaked into R18 movies”



I guess part of home for me is Newmarket because, you know, it's near where I used to go to school and it's kind of like my local. It's quite funny that it's now like the shopping central district of Auckland when to me it's just you know where I go to get anything or yeah, but the Rialto has always been a great place for me since I was about 16 or whatever and sneaked into R18 movies and stuff.

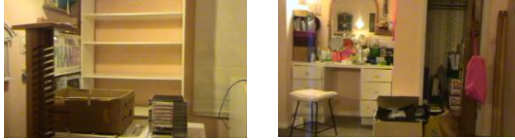
Figure 28: Video Diary “What home means is having a cat”



This is my cat Apollo, everyone calls him Polly. I think he might bite me if I play with him anymore, but um, yeah, I think part of being, or what home means is having a cat and being able to commit to staying in one place enough to have a cat. Although at Mattias' Aunt's place they had a pretty funny cat there as well, because in London, I'd sort of missed having a cat.

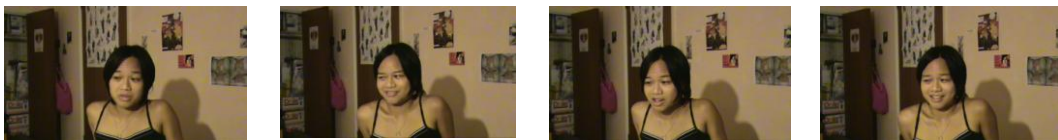
Figure 29: Video Diary “Pictures can be so evocative”

Some pictures and DVD omitted for anonymity reasons. Video shows two close-up photographs of Mattias. Video also shows extremely close up shot of Teresa with her reading glasses on when she turns the camera around to face herself.



Just in case you might accuse me of making up Mattias, here is a picture of him. Not that that means anything when it is just a picture, and here is another one. This one is in Bristol, the other one was in London. I don't have too many photos of him around, because I find it a bit difficult. See my bare room. Because sometimes it's emotional and stuff. Here you can see my shit all over my room. Basically *turns camera around to her face*, oh God, I wish I hadn't done that *laughs*. Sometimes it's like, because pictures can be so evocative, it's like, all of a sudden I am like somewhere completely different.

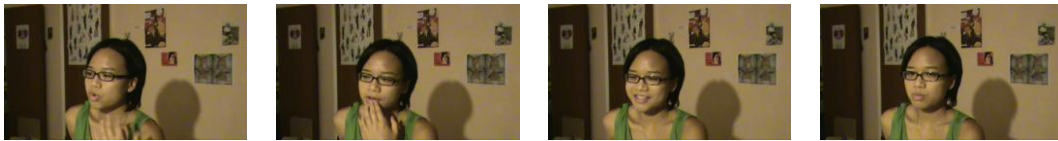
Figure 30: Video Diary – “I was negotiating all this stuff”



We'd been out for dinner at this restaurant called Number Five on City Road, off K road, and it was like my family, Mum, Dad, Sarah and John came along as well. And I was still feeling really 'urgh' at this time, and I think I mentioned to you that I hadn't heard of this restaurant before, and I was asking what it was like, and it was really posh, and then John said, "Oh, it's his favourite" about my Dad, and I was like "Ok, whatever." At the time, I was sitting there, I don't know whether I was being really spoiled, but I got back and I was like, while I was negotiating all this stuff and adjusting, I all of a sudden had to get to know this guy and like him, and it was a bit constraining, perhaps, or really cringy. Like, all the smittiny

stuff at dinner with my parents pretending to get along as well, and everyone was being all laughy and jokey and I'd not just even talked to Mattias for a whole month. And it was really hard when people would ask me, and I'd be like, "Yeah, no I haven't talked to him. Do you want to remind me again?" Because sometimes it felt like I'd just got back and I just wanted to turn around and go back.

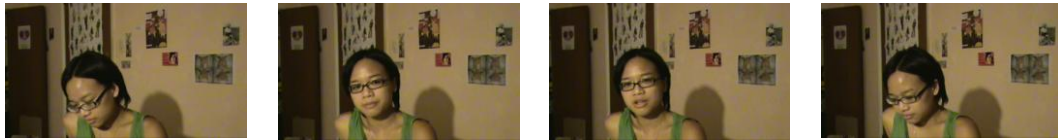
Figure 31: Video Diary “An easy thing to cliché”



I was thinking today, you know, all this stuff about what is home, and for a lot of New Zealanders I feel like they think of the whole of New Zealand, that is, New Zealand's home, and they have all these images of like the beach or the rural-ness or mountains or sea or whatever and they might not even relate to the experience if they live in the city... And it becomes such an easy thing to cliché as well. When you're in London and there's such a bunch of kiwis there, but then compared to somewhere like Germany, which is sort of mostly sort of inland, and actually people are very mobile. They, you know, you will go to the high school somewhere, but then you'll live somewhere else when you go to University, and you'll do another semester somewhere else, and your parents often live somewhere completely different, or you have family here or there or you decide to go to France for a year or a semester, or you go on holiday to Italy and travel around a lot. There are a lot more, like, long distance relationships that are just long distance by, you know, a few hours, because they live in different cities in Germany and then they just take the train and see each other in the weekends or something. Yeah I don't really. I did kind of have a point with that. Maybe. This is a particular sort of sentimentality that New Zealanders have. I know it is, it's because it's so far away it really

is a commitment to live here in a way and it is a commitment to leave. It's not easy.

Figure 32: Video Diary “The goodbye girl”



In a way because I have had to move so many times and give up this, that and the other and every time I used to move house I would obviously chuck things out and had to keep things to a minimum, because it's not easy to shift all your shit like to another place in London and everyone moving countries and stuff. Like all the books that I bought over there I gave away and gave away some of my clothes and didn't have that many things. I just can't accrue things, because I have to give like, can't keep them and then things with Mattias, it's like where, you know, you have to be sensible about things like that, like, I'm not going to send him lots of text messages every day, because it costs me like 30 cents every time I send one and stuff, and actually you know if I sit down and make a phone call with a calling card, 30 cents is like 10 minutes so yeah it's, I don't know. Maybe it's a little bit stoical or something. *Pause.* I guess yeah you've got to I think this is touching on the idea that there is a danger or becoming like nihilistic if you get used to giving things up and then you don't attach yourself to anything very much, because you know it can't really last then you'll get used to disappointment more. Like, and I guess that applies to countries or wherever you live and the people around you and all that as well. You just, I don't know. I don't know whether that means that you get 'hard' or something, like, I mean you harden up and you don't feel it anymore, or whether you can see it more positively than that. But for example, I mean I have sort of in the past thought of myself as the goodbye girl, because I have been left by Stuart going to another country, or

previous adventures I have had with boys where it's just like they're about to leave the country, or they have come back for a couple of days, or I'm leaving. And yeah, I have done that now too, where I am about to leave and I go a bit mental and kind of hook up with someone and then leave and then. Or obviously the whole time with Mattias, like, if we met up for a weekend or a week or something and then it's like always goodbyes. You get used to it. Like, I still obviously get upset when I have to leave Mattias but I get used to it in a way, like with this sort of modern world stuff you can see each other again some other time, you know? It's not the end of everything, like you get email and I don't know. *Pause.* Used to being left and used to leaving. That's terrible. *Pause.*

Four weeks later

4.4.9 Germany will “be quite different from my other homes”

I was having a bit of a funny day the other day because I started talking to Mattias about that stuff like, “Oh why can't I come and see you now” and stuff and I know that we have this plan, but sometimes I just like to hear the plan again or just check, and also sometimes I forget parts of it, which is really crazy in a way, because I am putting so much hope on it. But still, when I start to look at immigration rules for Germany and stuff like that and reading, it's hard to find any information, you can look up message boards, but it's just case by case studies. But I forget the fact that I am actually really going to have to really properly learn German and speak it every day, and not just hide away, or be lazy about it. I am going to have to stuff up and make a fool of myself and be real embarrassed and not be able to do stuff, and grovel for jobs again, which is not so nice. It is scary to see that most important thing in my life, and then sometimes I guess I have doubt, especially when I consider how long we have been doing long

distance and how many other things have gone on as well. When we are together, and even when we are not together, and I am upset or something, he's always there for me, and when we talk we just know each other so well. We don't really have any boundaries. It's like a spiritual thing, but it's like, wherever we happen to be, no matter what else the world throws at you that if you have each other.

But I think my doubts arrived from the Germanness and then whether I really gel with the culture there and living there, because it would be quite different from my other homes. Living in the U.K. was pretty sweet for me like and living here is fine pretty much, but Germany is different. I know I didn't really try very hard when I was there for five months and that became a point between us. But I know that if I want to make it work, then I really have to try. Mattias is awesome and on paper or when I just list off things, it doesn't even sound like, I joke about him being my imaginary boyfriend, he cooks really well, he cleans, he sews, he fixes cars, he is really emotionally aware, but then not really sucky about it, and he likes art and design. We don't have the same taste for movies and music or for a lot of things. But I think in some ways I am a lot more settled with him and don't care about little stupid and unimportant things.

4.4.10 “I think it's a lot more fluid and dynamic”

Certain people in London are clinging on to the New Zealand stuff so much and it's only when you go to a gig for a New Zealand band and everyone is wearing haka t-shirts or with New Zealand maps or Aotearoa and it's kind of cool. But if everyone's wearing greenstones and stuff that's kind of a joke as well, that's kind of uncool. It's a really Pākehā thing as well. I am not just from anywhere, I'm from New Zealand and it's like, ok, cool. People

get really defensive about being called an Australian which is fair enough. But I think I can find that a bit tiring. It's not that I don't feel like a New Zealander, it's just that I think the ideas about what everyone thinks a New Zealander is, are so fabricated and so mainstream and speaks a lot of values that I don't adhere to, whereas I think it's a lot more fluid and dynamic. Like, it's 'cool' to think about kiwi ingenuity or something, because you can see how people do apply that to their business, and do really well globally, but certain things it's like, "Oh God, not that again." It's mainstream, stereotypical, made up by Saatchi and Saatchi.

Whereas in London, you get affected by people around who have plans to go that place or that place and say, "You should come too", and then you get used to that mindset where people change around a lot. I guess that effects how it is when you come back as well, that people are like, "How long are you going to be back for?", or "Are you coming back to visit?" Some people I have to emphasise that I am here for a while and some people I have to emphasise that not forever. But I think if you're travelling around a lot, you don't have time to look at the bigger picture about what you are doing, or you just say, "Oh I will just keep doing this because then it will finish and I will have to go somewhere else", or "I'll think about it later". Whereas now it's like, "Ok, I have set myself up with a job, it will keep going and I don't have to get too emotionally invested in it, and I don't have to enjoy it or anything, so now I can work out what I want to do next."

4.4.11 "It's been enlightening"

The last couple of weeks I think it's just a meta comment that I have done so much blah blah blah blah that I reach my limit and I can't emote anymore or go on about it. Because I also talk to my friends about this stuff as well, so I just get to the point where,

well, because lot of it's just self reflection and I do think that it's unhealthy to do that too much. Because I have a tendency to do that anyway. Sometimes it's useful and sometimes it's not, because it's like endless navel gazing. Then, I guess a couple of things have happened while this has been going on so that's been quite interesting to see how me talking to you about this stuff has affected my opinions about it.

Like, when you have thoughts that you repeat over and over to people, you don't delve into them very deeply, then they just become something that you say. Whereas if I think more carefully about it, then it's like, "Is that actually what I meant?" I think part of it was I was asked so many times, "Why are you going home?" and I would say things about, like, "I miss my friends" or my family or whatever, "I never intended to leave for so long", but then to examine really what that actually means especially in terms of my family it's been enlightening. Examining it has helped, I mean, I see how I behaved badly and stuff.

4.4.12 "It's like a pit stop for me to work out strategic planning"

I guess part of that was the idea that I would stay at home for a while as well, just to settle myself down, and then try and work out what I am doing. Because even if I say I will stay here for a year and then I am going to think about going to Germany, sometimes it feels like ages and sometimes it feels like, "Oh my gosh that's not very much time to learn German." So it's like a pit stop for me to work out strategic planning.

I mean, like, I am in one place where I don't have lots of external forces affecting me, like being really broke or having to work out how I am going to stay in the country, or getting around and those

sorts of things, so it's like my home, so I can sit here and work out what I am going to do next. It is like, "Ok well, I have lived here before and its fine, and I can sort out some other stuff." But whether that is actually what I am going to do is another matter, because I seem to be spending a lot of time and energy on work, and I get quite frustrated and resentful in the way that I don't have the time to do some creative stuff or work out what I am doing, or even open my German book and you just get caught up in it. It's not that I'm afraid of planning for the future, but it's hard at this stage, and I think I have more of a plan than I used to and more than some people I know. I don't have a five year plan or anything; I don't have an engagement, wedding, baby sort of a plan. I definitely don't have a career plan.

But I think the big things that I am thinking about are what I do for work, career and creativity stuff, because I have said for so many years that I want to do this, that and the other and I get really frustrated when I see examples of what people produce and I am like, "I should be doing that, imagine what I could have done if I spent the time to do that", and I don't want to just end up like old and thinking, "Shit, I should have done that." But I think this is only in the last couple of days I've been like, "Yep, I really have to learn German." But that's something that I could be doing all the time and then I will feel a bit more secure about decisions to make the most of it, because I think I have a tendency, or have in the past, to just go through things without really knowing what I am doing.

I definitely didn't plan to do an O.E. the way that people go overseas to get some experience or experiences and then come to New Zealand with their experiences in a bag and then look at them sometimes and put them on the shelf and carry on. I think this is

something that I just wanted to do. Then, the whole time I was away, I didn't really know I was going to come back or whatever I thought about going to Germany for a while, I thought about trying to get another visa or going somewhere else and wasn't like I was waiting for the day to come back or that if I came back it would be for a very long period. I think perhaps this is to do with my family's influence on me as well, that I have quite a global outlook in that way and I don't necessarily feel like I always have to come back. I can go and do my own thing, and I think that's really important, and I have decided that that's what I like to do as well, and I've been feeling like I might get itchy feet soon.

I guess it's inevitable in a way. It's not really static, staying here or living here. I don't really know where I will end up. I think it definitely has to do with your partner and where you plan to set that all out and your family and especially I guess if all your family is here, that's a huge part of it, but it's not like I have to try and visit my grandma every weekend or have lots of cousins here or anything. It's up to me. In a way that can be kind of rootless, or you know what is it. But then, this is what I like as well, because Mattias has very strong ties to his family and that sort of thing.

But I think home is more than where you physically are and where your stuff is and where you get up in the morning and go to work or wherever. I guess it's all those abstract ties that we have to a place and who is there with you, or not with you, and where you should feel comfortable and stuff and then obviously if you are staying somewhere where you are not comfortable, then it's not really your home. When I was in Germany, the place that I was staying at was at Mattias' house, that was kind of home, but it was kind of not. I didn't get that bonded to it and I know it's his flat and he is going to leave it next week and I will probably never see it again, and it's like I was just piggy backing on his home. But I

think it is definitely something that you make your own and you can shift around or you can adapt to. I guess it is a changeable thing.

4.4.13 Additional correspondence

As well as Teresa's four and a half hours of interviews and four and three quarter hours of video diary, I also received intermittent email communication from Teresa, including some that arrived quite late at night, informing me of significant events that occurred to affect her experiences of return. While I had asked all returned travellers to 'keep in touch', Teresa took this more literally than the others. The following extract reflects an example of one such email:

5 March 2008, 18:05

Things I wanted to talk about:

- I got in trouble with my mum before about some mean thing she reckons I said to John yesterday. I didn't say what she thought exactly, though I didn't make a nice inference. My dad leapt to my defence. It's really nasty and naughty, but I think I'm kind of twisted and like conflict sometimes...
- I know I've been quite bitchy about people a lot already... and I haven't even talked about my colleague at work who I really dislike! I know I'm pretty exhausted and "on the verge" of getting sick (I would be, if I was living in London – I think my immune system is just better off here) and have really not had enough sleep for the last like month or something. My back tingles in places because the nerves must be half-asleep...
- Last night I dreamt about my grandma and grand-aunt, who have both passed away. My grandma passing away almost a year ago. That was really hard to deal with at the time, because I found out through an email from my dad, really late on a Sunday night, when no-one else in my flat was up and I cried in

my room by myself... it felt quite random that I was in London by myself really far away from my family for (sometimes unclear) reasons when it felt very pertinent that you have to spend time with the people important to you while you can... I think my point is that big things like that, you need support people around you, and with family things, it's hard being far away (and justifying that). I guess this ties into what we were talking about with coming back and wanting to actively spend time with or work on family relationships (though that often doesn't seem to work either)...

- Re my sister Katrina, we've got a running joke that we only see each other for a few days every year – it's been like this for the last... quite a few years.
- Do you know what you are getting yourself into? I can type very fast and I'm pretty neurotic and there's lots of commentary, you'll have to do a lot of sifting and editing! ;-)
- Last thing – a couple of things that I think have changed about me whilst I've been overseas. I've become arrogant in some ways (or I just don't give a fuck so much, hardened up a bit, quite narcissistic, really averse to sentimentality).

4.5 *Introducing Margaret*

The following table specifies Margaret's demographic information as a point of reference for the reader:

Table 11: Margaret's Demographic Information

Length of time spent overseas	Date returned	Length of time back	Place of residence in NZ	Place of residence overseas	Nature of residence now
3 years	Aug-07	8 months	New Plymouth	England	Own house
Marital status	Place in family	Job	Age	Gender	
Divorced with children	4 older brothers, one son, one daughter	Retired	69	Female	

4.5.1 “I didn’t realise until I was over there”

I got out when it was good without tempting fate. I missed the bombs, I was in London for the July bombing. I never got mugged and I was on the tubes and everywhere. I never had an accident, never broke any bones. Because you can over there, at my age, you know. But I think, ‘Well, put everything in, I have had a wonderful time.’ If I stayed longer, things could have happened to me. So you know, I am a very lucky person, I think, to be here. I had a wonderful time and now I have got to adjust back to my life.

But I loved England. Oh. I loved the villages. But coming back here, you have got to bite your tongue, because I think we are ripped off with the prices and things. When I first came back, I was shocked at what we had to pay for in the supermarket. Our cheeses over there are so much cheaper, butter is so much cheaper, the basics and the variety and here, and of course I will say to people sometimes, “Well we are under populated, that’s why.” I realised this since I have been away. I wouldn’t like to live in, it’s 70 million in England isn’t it? Something like that, and we are slightly bigger than England, I didn’t realise that either until I was over there. But the villages, you would swear you are in New Zealand in some of those little places.

They all seem much happier over there. I don’t know, I think people here are very, they don’t appreciate anything, “Oh it’s this and oh it’s that”, very boring. It’s a boring place really. But I wouldn’t say that to my friends sitting around, I wouldn’t say it, it’s a bit of an insult to them really, not that my friends are boring, because a lot of them travelled you know, years ago, but that worries me that I might get back into that little rut, it really does, because I think that it is very easy to slip into it, because there is

nothing new. I suppose too, in saying that, everything was new to me over there.

In these villages where I used to work and anywhere I used to love to sit and have a cup of coffee in my two hours off and just watch the people. Sometimes you really didn't find an English speaking, they all had the accents and you see there is a big problem with the Muslims and they are giving in to them too much. I went to Turkey, which is very westernised, you wouldn't have thought it was a Muslim country, but I went to Egypt, and it's a Muslim country, so you obey it. That's what England should do or the western world should do, welcome them in, but these are our rules, you know? But that's just my opinion and I think the normal English people are starting to realise it, but not the Government.

But if I said we need to populate this place, bring people in, "Oh we'll get the riff raff", well, there's a good lot of riff raff here without getting the immigrants in, aren't there? But I don't say that, I just say, "Oh well." It's true, we do need more people and not just from the Pacific Islands, we want them from Europe. I think that's what is so endearing about those countries overseas, their different cultures are allowed to be visible. I will say this for the very black black black people over there, they do the jobs that the English people wouldn't do. You see them in the underground cleaning up, you see them in the streets cleaning up. They are willing to work, so there's nothing wrong with that.

I was using the tubes a lot up and down with a suitcase or bag on wheels, and sometimes it was heavier than others. I think twice in the whole time I was there I had to do it by myself. I always got asked, "Do you want any help?" You know, people would let you

into the traffic, whereas here it's road rage isn't it? They would stop and blinker and let you in, and thank you and you're off. That's what I found coming back here, it was like road rage every time. Like this morning, I was crossing the road and there were cars parked down the back and one was getting into a park. The other cars were slowed down, quite a way away, so I just started to walk across the road, well, they put their foot on the accelerator and came straight towards me. You know, all they had to go was slow, they could keep slowing and let me through, but oh no, you know? It's the aggressiveness I find here and I was probably just used to it before I went away, but I find the young people are aggressive, not only the young, no I don't mean that, everybody is aggressive. They never stand back. I don't know why they are like that.

I didn't realise I had an accent. Wherever I went, like with my ladies, I would be getting them a cup of tea or we would be sitting in a coffee shop or something and someone is like, "What accent is that?" South African, they thought a lot of the times, or Australian. "Oh wash your mouth out", I'd say. You would say, "New Zealand" and everybody had someone in New Zealand who had been or gone or sister in law or cousin, quite amazing really.

But I am contented to be back, but it's my age I think. I think if I was young, I would be off again. My daughter, Kate, and her two children have just gone over to Brisbane and, oh, I encouraged it. She thought I would say, "Don't, wait." But I said, "Go, go and the experiences will do you the world of good." She is 34 and she was a very bright girl and never did much with it. She dropped out of school and has never really done anything, and so I said, "No get out and do it." It will be a real learning curve for her. I am sitting here at times a bit nervous, because things aren't easy for her over there, she has got to get accommodation and get a job and

everything like that, with a 15 month old and a 14 year old, it wouldn't be easy, but hopefully it will be the makings of her. I think she will be back at Christmas, but I think you just need to do it. But I don't think I would have encouraged her so strongly before, if I hadn't gone myself.

But when I first came back, because I would come back every six months, sometimes for a month or sometimes visit for two weeks, and the first time I came back, I was like, "Oh for God's sake, look what you paid for this", and in the end they were saying to me, "Oh you're just a whinging pom, hurry up and go back." I realised I was, and there is nothing worse than, "Oh no, that's no good." Oh, I wouldn't like a person talking like that myself, but if someone says to me, well, I'll tell them. That's why I thoroughly enjoy someone who has been in England and back and they will say to me, "Don't you think it's expensive here?" We will have a great old talk about it.

I think the bureaucracy here is shocking. We were in this little village in Slovakia and what really got to me, in a good way, is this lady sitting there, she had obviously milked the cows, it could have been goat's milk, I don't know, it was like Coca-Cola bottles and the milk was full and the top on and you could just buy it. Well, someone would be reporting them here. No, New Zealand is nice, but by God it's not the be all and end all, is it?

4.5.2 "I have had a pretty good innings"

I came back in August and this is really the start of my retirement, and I am getting used to that now and I am thoroughly enjoying it. People say, "How do you fill in your day?" I fill it in very much, some days I might just read a book and hardly do anything and

another day, I do like the foreshore, I go down there a lot, especially in this weather, and I will do a lot of walking down there. Of course, I have people in and I go out to people's places. I play a lot of bridge and do a lot of walking.

But I might go back for a holiday though, before my son comes back. They are not going to stay forever in England. At one stage I did say, "Oh I might go back to England", because I had very good tenants in here, a young couple, they were here practically all the time I was away. I was out to lunch with the girl who had put them into this house, she worked with them. There were four of us there at lunch, and they were talking about that, "Now that your daughter is going to Australia, what are you going to do?" I said, "If my old tenants walked into my house and said they wanted to rent my house, I would walk out" and Marie was sitting there and her face, "Oh my God," she said, "Someone came in off the road and said to them, "Would you like to sell your house?" and gave them such a good price they did", and she said, "We have been racing around getting a house for them," because I'd always said, "No I am not going back, not going back, I am home now for good" and anyway she rang them, but they had already paid all their bond for a house. I just needed that push. But then I thought, "Well I believe in fate, obviously I wasn't meant to go", and I am not pining for it, but I would like to press a button and arrive there. Because that plane trip, I've had enough of that. But I would have worked for six months, but then, often now I think I'm glad I didn't go back.

Because I am getting older and it was the travelling from place to place to my ladies, that could be quite strenuous, you know, on the tube and on the train and it would take you all morning to get there. But then, I have always said, "Never say never", but I am not

pinning to go back. I would love just to go back and see my son David and Clara, and I have made other friends and to stay with them for a couple of days and perhaps do another trip somewhere. That would be fantastic, but that all takes money. But I have had a pretty good innings. I am that sort of person, laid back and well, if it happens, it happens. I don't lose any sleep over it. Because I have had a wonderful time and you can't be too greedy. I am not saving to go back or anything like that. I think at my age now I've got to settle down a bit. Financially too, I can't just keep hopping over and doing things. If I won lotto, then I would certainly think about taking off and having a holiday. I wouldn't work I don't think. No, I wouldn't go over to work. I say that, I just might. Because there are some lovely people there and they would always welcome you back with open arms, mind you, they could be dead by now. Most of them were in their 90's.

4.5.3 “I don't go on about it”

When you are over there, you have a different outlook, you look at Afghanistan in a totally different light when you are over there, don't you? Whereas here, you are so far away, you get on with it, but what can you do? You are not the government. But my friends are all interested in what I have done, but I don't go on about it. Sometimes I have heard myself and I think, “You are talking too much about your trip.” I think you have got to be a bit careful. Oh, we'll have a laugh and a talk and you have got to remember, I think it's from being older, that they have got interesting things too, so you've got to say, “What did you do, where have you been?” you know? Yes, you've got to be careful you don't go on. I have never been one to take photos. I think it is a waste of time myself. Click, click, click, click, click. So I get postcards where I've gone or little books or things like that, so I am not one to be pulling out the photograph album, they'll never stand that.

I have got to stop myself by not being bossy in a conversation not saying, “Oh, what a lot of rot.” You have got to watch yourself, because that could hurt some people, couldn’t it? They are genuine in their thinking, just because I don’t agree with it, and because I have travelled and seen it first hand and think, “Oh get out there and do it.” But I can’t say that. A lot of people have said to me, “Oh I would love to do what you have done”, but I know damn well they would never be able to do it, and I have given quite a few the addresses and what to do. “Oh I don’t know,” they say. “Well, it’s up to you,” I say, “It’s a wonderful experience and you should do it, in my opinion, but it is your decision.” I don’t keep at them saying. “Have you done anything?” It’s their decision, like it was my decision. I had to make up my mind, so they have got to do it too, but I know some won’t. Oh it wasn’t easy, but I feel a bit sorry for them too, because I think, “Gosh you could do it and you’d love it,” but that’s their decision. God helps those who help themselves.

Also, I couldn’t help but think that some of my friends, they have waited until they retired, saved up all their money and gone on this huge trip that has cost them thousands and then from one bus to the other. Whereas a husband and wife could do what I did, they could go onto the big estates and he does the gardening and she does the cooking or caring or anything, and you work so long and then you are off, and you have earned that money. You are in with the people of the country, you are not sitting in a busload of tourists. Whereas I would have thought before I did this, “Oh that would be great, that’s great that they are doing that, that must be wonderful”, but since I have done what I’ve done I think, “What a waste of time.”

But my friends are important to me, especially my friend Jane. I have had a lot to do with her and when I came back, when my house was rented, I stayed with her. She has done a lot of travelling. Her husband died about two years ago and she is going to do a trip and go to New York. She is very well organised, totally different to me, everything organised where I just flip around, but we have a few laughs together. She is someone who I can have a laugh with and be serious with, have a talk and everything and she is a very independent person and we possibly ring one another each day. What I like about Sally is that she gets on with life, I knew she was worried about her sick daughter recently, but she doesn't mope, she didn't show it much, and she just gets on with life and she is busy. As I say to her, she just exhausts me by the way she rushes around does this and does that and bakes and visiting, but it doesn't worry her, and it doesn't worry me either. But she's been good since I've come back. There is nothing like your friends around you. Overseas they were wonderful and the families were wonderful, but they are not *your* family, they were very nice, but it was all on the surface, simply because I was moving around a lot, but there is nothing quite like your friends.

4.5.4 “It wasn't my home”

Over there I had two hours off a day and I'd go out everyday into the village or go walking, but I couldn't do what I would do here, like, I couldn't do any gardening, not that I wanted to, I wasn't going to and it wasn't my home. If I stayed in, I think I only stayed in a couple of times, but I would be in my bedroom, because it's no use staying in their lounge, because they are there and they would be wanting you to do something. I made sure I had those two hours. So in those two hours that were mine, it was pretty precious. Sometimes I might just sit in the coffee bar and have a coffee and watch the world go by, or I would be shopping or

walking and you know, things like that. But it wasn't my home, they had good libraries in them and I used to enjoy reading, but no, I couldn't do anything there that I would do here, the only thing would be cooking the meals and doing the washing and ironing.

But I did feel comfortable in all the homes and I kept myself pretty busy during the day, because you'd sit with them and talk about what they did in the war, and they loved to talk about it, and that's half your job, to sit with them and have a chat. Then I would always do the crossword with most of them, so in that way I did make myself comfortable, well, you had to because if you weren't at home in that place, they would sense that. Most of the time you had a TV in your bedroom, so some nights I would go and just watch and on some days I would watch it in the afternoon, and so in that way, yes, you had to make yourself feel at home. They had lovely gardens, you could sit out in the garden and everything. Which surprised me, I always thought of English places with no grounds or anything, but they had lovely gardens. At the same time, you respected it as their home, but it wasn't your home.

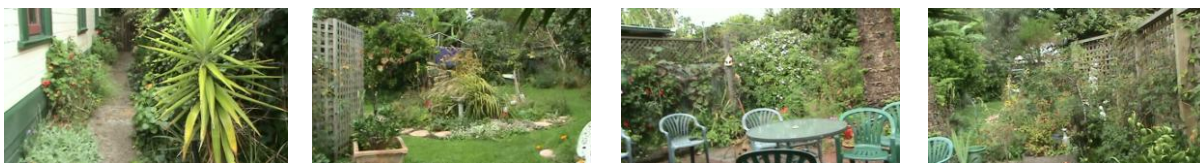
4.5.5 “I make the most of it”

If I am away for too long, I like to come back. I suppose I am a home body, but in saying that when I was overseas I didn't want to be coming home. Because I suppose I knew I was never going to live there permanently, that this was always here, so I made the most of it while I was over there. I am not a person who will go away and pine to get back, I know I probably won't be going back there again, so I think, “Make the most of it.” Some of those places in Europe I thought, “Well I won't come back here, there are too many other places to go, I won't be back here,” so I made the most of it.

I came back every six months because of my superannuation, or I would have lost it. I would come back to my daughter and check up on her and it was nice to see my friends and then I'd take off again. But I think I was getting a bit tired and my visa runs out next year, I know I have got this year to go back if I want to, but I don't think so. I was getting tired and I think I had done all I wanted to do. I was sick of living out of a suitcase, and I think I was getting tired actually. I wanted to get back and get into my garden and just do things like that. I was sick of doing that long plane trip. Of course when I first went, I was only going for six months. I was going to give it a go for six months and come back, but it went on and on and on. I just enjoyed it and I wanted to go back. I didn't want to stay home, and my home was being rented and money was coming in and I was enjoying it over there, so I was making the most of it. That's my philosophy in life, make the most of your opportunities and I had no commitments, well I had a daughter here, but I was a free agent and you have just got to make the most of that, I think. Opportunity knocks once.

4.5.6 Margaret's Video Diary

Figure 33: Video Diary "It's just Linda really"



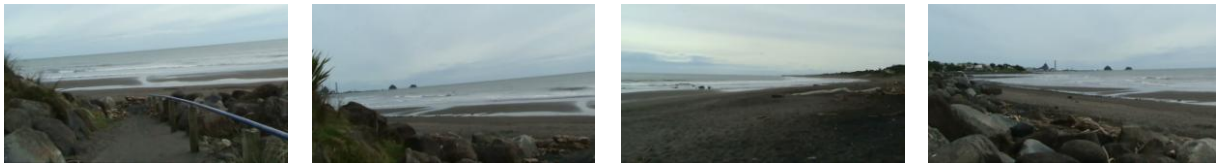
I've come to Linda's today and I am meeting up with Joan and we are going to look at Linda's daughter's wedding photos, but at the moment she is not home. But I love Linda's garden it's a bit of everything, so we will have a little look around it while we are waiting for Linda to come home. And I love the house, it's just Linda really.

Figure 34: Video Diary “I am a home person”



This is my garden, I don't know if it's going to come out very clearly here, but I did miss being able to get into a garden when I was away, because I do find it very relaxing and if I have got anything on my mind I am inclined to get into the garden and I find it very therapeutic. I love this house and people say they feel very at home here which pleases me, because it is comfortable. I have got it the way I wanted now and, yes, I did miss my home when I was away, but I am back here now and perhaps that's what making me settle so well is that I am back in my own surroundings and really, if I look hard at myself, I am a home person.

Figure 35: Video Diary “This is my favourite spot”



This is my favourite spot. Its Fitzroy Beach or right along this coast actually. There is most marvellous walking and really I did get a bit homesick for this area. Even though for 18 months I was down on the South Coast in Sussex, and I lived right by the beach, and that's why I liked it, I just love to be near water. And really, I suppose that is my birth sign, Pisces, and I think I am a true Pisces. I often come down here in any season and do a walk along this beach. I find it very, what would you say, therapeutic, yeah. And today is a bit overcast, but the weather we have been having, it has been just magnificent down here. There is always someone down here to stop and have a chat to. And I think that is why I wouldn't move away permanently to any place that I couldn't be close to the water. And when the children were young we had a little dog, it

was always part of it, to come down here and play. But there are some fantastic beaches and resorts over in England and Barcelona. Oh! But you know there is still something about this. There are other nice places, put it that way, but this is home.

Figure 36: Video Diary “I used to bring my children here, now I am bringing my little grandson”



This is the Bowl of Brooklands. Many a concert I have been to here. It is the most beautiful setting and I was here at Womad and the whole place was completely transformed. At night you could have been anywhere in the world it was just magnificent and I would recommend Womad to anybody and everybody. This is the little train that takes the kiddies around the park. I used to bring my children here, now I am bringing my little grandson who is 15 months. I just love it. It is a beautiful park, it really is.

Figure 37: Video Diary “We spent lots and lots of happy times here”



During Womad this whole place was completely transformed up here. It was just magical and there were stalls and everything, people picnicking all day under the trees. We spent lots and lots of happy times here and I look at it in a different light now actually. I took it so much for granted. When I was away in some of the countries and I feel now my daughter is experiencing this in Brisbane, there is no place like home really. It's great to go away, but it's always nicer to have somewhere to come back to.

3.5 weeks later

4.5.7 “I will always be a New Zealander”

I suppose now I have come back to my home. I guess if I had come back to a rented property, but this is my home and I am comfortable here. You see for me, when I went to England, I had to get right out of my comfort zone, right out of it. It would have been very easy for me to say, “No, I am not going. Oh no, I’ll stay home here”, very easy. I mean I was 66 when I went over and that was a big thing to do, though I didn’t think of it at the time, but looking back. Yes, I think coming back here and I am into my home and familiar surroundings and I will probably go to Brisbane for a week or so to see my daughter, but other than that. My surroundings are what make this home for me, what I have got in it. I feel very comfortable here. Like, I bought this table mat in a little village in Slovakia. But I think New Zealanders are home orientated. They like to have their own piece of land and everything.

I am a home body and I think your roots are back in New Zealand, and as kiwis in my generation, we were brought up to own your own home. I will always be a New Zealander, I am not like when I was over there people used to say to me, “Oh how could you leave that beautiful place to come here?” I said, “Well, I am not living here”, but I said, “You know, *you* have got a beautiful place here.” That’s it, New Zealand is my home, but I have been lucky enough to see that other people live in lovely places too. I mean the only thing I think in New Zealand’s favour, I mean I haven’t been to the Pacific Islands or anything I don’t know that area, is the under population. All those other places are over-populated and I don’t think I would ever get used to London, living there and having to go on those tubes every day. But I am a New Zealander, I was

born, I have got a New Zealand passport I suppose. I was born here, my roots are here, and I wouldn't take on another country's passport and forgo mine. Because I am a New Zealander, I felt comfort in some of those countries with a New Zealand passport, I wouldn't like to have been travelling on an American one. So I suppose I feel safer with a New Zealand passport, but that's my country. I suppose it's just loyalty, no it's not loyalty, it's where I belong, it's my security I suppose.

I got lost once. I missed the roundabout instead of going left, I went right, oh, it was awful, and it was bank holiday and everybody was going everywhere and everybody knew where they were going except me. It was the most devastating feeling to think I was on the other side of the world, I knew nobody. Whereas here, no matter where you were here, I could contact someone I knew. It made me realise that I was on my own, I didn't know where I was. But I mean I had only been there a month and to get on this, and I could see Brighton coming up on the road sign and I could see London, oh God, it was a terrible feeling, shocking. That made me realise that little old New Zealand, I could find my way around here, but there I can't, no. New Zealand is my country, but it is nice to be free to go wherever you want, travel and do things. But younger people haven't got their roots here, they have got their parents here and their family here, and it's good to come back to. But I think if you asked a person my age they would say they are New Zealanders, even though we are ripped off.

4.5.8 “I had a lovely life over there, but I knew it wasn't permanent”

The most important thing to me is my health, it really is, and at the moment I have never had any problems, but I hate saying that because tomorrow I could fall down the stairs or something. But my health is very important to me and my friends and my home.

Where I can have my own things around me, where it's mine, I can do what I like in it. If I want to splash paint over it, well that's my business, isn't it? That's how I look at my home. Yep, my home is very important to me. I don't have to have a showy home, to say, "Look at me, I have got the best house in the street", that has never been my priority, I've liked a comfortable home, and friends come, and they have nice homes, but they are comfortable homes. It's such a quiet area here. But I think health is number one importance, because being able to get out and drive your car and being able to go over to the East Coast if I want to, and that's important to me, being active, I would hate not to be active. I mean, I can be a slob, I can sit in that chair and put my feet up and have a snooze and eat a chocolate, but that's what I want to do. So home's home, I mean even though I was in homes and I was treating them like my home, it's not the same. I collected quite a few things that I wanted to come and put in my home.

But I could make a home anywhere. I didn't make a home really because of the suitcase you are pulling around all the time, you couldn't unpack and say, "I am here", you know, but I could make a home anywhere. But to live in England the way I would like to live in a lovely village, close to London, I would have to have lots and lots of money, and I haven't got that. One place I stayed was down in Sussex for about 18 months on and off, and that was the longest time in one area. But then I thought, "Well, I haven't come over here to stay in one place", even though I loved it, I had to once again get out. It was very comfortable, good money, I wasn't spending lots on travelling backwards and forwards, but once again, I had to shift out of that and go to all different places, because that's what I wanted to do, to see the places. Oh I could have stayed in Sussex and got a little flat or something, but I didn't want that, that was extra money that I didn't want to spend, you know. So I wasn't trying to make a life over there. I didn't go

over there to settle down. I went to see as much, I was like a kid in a toy shop. I couldn't see enough of everything. No, I didn't go over there to make a life, or to make a permanent life. I had a lovely life over there, but I knew it wasn't permanent, that's why I did as much as I possibly could, because I was coming back here, and I wanted to come back here.

But I told you about my old tenants maybe wanting to move back in, and that's what I would need, someone to come in and I think, "Oh well, I've got to go", you know, that's the only reason I would go back. Anyway they had paid their bond and everything and it meant they would have to lose their bond to come here. So my philosophy was I wasn't meant to go, that's how I look at it, but who knows? Because that's how I operate, I am quite happy and then all of a sudden I am doing something totally different that I never even thought I would do, and I would just go with the flow and think, "Oh right, I must be meant to do it, I am quite happy to go off and do it." But I really think I have got lazy and I think, "Oh my bed's lovely" and I have got my bridge, I have got Probus and I've got my friends and I am healthy. I have had a lovely, lovely time. As I said before, I dodged the bombs, I didn't get mugged or robbed or lose anything, fall over on those cobblestones and break my leg, so I think I left at the right time.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the individual contextualised stories of return for the travellers who took part in this research, to allow the reader to 'get to know' each returned traveller. In particular, their ruminations of what made them (un)comfortable, what was (un)familiar and what made them feel like they (did not) belong are captured in these stories to illustrate the returned travellers' reflections as they conceptualised their home(s).

However, some aspects of the returned travellers' stories have necessarily been removed from the original transcripts for reasons of conciseness in presenting their stories. For example, in our conversations, Kylie expanded on her frustration with the 'things New Zealanders care about', and explained in more detail her family history and the way she felt she did not 'fit in' to New Zealand society. Simon spoke at more length about the circumstances of return, for example he discussed his mother's reaction to the situation of the way his father had treated him and provided additional details of his experiences living with his father and step-mother in London. He also discussed in more detail the nature of his sport and his career and provided additional examples of why the lack of population in New Zealand frustrated him. Dillon provided additional anecdotes of prejudice he experienced against his Chinese ethnicity and provided more comparison of his perspectives of New Zealand and Columbia. Teresa described repeated accounts of arguments she had with her mother and provided additional contextual information, for example, specific details of her relationships with different people, which often seemed tangential to her main story. She also elaborated on her relationship with Mattias, and read from a personal diary she had written when she first returned. Margaret spoke in more detail about her experiences caring for the elderly, and experiences she had encountered while travelling, for example in the Middle East. She also discussed her perceived comparisons of New Zealand and the U.K. in detail. She provided additional examples of people and places she felt attached to and additional anecdotes of her daily (retired) lifestyle. While these aspects of the returned travellers' stories are presented in this chapter, the extent to which they illuminated their attitudes, perceptions and feelings has been condensed. However, despite these omissions, the stories presented in this chapter, rather than adhering to a prescribed research agenda, portray the main issues or ideas that were important to the returned travellers at the time of our conversations.

Whereas this chapter presents the data in the participants' own words, in the next chapter I present my interpretation of that data. This interpretation is not based on a hunch that I set out to prove, but rather is derived from the data itself (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) in terms of what I thought was most important to the returned

travellers and what they were ‘telling me’, as detailed in Section 3.11 - Data analysis (page 97). Nevertheless, my interpretation is unavoidably situated and but one possible interpretation of the returned travellers’ stories detailed in this chapter.

5 Creating a Plot

This chapter ‘creates *a* (not ‘the’) plot, that is an interpretation and discussion of the returned travellers’ stories. This ‘plot’ arose from my thematic analysis of the data and comprised four themes of historicity, emotion, resistance and (re)negotiation, which I felt were most representative of what was important to the returned travellers themselves as they attempted to conceptualise their home(s). These themes are certainly not mutually exclusive, but overlap and are linked to the research objective to explore concepts of home for returned long term travellers.

Each theme is presented within this chapter with an introductory conceptualisation and description of how it arose from the data. Specific examples are then drawn upon from the returned travellers’ stories to justify the importance of that theme to them, and to enable wider theoretical discussion of each theme. Following the specific examples drawn from each story, an attempt is made to synthesise each theme across all stories of return. This synthesis is followed by a theoretical discussion, drawing on the academic literature and eluding to previous discussions of the literature, namely in Chapter 2 - Setting the Scene (page 15). These themes, rather than being ‘answers’ or ‘truths’ defining ‘home’ for returned travellers, represent aspects of the returned travellers’ experiences that were influential in their reflections of what ‘home’ meant to them. Thus, rather than conceptualising home(s) definitively, this chapter explores the meanings and struggles that returned travellers encountered as they thought about what ‘home’ meant for them.

The first theme of historicity represents the personal and social histories of returned travellers, incorporating their past, present and emerging experiences, their worldviews, their relationships with others, and their priorities within the wider context of their life courses. Therefore, this theme highlights the way returned travellers couched their stories of return within personal statements that emphasised the way they interpreted the world, that outlined their values and that reflected their own prejudices and positions. It also describes the way their life

circumstances, relationships with others and their pre-sojourn ways of being (such as not ‘fitting in’, searching for ‘an identity’ or holding a strong national identity) were important to their experiences of return and their concepts of home. Thus, these aspects of contextualised histories, relationships, worldviews and priorities, that is, their ‘historicity’, seemed to be important to participants in terms of shaping their stories of return and their concepts of home. Furthermore, the interpretation of this theme argues for the importance of the situated voice in understanding the complexity of the social world. Indeed, it is proposed that personal historicity uncovers deeper meanings, tensions and circumstances in social research, and therefore offers a ‘richer’ story that a less detailed and specific approach may miss.

The second theme of emotion is presented through the emotive language that travellers used to describe the often distressing and transitional experiences of return. Each emotion arose within its own context; however, viewed across the data, the theme of (often unexpected) emotion was deemed an underpinning aspect of the returned travellers’ experiences. The theoretical discussion of meanings of emotion within the context of exploring home(s) draws particular attention to the social and cultural constructions of emotions, as they are influenced by interpersonal relations and social discourses.

The third theme reflects the often passive resistance to social norms, assumptions and ways of being described by returned travellers. This theme is conceptualised within Thomas and Davies’ (2005a, 2005b) view of resistance as individuals identify contradictions with ‘mainstream’ discourses, and subtly change meanings and understanding in order to deal with these tensions. Therefore, rather than presenting a unified voice of resistance, this theme reflects subtle, low level forms of struggle and challenge. A ‘resistance to home’ is suggested as a new way of conceptualising the adaptation process that these returned travellers experienced.

The final theme of (re)negotiation is described in the way returned travellers reconsidered what and who was important to them, what they wanted from their lives, how they had changed through their travel experiences, and how they ‘fitted in’ to wider social and cultural structures. This (re)negotiation is discussed at

length across overlapping layers of personal identities, meanings of relationships with others and wider social identities.

5.1 “I think I will always be like that” – Historicity

Historicity was an important theme to emerge from the research as it set the context of the stories. Historicity, in terms of the background understandings that shaped returned travellers’ interpretations of their experiences (Guignon, 2002), was revealed as a theme by the importance returned travellers seemed to place on the contextualisation of their experiences and their personal worldviews. Indeed, they often explained their experiences of return to me by setting those experiences within the wider context of their life history and their personal views as the following section illustrates. Thus, each individual participant’s personal history with the people and places they described, their personalities, their prejudices and worldviews, that is, their historicity, all contributed to the stories told within the context of their return.

I begin this section with a description of each returned traveller’s historicity that influenced their overall story, to demonstrate the way historicity shaped returned travellers’ experiences of return and constructs of home. Within this theme, I also elude to the theoretical importance of historicity in understanding personal experience and constructed meanings of home.

5.1.1 The returned travellers’ historicity

The way returned travellers couched their stories of return within wider stories of their life history, and statements that emphasised their worldviews, indicated that their personal histories with the people and places they described, their contextualised experiences, their personalities and their worldviews, that is, their historicity, was important to them. For example, in terms of their worldviews, returned travellers often made personalised statements regarding the way they interpreted their world, with statements like, “I think there are pros and cons in everything at the end of the day”, “I think that where there is a will, there is a way”, “I think if you are more open minded, more opportunities will come your

way”, “I believe in fate”, “you have just got to make the most of that, I think” and “opportunity knocks once”. Such statements refer to background understandings that are situated within their previous experiences.

Additionally, their values were also evident in these personalised statements, such as, “I think you need the support of your family”, “I think there is a lot more to life than settling down so young”, “I think everyone should travel”, “you’ve got to pick your battles, I think”, “I still believe in the importance of close relationships - that’s just a core part of what makes life”, “there is nothing quite like your friends”, and “God helps those who help themselves”. Moreover, some also passed judgement on others, which reflected their own prejudices and positions, for example, “I think people are up in arms about the wrong things”, “I think from a more international perspective”, “I think everyone should travel” and “I think until you are in that situation, you can’t really sort of pass judgment”. Thus, their values and beliefs as shaped by their previous experiences and their relationships with others, and their priorities in terms of their wider life courses are evident here in their interpretations of their experiences.

Moreover, returned travellers reflected on who they were historically compared to now, for example, “I think I will always be like that”, “I’ve been thinking about these sorts of things for quite a few years”, and “that’s how I operate”. Such statements further reflect their historicity in terms of their past, present and emerging experiences and ways of being, which shaped the way they interpreted their experiences. Thus, the returned travellers’ historicity in terms of their worldviews, perspectives, beliefs, values and ways of being, shaped their interpretations of return and their concepts of home, and were therefore, an important aspect of their stories. Another aspect of historicity that was important to returned travellers was the contextual and personal nature of their stories. The following passages specify these factors of historicity that influenced their individual stories.

Kylie’s stories of her family’s ‘gypsy’-like behaviour shaped her attitude, beliefs and values of nomadism as “awesome”, “exciting” and “exhilarating”. However, this family-based nomadic value reportedly contrasted with her more recently

emerged personal desire for domesticity. She said she had ‘come out’ about her desire for domesticity as though it were something to be ashamed of, which illustrated a tension between her historic and emerging values. Indeed, at the time of our interviews, Kylie was reportedly torn between wanting to stay (having children and the domestic lifestyle or setting up her own business) and wanting to leave again (to re-experience newness and excitement and to escape the disappointment of not being able to have children). Some scholars would attribute this irresoluteness to the transient nature of return. For example, Foust *et al.* (1981) found returned travellers were likely to be uncertain about their plans due to the new insights and opportunities gained through the experience abroad, and Smith (2002) suggested that travellers consciously realign their goals to be congruent with their new skills and experience in order to reduce uncertainty and indecision on their return. However, rather than viewing her indecision as a ‘common feature’ of experiences of return, Kylie expressed it within the deeper, more personal context of her historicity. This indicates that her family stories, her values and her beliefs, regarding nomadism versus domesticity at that point in time, shaped Kylie’s way of thinking (priorities, decisions and attitudes) and way of being (unsettled, torn and ‘disjointed’) and, therefore, were an important contributing factor to her personal experience of return.

Another factor of historicity that influenced Kylie’s experience of return was the way she perceived her family culture to be ‘atypical’ within the wider New Zealand culture. She explained that her family did not watch rugby, did not own a beach bach, and did not have a large extended family in New Zealand, all examples of what she perceived to be “typical” representations of mainstream New Zealand culture. Thus, her perception of ‘abnormality’ shaped Kylie’s sense of ‘not belonging’ in New Zealand. A lack of affiliation with the originating culture on return from long term travel is another commonly reported ‘finding’ in intercultural literature, as scholars have suggested that “readjusting to one’s home culture may be more difficult than adjusting to the foreign culture” (Martin, 1984, p. 115). For example, Hottola (2004) suggested that for returned travellers, “the values and norms of their original societal context may seem less appealing than before” (p. 460). However, Kylie’s personal history within her small and tight-knit family, who had lived in the same suburb for three generations created a

sense of belongingness for Kylie within that particular community, where she knew her neighbours and where she had lived in the same house since she was five years old. Thus, although Kylie did not identify with the dominant discourse of 'being' a New Zealander, her personal historicity helped to make her feel 'at home' within her local community.

Simon's experiences of return were shaped by the unplanned and burdening circumstances of Amanda being diagnosed as terminally ill. Moreover, his family history, his relationships with his father and Amanda (feeling like Amanda would always be part of his life and his becoming closer to them both through their shared travel experience), and his close friendships in New Zealand shaped Simon's decision to return to New Zealand with her and to seek his own support from friends 'at home'. Nevertheless, Simon reported regretting that he had not yet "completed the journey", which illustrated a tension between Simon's values of family obligation and his desire for personal freedom. Furthermore, Simon's father's reaction to Amanda's illness (and Simon's reaction to his father's choices) influenced the probability of Simon returning to the U.K. (initially he felt he couldn't return if his father was still there). However, with time and more constructive dialogue with his father, his anger towards his father waned slightly. Thus, Simon's travel decisions were largely shaped by the obligation (or resistance) he felt towards particular family members and by his need of support (from close friends) during this 'turbulent' phase of his life.

Another aspect of historicity that shaped Simon's experiences of return was his drive and determination regarding his sport and career, which also contributed to his decision to stay in New Zealand or leave again. His career reportedly represented his desire to leave as he saw more opportunities to expand his career abroad, whereas his sport represented his desire to stay, as the New Zealand environment was more conducive to healthy sporting conditions (clean air and no smog). Thus, Simon's personal priorities and values shaped his travel decisions, and also influenced his concepts of home, which he acknowledged would always depend on his priorities at each stage of his life. Such deeply personal circumstances that influence experiences of return and decisions of whether to leave again are rarely reported in intercultural literature, which tends to generalise

findings across a wider population (for example, Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1992; Gregersen & Stroh, 1997; Gaw, 2000; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). Yet, these personal circumstances were integral to Simon's experiences of return and contributed to his concepts of home.

Furthermore, Simon's relationships with the rest of his family, who "drive [him] insane", were "quite different" to Simon, and did not understand his corporate career or his need for travel, contributed to his frustrations with what he perceived to be a parochial New Zealand culture. This 'difference' was further highlighted by comments from some of his family members, as follows:

I think his ideal home is earning lots of money, having a well paid job and having time for all his sport things. Yes, having a well paid job and having time for his interests and travelling. Oh, I should say his family, eh? *Laughing*. Do you think we are important to Simon? Yeah, I think we are, yeah, yep but we might be a bit down the list... The jobs that he's had where he has to entertain clients and he quite likes going out to posh places... Like, he hasn't eaten at the RSA since he has come back. He wouldn't go there and eat, but you can't beat the RSA. Good Kiwiana food... We just give him a hard time... We all give each other a hard time in this family. *Laughing*. Nobody is allowed to get above themselves, *laughing*, it's just what we do... Maybe we are so busy giving him a hard time that we don't realise that we do mean more to him.

Thus, some of Simon's significant others, in particular some family members, struggled to understand his values and interests. They believed Simon valued and prioritised his corporate career over them and criticised his choices (by giving him a "hard time") to ensure he remained grounded (and not "above" himself). They also reflected that they had not considered what it may have been like for Simon to return, as the following passage indicates:

I had never actually really thought about what it is like for him to come back. I think he probably talks more to his friends. No, he hasn't actually spoken a lot about it really. Not that we see him all

that often and when he comes down, by the time he's finished visiting everybody else and you don't really get to spend a lot of time with him, he actually hasn't really spoken a hell of a lot about it... He actually seems to like weird places like Vietnam and Cambodia.

This family member was reportedly unsure of Simon's values and blamed this lack of understanding of Simon on the perceived insufficient time Simon spent speaking to his family. This lack of understanding was further illustrated by the family member's description of Simon's favourite destinations as "weird places". In particular, his brother, who had not travelled himself, attempted to imagine Simon's circumstances living abroad by relating to a television programme he had witnessed:

When Simon left I thought, you know I don't really usually pay much attention to busy folks, but then after a while I thought, "Well he's my little brother" and it dawned on me that he was going to London. I imagined some scheisster trying to pull a shifty on him, in one of those markets, like you see in East Enders. I wouldn't want anyone to do that to my little brother, so yeah, it dawned on me a bit that he was going far away, I suppose.

He initially admitted he had little time for "busy folks" like Simon, but as he considered the dangers that might await Simon on his sojourn, he realised the deeper importance of his relationship with his "little brother". Therefore, although these family members did not understand Simon's values and priorities in terms of his career and travel, they felt they were 'connected' with him on a deeper, more emotional level in terms of the values they placed on family relationships. Moreover, their own historicity (their perceptions towards travel and "weird" places, their desire to keep Simon grounded and their values regarding family) may have shaped Simon's experiences of return (in terms of his frustrations with parochial New Zealand 'culture') and his concepts of home (whereby his career and sport took preference over his family members who did not understand him).

The intercultural literature reports returned travellers' frustrations with the originating culture, as travellers struggle to reconcile previous values, attitudes and lifestyles with those experienced and adopted abroad (Foust et al., 1981) and as travellers notice things they had previously accepted as normal (Smith, 2002). However, such studies are rarely set within personal stories of family relationships. One exception being Ramirez *et al.* (2007), a Salvador-Australian who wrote an autoethnographical account of the main author's experiences meeting her transnationally dispersed family for the first time, and found she shared a greater mutual understanding with other 'exiled' family members than with those who had remained in Salvador.

Thus, Simon's pre-sojourn historicity (his pre-sojourn relationships, attitudes and experiences), his contemporary historicity (the circumstances of his return, his balancing of sport and career) and his emerging historicity (realisations regarding the importance of his friendships over experiential differences, realisations regarding his father) appeared to shape Simon's experiences of return and considerations of whether he would leave again and his thoughts of what 'home' meant for him, which he realised would always depend on what he wanted at that stage in his life. These aspects of historicity, while rarely reported in wider academic literature, made an important contribution to Simon's story of return and to his concepts of home.

Dillon's search for identity was an important aspect of his story. Historically, Dillon had reportedly been searching for an identity since his childhood, when he was the only ethnically Chinese person in his school. However, since his travel and return experiences, Dillon had become less "precious" about his identity and was more comfortable considering himself a "global citizen... not necessarily belonging anywhere in the world, but being able to survive and learn about wherever [he was]". Moreover, Dillon's connections to Latin American, Chinese and Māori cultures made him feel multi-ethnic, and his exposure to multiple places (having lived in Finland, Germany, New Zealand and Columbia) and to different ways of living (multi-cultural values in Finland, peace and quietness in New Zealand, poverty and violence in Columbia) had led him to hold more cosmopolitan worldviews. Cosmopolitanism is "an orientation, a willingness to

engage with the Other... a search for contrasts rather than uniformity... a personal ability to make one's way into other cultures" (Hannerz, 1996, p. 103). To be cosmopolitan is to "owe no allegiance to any single culture or place, and to be comfortable with that loss... [to belong] in no one place, precisely because every place offers the self something, and thus every place *could* become home" [italics in the original] (Conradson & Latham, 2007, p. 248). Moreover, "cosmopolitanism must be understood as a holistic disposition or attitude... which comprises cognitive, affective and behavioural components altogether" (D'Andrea, 2006, p. 104). Dillon, for example, reported associating himself with multiple ethnic groups on surveys, he had let go of his need for a New Zealand identity and believed he could be equally comfortable living in a variety of places. Thus, Dillon's historicity in terms of his multi-ethnic identities and his experiences living in multiple cultures abroad had developed his comfort with being a 'world citizen' and thus his cosmopolitan attitude.

However, this cosmopolitan historicity and resulting ideologies led Dillon to take a different life path, and to hold different worldviews than his peers. For example, he reportedly held strong values regarding helping the underprivileged because he had experienced poverty first hand, whereas his friends did not necessarily support charitable causes. Moreover, he questioned the dominant values of home ownership, having children and career progress compared with spending time and energy helping others less fortunate than him. Thus, his historicity was apparent in the way he questioned what growing older meant for him and a tension between his personal values and those espoused by wider social expectations became evident. Dillon also held strong views about the meaning of Māori culture, which were different from mainstream 'Pākehā' New Zealanders, who would (disrespectfully) perform a haka outside a London pub without a qualm. Thus, Dillon found himself being quite critical of New Zealand culture, especially in terms of its complacent attitude towards global issues and lack of charitable tendencies. Again, the tendency to criticise the originating culture is well documented in intercultural literature (for example, Hurn, 1999; Gaw, 2000; Smith, 2002); however, the deeper, more personally historic circumstances surrounding this criticism of the originating culture are rarely reported. For Dillon, these differences in worldviews based on his experiences of identity

searching and his exposure to poverty shaped his experiences of returning to New Zealand, the way he viewed his peers and his meanings of home. Indeed, his idea of a more ‘emotional home’ (an ability to express himself verbally, emotionally and physically, rather than home being one physical place) emerged as he considered what had been important to him before his travel experiences and what was important to him on his return.

The nature of Teresa’s interpersonal relationships with Mattias and with her family set the context of her story. Teresa had not experienced a “happy family” life, except through Mattias and his family, and had been “depressed”, “aimless” and “disappointed” in her family relationships in the past. Her relationships with individual family members reportedly had changed over the time she was away, as she felt closer to her like-minded sister, Katrina, more distant from her “airy fairy” sister, Sarah, closer to her mother and more distant from her father on her return. The tensions she described with her family members had been “brewing forever”, but were exacerbated by John’s unwelcome presence in the family household on her return. The interpersonal animosity between returned travellers and their significant others is well documented within the repatriation literature, such as returned travellers’ feelings of superiority and resentment by those who remained behind, as discussed in Section 2.3 - Moving beyond the physical return (page 28). However, Teresa’s story highlights the significance of historicity, specifically in terms of her personal and situated relationships with individual family members and her boyfriend, which ran deeper and endured beyond the transitional phases of her travel and return experiences.

Teresa’s historicity is further explained by a friend, who understood and accepted her personality, as follows:

She’s been through a lot of stuff, but she negotiated these things as the same person with the same skills and traits she had before. Life has changed, but not her... She is smart, with a shy confidence, not prone to confrontation, but when she knows she’s right, nothing will change her mind and she will try to change others’ opinions. Her confidence has developed more through travel, because she has experienced life and had more situations to apply it to. Her

horizons were broad before she left, but she's had more situations overseas to apply that broad mindedness to. She's still as broad minded, but with more experience. Teresa is incredibly self-reflexive and self-aware. She assesses the way she's acting in a new situation. She is able to compromise enough to act in a way that is still productive and maintain critical distance, but she won't sell her soul. She is quite volatile, but aware of it afterwards. She regrets it, but she can't change it. She can be prone to depression and get sad easily though, like in any uncertain situation that involves other people... It hasn't been easy for her to return, with her changed family situation and being further away from her boyfriend... I think having to spend so much time away from Mattias is hard for her, and over the last five years she's spent more time away than with him... Despite all that, it's never stopped her from getting ahead, because she's also rational at the same time and can be pragmatic. She can off load to her friends and then carry on. She'll be able to live in Germany, but won't have an easy time, but she'll be able to do it... Teresa is not good at being anyone except herself. In any situation she won't change her behaviour or the way she thinks, or if she does, it won't have a lasting effect. If she lived in Germany for two years, it wouldn't change who she is. It would just be the same person in a different place.

Indeed, this friend understood and accepted Teresa's personality, including her volatility and her susceptibility to depression, and understood her difficult family relationships and the importance of Mattias to her. This friend was happy to support Teresa in her "off load" as it enabled her to "carry on". The friend also realised and accepted that Teresa's personality and behaviour would never change as she was "not good at being anyone except herself". Thus, this friend also believed that Teresa's historicity in terms of her personality, her relationships with her family and Mattias and her past experiences were an important aspect of her being and thus, her story of return.

Margaret's long history in New Zealand, the fact she had bought up children and owned her own home contributed to Margaret reportedly feeling her 'roots' were firmly planted in New Zealand. Her strong national identity was reportedly reinforced by her travel experiences, as she realised she had an accent, felt the security of holding her passport and reflected on the taken-for-granted memories she had of meaningful places 'at home' (which she visited with her children and grandchildren). Furthermore, Margaret's conscious choice not to create a (semi)permanent lifestyle while she was abroad, and her enjoyable retired lifestyle, contributed to her feelings of 'homeliness' on her return. Margaret's belief in fate and her attitude of making the most of opportunities meant she thoroughly enjoyed her experiences abroad; however, she was comfortable with her decision to return (largely for health reasons) and was content to 'adjust back to life'.

Thus, Margaret's longer history in New Zealand (in terms of her more advanced age), compared to the other returned travellers, meant she felt a stronger connection at a national level. This strong identity with the originating culture is rarely reported in intercultural studies, which tends to focus on the intercultural discrepancies and dissonances, such as returned travellers' psychological distress and social difficulties on return and unrealistic expectations by both returned travellers and the people they left behind, (for example, Rogers & Ward, 1993; Hurn, 1999; Sussman, 2000) rather than affiliations, alliances or 'positive' experiences of return. More recent intercultural literature has begun to examine the emotionality of transnational (family) life (as discussed in Section 2.3 - Moving beyond the physical return, page 27), such as feelings of 'missing' and 'longing' among transnational migrants (Baldassar, 2008; Ryan, 2008; Svašek, 2010) and the turbulent nature of emotional connections that transnational migrants experience (Svašek & Skrbiš, 2007; Skrbiš, 2008). However, the specific, detailed, diverse and unique historicity of individual travellers, like Margaret, remains largely unreported in intercultural literature.

Moreover, the tensions reported in the repatriation literature tend to centre around intercultural and interpersonal aspects of the transition back to the originating environment (for example, Martin, 1986; Sussman, 2000). While some studies

acknowledge the changes in personal perspectives and worldviews of individual travellers (for example, Noy, 2004; Brown, 2009), these are rarely situated within the wider historicity of the individual participants. Yet, this section has shown that personal tensions may also arise as travellers renegotiate what is important to them personally, for example, nomadism vs. domesticity (Kylie), family obligations vs. personal freedom (Simon), national identity vs. global citizenship (Dillon) or family relationships vs. a boyfriend (Teresa). Thus, this thesis has provided historically situated depth and detail in the personal stories, thereby acknowledging the contribution the situated context makes to each story of return.

Specifically, the personalised contexts in these returned travellers' stories indicated that individualised historicity, in terms of each returned traveller's personal history with people and places that were meaningful to them, their worldviews and their personal, contextual experiences, were important to their experiences of return and their concepts of home. Indeed, concepts of home had changed for many of these returned travellers as they reconsidered what was important to them in light of their travel and return experiences. For most participants, except perhaps Margaret, New Zealand no longer represented home (if it ever had). Rather, concepts of home were represented by 'belongingness' in terms of each individuals' historicity, and encompassed their past, present and their emerging sense of belonging. Indeed, for these returned travellers, home was discovered in belongingness to local communities (Kylie), in the meaning of close personal relationships (Teresa, Dillon) particularly within the context of traumatic life circumstances (Simon), in a cosmopolitan identity (Dillon), or in an 'emotional' home where returned travellers felt comfortable expressing themselves (Dillon, Kylie, Teresa). Thus, 'home' was manifested in an "environment that allows us to fulfil our unique selves through interaction... an environment that allows us to be ourselves (Tucker, 1994, p. 184). Yet, just as the returned travellers' historicity was individual and unique, so were their concepts of 'home'.

5.1.2 The importance of historicity in understanding personal experience and constructed meanings in social research

Due to the fractured, contradictory and context-rich nature of the social world, the situated voice of individual participants was integral to understanding (and interpreting) their social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Botterill, 2007). While qualitative research is increasingly acknowledging the situated nature of research in terms of the relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), few tourism studies recognise or specify the situated nature of the participants' voices. Instead, many scholars seek 'commonalities' in data while ignoring differences and contradictions between participants. In contrast, this thesis aligns with Wearing *et al.*'s (2010) argument that:

Tourists have contrasting personalities and differing identities, and each brings different values, beliefs, expectations and knowledge to the travel process which influence the behaviours, outcomes and experiences of their individual travels. At the same time, however, these values, beliefs and knowledges are shaped by significant cultural and social factors (p. 79).

Thus, tourism is inseparable from everyday lives, and understanding people's daily existence is important to make sense of their activities and experiences (Pernecky, 2010). Therefore, this thesis acknowledges and indeed privileges the situated individuality of each participant, and highlights within this theme the personal historicity that shaped each traveller's experiences of return.

Indeed, this thesis puts forward that the personal experiences, life history and worldviews of each individual presented within this theme has offered a depth of understanding that a less specific and detailed approach to research may have missed. As Section 2.3 - Moving beyond the physical return (page 27) implied, much intercultural literature seeks commonalities among participants, in an effort to synthesise results into categories that are understandable and (sometimes perhaps all too) obvious. However, while this intercultural literature may inform an interpretation of the stories of return in the present thesis, it was also important to acknowledge each individual's personal, diverse, unique, and often

subconscious historicity, which shaped their experiences of return and their constructions of home(s). Thus, the approach I have taken in this thesis, presenting the detailed stories of each returned traveller and examining those stories to reveal a lens of historicity to uncover the deeper meanings, tensions and circumstances that shaped personal experiences and constructed meanings, I believe, offers a 'richer' story of return.

5.2 “Returning was quite a mixed bag of emotions” - Emotion

The theme of emotion also emerged from the data as returned travellers described and reflected on their experiences of return and their concepts of home, using emotive language. Each emotion arose within its own specific context, as detailed in the next section, but viewed together across the data, this theme of emotion underpinned their stories of return. In particular, returned travellers proclaimed a “mixed bag” of emotions of both negative and positive emotions, such as uncertainty, frustration, displacement, and contentedness, pleasure and excitement, as they considered meanings of their home(s). Moreover, on a more subtle level, returned travellers intimated sarcasm, desperation, annoyance, disquiet and peace of mind either directly to me in the interviews or through their video diaries. Specific examples of these more subtle emotions are also detailed in the following section. Overall, the emotional aspect of return seemed to be largely unexpected by the participants. Yet, this emotional element reflects the transitional nature of return as noted by a number of scholars (for example, Rogers & Ward, 1993; Hurn, 1999; Gaw, 2000; Ghosh, 2000; Sussman, 2000). Thus, this chapter specifies the emotions expressed by participants within the context that they arose and then discusses an interpretation of these emotions within the framework of return from long term travel and within the wider context of meanings of home.

5.2.1 Emotions expressed by participants

Kylie felt “*strange*” and “*disjointed*”, like she was “squatting” in her parents’ “disrepaired” house, which she had grown up in, while they still lived abroad themselves. She felt “*flat*” in the knowledge that she could not have the life with

children she had returned to New Zealand for, but “*centred*” and “*relaxed*” when she baked and sewed. She felt “*displaced*” and like she was “*not part of it*” as she considered her future working in a “desolate aircraft hanger”, yet she felt “*decisive*”, “*excited*”, “*free*” and “*more involved*” when she gave up her job to create her own business. She also found it “*exhilarating*” to live in another language and was “*demotivated*” to adapt back into New Zealand.

Simon expressed *uncertainty* and *indecision* in his decision to return to New Zealand and his consideration of when to leave again. He felt “*frustrated*” with his “programmed” peers, and what he perceived to be their conservatism, ignorance, fixed ideas and prejudices. He was also “*frustrated*” with his family members who were “quite different” to him. Moreover, he was “*ashamed*” and “*angry*” towards his father and felt “*burdened*” by the responsibility he’d had in London looking after Amanda. In contrast, he was “*excited*” by travel, experiencing different cultures and global work opportunities, but felt “*scared*” that if he remained in New Zealand too long his career would stall and “*unsettled*” that he wanted to travel while his peers were settling down.

Dillon expressed a “*mixture*” of emotions in returning to New Zealand, including both *boredom* and *relief* at the relative safety and protective nature of New Zealand society compared with his more recent exposure of Columbian society. He felt “*stressed*” at the pressure of getting older, and questioned society’s and his peers’ perceptions of what he should have achieved by this stage in his life. He expressed “*disappointment*” and a “*distancing*” from his friends who had taken different life paths and no longer shared his worldviews, and while he *appreciated* those people who had accepted his wife Maria unconditionally, he was “*hurt*” by those who had not accepted her. He was also *offended* by people who expected him not to speak English because of his Chinese appearance, *saddened* by limited notions of New Zealand history that did not encompass Chinese history, and “*appalled*” by lack of appreciation of Māori culture by his friends. He was *comforted* by having his own space in which he could behave how he wanted and was surrounded by things that were meaningful to him, but felt that this personal space could be anywhere, not just New Zealand. He was also *comforted* by realising who he was and in his ability to stand out from a crowd. Thus, Dillon

expressed an “*emotional concept of home*” that manifested itself in his close personal relationships with others (his wife, friends, parents, in-laws or the families he lived with in Finland or Germany), in his future possibilities (a place he may buy in the future whether in New Zealand or in a “completely different country”), in his present comforts (having the space and mechanisms to express himself emotionally and physically) and in his personal history (something he may think about when he dies that he had experienced or had yet to experience).

Since she had returned, Teresa had experienced “*ups and downs*”. She was “*stressed*”, having migraines, “*exhausted*” and “*on the verge*” at the time of our interviews. She felt “*guilty*” not telling her boss about her “*nutty*”, “*crazy*”, “*cringy*” and sometimes “*doubtful*” long-distance relationship with Mattias, who she was “*totally in love*” with and was “*scared*” by her boss’s expectation that she would be staying in New Zealand. She was “*self-deprecating*” and *frustrated* when she described her perceived lack of social progress compared to her friends (when she had no car, no “real” boyfriend and no job). She was “*disgusted*” by the lifestyle of most New Zealanders in London, and found the mainstream stereotype “*tiring*”. She was “*depressed*” and “*upset*” by the intercultural “backwardness” of Germany, she “*hated*” the derogatory racial comments which she found “*really awful*”. She also did not enjoy feeling “*exotic*” in London, being ethnically Chinese, and “*loved*” being in the “normalness” of multi-cultural Auckland with a large proportion of Asians.

She realised she was being “*mean*”, “*bitchy*” and “*judgemental*” in her comments about John, but she could not help feeling “*annoyed*” with the situation, which she was “*not happy*” about. She was “*hurt*”, “*upset*”, “*insulted*” and *angry* at the lack of consultation about John, and by her mother’s comments about her not being committed to her family. She was also *frustrated* by Sarah’s ignorance regarding her parents’ pending separation and the “fake” behaviour by her parents in John’s presence. This lack of connection with her family made her feel “*floaty*” as she questioned her ideals of family and home, and made her realise that home for Teresa was “*fluid*” and “*dynamic*”. She felt “*hardened*” and less “*attached*” by her experiences as the “goodbye girl”, which she thought it was “*terrible*” to become used to. She also felt she might have become more “*arrogant*” and

“*narcissistic*” by her travel experiences. In contrast, she felt “*spiritually settled*” and “*committed*” with Mattias, on whom she pinned “so much *hope*”, and became “*emotional*” when she looked at pictures of him, which she found “*evocative*”.

Margaret felt “*lucky*” and “*content*” with her retirement lifestyle in New Zealand and was “*glad*” she chose not to return again as she was “*sick*” and “*tired*” of the travelling lifestyle. However, she was also “*worried*” that she would slip into routine of life where nothing is ever new. While she was away, she was “*devastated*” and “*shocked*” to realise she had no one to call upon (especially when she got lost). In contrast, she felt “*comfortable*” being surrounded by her good friends and in her own home, which contained meaningful objects. She was also *comforted* by her garden and her local beach and parks, which she found *therapeutic* and *relaxing* and which she took for granted before. When she was travelling, Margaret felt *comfortable*, *safe* and *secure* carrying her New Zealand passport, which represented her roots and her identity, although also felt she could make a home anywhere. However, on her return, she was “*shocked*” by the cost of living and *disappointed* with the perceived aggression that she was “used to” before she left.

The participant’s video diaries, and particularly their tone of voice as they narrated the scenes they were filming, or as they talked directly to the camera, demonstrated their emotions on a more subtle level. For example, there was *desperation* in Kylie’s tone as she described “really wanting” a mixer while she was in London, *relief* was evident as she talked about what she would feel like if her parents were there with her, and *disappointment* or *frustration* emerged in her tone as she described what the ripped wallpaper in her house meant to her. Her film of the ‘desolate wasteland’ where she worked, in particular, demonstrated the *disappointment* and perhaps *depression* she was feeling at the time of the videoing. Simon’s sarcasm in his film of the deserted beach reflected his values, as the place where he grew up did not fulfil anything he needed or wanted at that time in his life. In contrast, his more positive tone in his other beach scene, Mission Bay, reflected a more *satisfied*, *happy* demeanour as that place did fulfil at least some of his requirements. Margaret’s peace of mind, her *contentedness* and her *satisfaction* were evident in her tone and the words she chose to use as she

described what being near water and her garden meant to her (“*therapeutic*”, “*relaxing*”, “*comfortable*”). Her *contentedness* was also evident in her tone of voice as she filmed places where she took her children and grandchildren and as she reflected on places that emulated her home, which she had taken for granted before.

With many of Dillon and Teresa’s videos, both their facial expressions and their tone expressed their more subtle emotions, as they talked directly to the camera. For example, as Dillon reflected on what the photos of Columbia meant to him, his facial expressions, like the way he talked to the camera and then looked away as he thought about and described feeling “*sad*” and missing daily life in Columbia, demonstrated his emotional connection to Columbia. Dillon’s resolute and definite tone as he discussed his “world citizen” identity demonstrated his newfound *confidence* in standing out from the crowd.

Teresa looked away from the camera as she considered her deepest thoughts, for example, as she discussed the “clichéd” New Zealand culture, and feeling like the “goodbye girl”, and glanced towards the camera only intermittently, perhaps to emphasise the point she was making. She used other body language like hand gestures, facial expressions and verbal pauses to express herself as she developed her thoughts, rather than looking into the camera lens. Her ‘goodbye girl’ video was especially expressive in its pauses, silences and eye contact with the camera in certain frames, which perhaps reflected her emotional connection to the concepts she was describing.

However, the pauses and silences as the participants talked to the camera may represent a number of things other than emotional connections. For example, these silences could reflect the way returned travellers paused to think about what to say next, the discomfort or unnaturalness that arose as they talked to a camera rather than a person, or a hesitancy or withdrawal from expressing deeper emotions. For example, Margaret’s beach scene contains significant pauses, as she alternated between concentrating on what she was saying, where she was walking and what she was filming. Specifically, she paused and was perhaps distracted as the Sugar Loaf Islands came into view while she was explaining the

way she was homesick for this particular beach. She paused again, perhaps to check her footing, as she entered the beach. At other times, she paused as she thought of what she wanted to say, for example as she sought the word “therapeutic” (with the camera wavering to and fro without focusing on any particular point). However, despite the potential discomfort or feeling of ‘unnatural conversation’ that video diarising may have created, the perseverance with which participants persisted in creating their video diaries demonstrated the deeply felt importance of each scene they chose to film. For example, although Margaret admitted to me that she was uncomfortable and “not used” to creating video footage, she persevered with her video diary in her attempt to reflect upon and capture her concepts of home.

Thus, the diversity of emotive language that was used by returned travellers to describe their experiences of return perhaps reflected the emotionally-laden concepts of home. Some returned travellers expressed more frustration (Simon, Dillon), disappointment (Kylie, Teresa) and contentedness (Margaret) than others. Nevertheless, all returned travellers expressed a mixture of emotions throughout their story of return. Interestingly, returned travellers were simultaneously able to express nostalgia and longing for their more transient lifestyle, rejection of and resentment towards their presumed familiar ‘culture’ as well as satisfaction and a sense of belongingness to certain aspects of the environment (and relationships) to which they had returned. This further illustrates the “mixed” nature of the emotions returned travellers felt and reflects the continuum between comfort and discomfort, feelings of belonging and not belonging, and thus, concepts of home and homelessness that returned travellers experienced. Therefore, far from the primarily negative emotion, such as culture shock, reverse culture shock and repatriation distress, discussed in much intercultural literature (Jansson, 1986; Rogers & Ward, 1993; Hurn, 1999; Gaw, 2000; Hottola, 2004; Tange, 2005), this thesis illustrates the mixed and ‘rich’ diversity of (often unexpected) emotion that can arise from such an experience.

Moreover, the individual stories and the reiteration of the specific contexts through which the theme of emotion arose in the data, enabled the wider socially and culturally negotiated emotionalities to be considered in the interpretation of

the stories of return. For example, the perceived social and peer expectations of what especially the younger returned travellers should be doing (marriage, children) and achieving (progressing career, mortgage) with their lives, now they had decided to return, created feelings of “stress” (Dillon), “frustration” (Simon) and anxiety (Teresa) for some participants. Indeed, social expectations (around work, what ‘progress’ meant and how it should be measured), perceived social expectations (Simon’s frustration with the ‘New Zealand Programme’ of mortgage, marriage and children), and social expectations in relation to personal preferences (Kylie’s feelings in giving up her job and creating her own business, Simon’s fear of stagnating career-wise) raised emotions through which concepts of home became contested. Even Margaret, although she was “content” with her retirement lifestyle, was concerned that she would “slip back” into the “rut” of routine. Thus, the social and cultural assumptions of what it meant to be ‘home’ (to settle down, progress a career, no more long term travel) contrasted with the individual’s immediate priorities and preferences (wanting to go away again, experiencing new and exciting environments and people) and resulted in emotions of frustration and despair arising. As discussed under the theme of resistance (page 255), this contradiction between social ways of being and individual priorities, as well as raising negative emotions, can lead to subtle forms of struggle and challenge, which may manifest themselves in changes to identities and constructed meanings and, in this case, meanings of home (Thomas & Davies, 2005a, 2005b).

Furthermore, constructs of belongingness awakened emotions as participants considered who they had become through their travel experience, and how they ‘fit in’ (or more likely no longer fitted in) to their previously familiar culture and society. Dillon, for example, felt confident relinquishing his former search for identity in favour of his newly established global citizenship. Kylie continued to feel uncomfortable, and “displaced” by her identity as an urban dweller in contrast to the mainstream beach-going, rugby-watching, rural-living culture. Teresa felt more ‘at home’ in the “normalness” of multi-cultural and Asian-populated Auckland compared with her recent sojourn in Germany and London where she felt she looked “exotic”. Thus, the sense of belonging (or not belonging) was linked to constructs of what it meant to be ‘normal’ in the social and cultural

environment to which these travellers had returned. Emotional ties to meaningful places (a beach, a garden, a park), people and things (a sewing machine or mixer, a music collection or cutlery drawer) further reflected the individually constructed but socially influenced concepts of home. The following section discusses this theme of emotion within such constructed meanings of home.

5.2.2 Interpreting the meaning of these emotions

Thematically, the return phase of the travel experience offers an important context within which the emotional component of concepts of home may be examined and discussed. Indeed, for these participants, the emotional sentiment appeared to be intense, diverse and deeply felt as returned travellers reconsidered what they wanted from their lives, as they reengaged in their relationships with people they left behind, and as they reflected on how they had changed and how they might assimilate to a society they expected to be familiar and to which they expected to feel historically connected. Specifically, the vast array of emotions expressed in this research, set within the immediacy of return, arguably reflects the turbulent and transitional nature of return from long term travel, as travellers were 'shocked' by unexpected aspects of the originating environment, and simultaneously soothed by other elements. As Conradson and McKay (2007) point out, "dynamics of feeling impinge upon where we belong and with whom" (p. 172), thus, the emotional theme in this research was important in the travellers' experiences of return and in their (re)construction of their home(s).

Certainly, the emotional theme that emerged from the data reflects the depth of feeling that concepts of home summon. This supposition is supported, for example, by Gurney's (1997) episodic ethnographic study of heterosexual couples' meanings of home, in which he found that home was "predominantly portrayed as an emotional sphere within which personal biographies were framed" (p. 383). He argued further that "climatic events formed defining moments in these biographies as meanings were reassessed and renegotiated [and that] emotions were crucial to this" (p. 383). The return from long term travel is arguably one 'turning phase' in which meanings of home are reassessed and

renegotiated, and certainly within this research, returned travellers expressed a myriad of emotions as they reflected on what 'home' meant for them.

Yet, despite Gurney's findings, an exploration of emotion is missing within traditional assumptions of meanings of home, as emotions are used as resources to describe feelings of 'being at home', rather than as fundamental elements in meanings of home. For example, 'comfort' and 'belongingness' are largely assumed to be associated with feeling 'at home in the world' (Heidegger, 1971), rather than being examined for the (often socially constructed) meanings that constitute comfort/belongingness, and thus 'home' for the individual. Similarly, discomfort and a sense of not belonging are assumed to represent 'homelessness' without examining the meanings associated with such feelings. In contrast, this thesis has attempted to explore what or who makes returned travellers feel comfortable (or uncomfortable) and like they belong (or do not belong) in order to explore the meanings associated with feelings of 'home' and 'homelessness'.

Developing this theoretical perspective further, this thesis draws upon theories of social and cultural construction of emotions as influenced by personal history and interpersonal relations, rather than taking a universalist portrayal of emotion as "a panhuman ability or process that is invariant in its essence... and distribution" (Lutz & White, 1986, p. 4). While all humans may (potentially) be emotional beings, and emotions may be closely linked to notions of affect, "an embodied, physiological state that emerges through relational encounter" (Conradson & McKay, 2007, p. 170), considerations of socially validated or negotiated (often ideologically constructed) emotions seem a more appropriate discussion pertaining to the data highlighted above and within the context of return from long term travel and concepts of home. Individuality is not ignored with this approach, as 'home(s)' remain unique to each individual, but such discussions of social constructions of home also recognise social influences, such as what it means to 'progress' and social assumptions regarding 'settling down', on individual constructions of home.

5.3 “But I wouldn’t say that to my friends... it’s a bit of an insult to them” – Resistance

The theme of resistance (and attempts or considerations to conform) became evident through the research process as participants quite passionately opposed what they perceived to be cultural norms and accepted social attitudes, such as home ownership (Kylie, Dillon, Simon), the ‘natural’ progression of marriage, mortgage and children (Simon, Dillon), “narrow”, “conservative” and parochial worldviews (Simon, Kylie), and complacency regarding bureaucracy and cost of living (Margaret). Indeed, returned travellers tended to select and critique aspects of the way they perceived life to be in New Zealand, such as complacency, parochialism and conservatism, and they felt their travel experiences had given them an opportunity to observe otherness and thus critique this perceived New Zealand way of life more openly. However, returned travellers also tended toward conformity as they chose not to challenge friends’ worldviews and philosophised that they too would most likely eventually succumb to the dominant local discourses and ways of being. This section describes a theory of resistance that pertains to the findings of this research, then specifies the resistance expressed by each returned traveller and suggests a theory of ‘resistance to home’ as a result of this research.

5.3.1 Theory of resistance pertaining to the findings

Based on the stories of return, the discussion of resistance in this thesis follows Thomas and Davies (2005a, 2005b) post-structuralist theory of resistance recently emerging in organisation studies. Within this theory, resistance is viewed as a “constant process of adaptation, subversion and reinscription of dominant discourses” (Thomas & Davies, 2005a, p. 687). Indeed, resistance occurs as individuals confront and reflect upon their own ways of being, identify contradictions and tensions with ‘mainstream’ discourses, and subtly change meanings and understandings in order to deal with the discord that arises from those contradictions and tensions (Weedon, 1987). According to Thomas and Davies (2005a), this resistance arises from the individual’s “desire to gain the security and comfort that reside in knowing ourselves” (p. 687). Thus, where a contradiction, weakness and gap arises between a dominant discourse and the

individual's own interests (in terms of needing to know themselves), resistance to that discourse is produced.

Thus returned travellers, who had developed new perspectives through their experiences with and exposure to 'otherness', were faced on their return with often forgotten, taken for granted or unrealised pre-sojourn views, which they often only apprehended on their return. For example, the complacency with the high cost of living and 'aggressiveness' that Margaret observed on her return, the parochialism in terms of what Kylie perceived New Zealanders worry about, and the 'New Zealand programme' and sheep-like behaviour that concerned Simon reflected local discourses that no longer aligned with the returned travellers' interests, priorities or ways of thinking. Equally, the priority for travel or living and working abroad over other lifestyle choices that all returned travellers valued, and the intercultural sensitivity returned travellers felt they had developed, reflected newly developed worldviews that contradicted local discourses and ways of thinking. These contradictions in perspectives raised tensions in relationships as returned travellers chose whether to confront or disengage with their peers and family members regarding such issues. For example, once Margaret was told she was a "whinging pom" and should "hurry up and go back", she realised her resistance to her peers' views was 'insulting' them and chose to "bite [her] tongue". Her resistance remained prevalent in her mind, as was evident in her expression of opinions to me, but was silenced or concealed for the sake of her friendships.

Thus, this theory of resistance recognises multiple and differing standpoints, contexts, and voices, both within and between individuals, rather than assuming a unified approach to resistance. Moreover, this theory draws "attention to the importance of appreciating resistance not only as collective, overt acts, but also as subtle, routine, low level forms of struggle and challenge" (Thomas & Davies, 2005b, p. 720) and recognises "'difference' not only between resisting subjects, focussing on their own situated and personal agendas, but also difference and fracture within individuals" (ibid, p. 724). The resistance described here then, rather than being based on observable acts and behaviours, emerges at the level of identity and in the conceptualisation of meanings. As Thomas & Davies (2005)

point out, “at the discursive level, we can see an emphasis of ‘being different’ as a form of resistance in its own right” (p. 726). In terms of this research, each returned traveller resisted different aspects of the social environment to which they had returned, as the next section highlights.

5.3.2 Resistance expressed by each returned traveller

Kylie resisted the *narrow mindedness* of New Zealanders and the *things people worry about*. She complained about the cultural norm of *home ownership* and *materialism* (like the (un)importance of owning an expensive coffee table). Interestingly, she also believed that she would likely conform to this way of thinking eventually. She also conformed in terms of *belonging to her local community* because of her history there, as was evident, for example, in her behaviour at the pizza shop where she snubbed any newcomers. In contrast, Kylie felt *atypical within the wider New Zealand community*, as her upbringing did not adhere to symbolic cultural norms (like beach holidays, rugby and rural living).

Simon silently resisted the “*set programme*” of *mortgage, marriage and children*, and perceived New Zealanders to hold “*very fixed*”, “*conservative*” and “*closed minded*” *ideas*. In particular, he complained that his peers preferred to spend their money on alcohol or a flash car instead of what he valued as more “worthwhile” expenses like travel experiences. However, Simon’s resistance was largely *silent* as he thought that vocalising his thoughts would inevitably result in *pointless confrontation*, and as he admitted that doing so may *lose him his friendships*. Moreover, Simon realised through the research process the *value he placed on these friendships*, which surpassed the experiential and political differences he had with his close friends in particular, as they helped to ease a difficult phase of his life.

Dillon had been ‘resisting’ social assumptions for most of his adult life. His Chinese ethnicity and minority status in New Zealand and his subsequent search for identity throughout his life had made him particularly ‘*resistant*’ to *mainstream social assumptions*. Since his travel experiences, he also resisted the *complacency* he perceived to be part of New Zealand culture, a ‘culture’ that was

uninterested in international affairs, rejected non-mainstream social histories and disrespected Māori cultural protocols. In particular, he had chosen a *different life path* from many of his pre-sojourn peers and resisted their worldviews, such as the *assumed need to progress financially* rather than offering assistance to the underprivileged. On the other hand, he conformed to what he considered New Zealand culture (*rugby, fish and chips, Maoridom*), and had recently realised that traditional notions of belonging no longer mattered to him; that the concept of *being a global citizen*, surviving and learning about wherever he lived, was more important to him than the *sense of belonging in one physical place*. Nevertheless, at the time of our interviews, he remained unsure whether he would continue to resist or conform to the social pressures he felt in terms of *buying a house, having children and progressing his career*. He was questioning his own values compared to those of his friends and weighing up his options. Certainly, he felt these social pressures to be a “hindrance” in his experiences of return.

On a socio-cultural level, Teresa resisted “*discourses of otherness*” in Germany and, in her perception, the “*clichéd*”, “*made up by Saatchi and Saatchi*”, “*mainstream*”, “*stereotypical*” and “*fabricated*” values that represented being a New Zealander, like rural-ness, beaches, mountains and the sea. She also resisted the *typical long term travel experiences*, as she perceived people “put their experiences in a bag” to “look at sometimes”. In contrast, her identity was more “*fluid and dynamic*” and not necessarily connected only to New Zealand.

Teresa also resisted people who “whined” or complained about their life without doing anything to change it. Interestingly, this resistance reflected her own dissatisfaction with her chosen lifestyle at the time of our interviews, as she was unhappy living with her “annoying” family in order to save money. Indeed, on a more interpersonal level, Teresa resisted *mainstream discourse of family relationships*, as the idea of “Yay, happy family” was never “really real” to her. Her resistance to her family members specifically manifested itself in an emotional deluge of frustration, hurt, anger and tears. She cried and argued a lot with her family members, particularly in the context of John’s presence in the household.

Some of the comments from Teresa's significant others shed further light on Teresa's personality and the resistant nature of her relationship with her family. One family member in particular was disappointed (and indeed distraught) to be re-exposed to Teresa's volatile nature, which she had forgotten about while Teresa was away. She tried to understand Teresa and justify her behaviour, for example by making the excuse that Teresa "missed London" or was "frustrated and bored", but her distress and shock was evident in her testimonial, and she wished she had been better prepared for the conflict that occurred on Teresa's return. Similarly, another of Teresa's family members found her return required a sudden adjustment that was perhaps unexpected, as the following passage describes:

I think she's more organised and more decisive. She seems to have a more definite idea about her future. Basically she's still the Teresa that we all know... I guess two and a half years is quite a long time. When the person's gone, that space is gradually eaten up by other activities and other people and everybody else. When a person suddenly appears, you have to reschedule to accommodate this space here... We have all to make space. There was no Teresa for two and a half years, and all of a sudden there's a Teresa again.

This family member saw Teresa as "basically the same" and found she had to suddenly "make space" for Teresa when she returned. Thus, these comments by Teresa's significant others illustrate the influence of Teresa's (resistant) return on their own lives, as they had to (sometimes reluctantly) accommodate her back into their routines. A passive return-resistance by her significant others was also evident, as they were faced with her (forgotten) often abrasive personality traits. Thus, interpersonal resistance may lead to tensions in relationships, whereby neither party may hold the power or dominance in the relationship, and where dialogue may be destructive to the relationship, as power is negotiated and contested but never resolved. Dialogue is often viewed as constructive in the resolution of conflict in relationships (for example, Weinstock & Bond, 2000); however, in some cases, such as Margaret and Simon choosing not to confront friends on controversial issues, parties may refrain from dialogue in order to preserve the relationship instead.

Margaret's resistance manifested itself through *silences* as she, like Simon, chose *not to confront her friends* with particular views (for example, complaints regarding the high cost of living and bureaucracy, concerns about New Zealand's under-population and immigration policy, and frustrations with her friends' travel choices which she viewed as a "waste of time"). She felt she had "*grown*" by living with other cultures and experiencing different ways of life, and that her friends were perhaps *limited in some of their views*. However, she chose to *bite her tongue* rather than "hurt" or "insult" the people who meant a lot to her. In contrast, Margaret seemed comfortable expressing her more controversial opinions to me, perhaps because I was consciously listening non-judgementally and thus offering her a rare opportunity to express herself.

Thus, this theme of resistance emerged through interview settings as returned travellers openly shared their (controversial, oppositional and 'resistant') views with me, which some of them refrained from sharing with friends and family. Moreover, as they positioned themselves as 'others' (travellers, "global citizens", "nomads", not wanting to "settle down") in comparison to peers (with set national identities and "very fixed", "conservative", parochial ideas) and against dominant positions in local discourses (for example, the "New Zealand programme" of mortgage, marriage and children, or the complacency with the high cost of living), moments of resistance arose. Certainly, their worry at 'falling into a rut' of routine lifestyle, as opposed to their more recent and desired exciting and new lifestyle, indicated a level of resistance to the social environment and way of life to which they returned.

Therefore, these returned travellers drew upon new and different worldviews, values, and ways of being to those offered by the dominant discourse of the social environment they had left and returned to. In doing so, tensions between the different perspectives arose, for example, their friends' and families' views reflecting dominant discourses versus their newly acquired views developed through their exposure to other ways of thinking and being. They challenged dominant discourses through small-scale, subtle and covert forms of resistance within the specific context of their individual experiences. This resistance was

not part of an emancipatory project or wider social oppression, but did attempt (albeit not publically) to challenge dominantly held subjectivities and meanings.

However, it remains unclear whether the returned travellers' resistance destabilised truths, made more acceptable other ways of being, or created a force for social change at any level (Thomas & Davies, 2005b). Indeed, it would seem that returned travellers were more likely to revert back (or convert) to dominant ways of being and thinking, by withdrawing and disengaging with their newly formed ideas for the sake of the relationship with their friends and family members. Questions arise as to whether this importance placed on relationships is socially influenced or a personal choice. For example, Brewis (2004) notes that resistance does not necessarily equate to freedom and liberty, but can be difficult, demanding and risky. Indeed, the ability to resist is what provides the freedom, but the consequences of such resistance may not produce positive results, and may therefore not be practiced (ibid). Therefore, rather than continuing to challenge dominantly held views or inspiring others to challenge and thus rewriting discourses (Thomas & Davies, 2005b), some returned travellers 'chose' to remain silent.

Moreover, evidence from my interviews with significant others suggests that unless the friend or family member had themselves lived and worked abroad, they were unlikely to understand the returned travellers' personal growth, seeing the returned traveller as "the same" Kylie, Dillon, Teresa or Simon. Nor did the untravelled significant others understand the wider social benefit of long term travel, as one participant aptly summarised:

Travelling is not the be all and end all, you're not a more intelligent person; you've just experienced more geographical locations... They come back with travel experience, but I wouldn't say any more than that. I don't feel less intelligent or less academic because I haven't travelled... God forbid they bring out their bloody photo collection.

Thus, the resistance that returned travellers felt was unappreciated and in some cases rejected by significant others who had not experienced a similar lifestyle of living and working abroad themselves.

On the other hand, those who had travelled recognised and appreciated the resistance in the returned traveller and found their friend or family member's return as an opportunity to relive their own experience of return. For example, one friend commented:

All that "Oh, I'm not settled, and what do I do next, and how does that all work?" That's the same experience for me, when you are in London and when you are on your own and the culture is a little bit more, not so much pressured on being settled down... I am really glad that he has actually experienced it as well, so it's something in common that we can talk about.

In these cases, the returned travellers felt more 'understood' by their significant others as they shared similar experiences and did not need to censor their thoughts and opinions.

5.3.3 Proposing a 'resistance to home'

In terms, more specifically, of informing theories of resistance to home, feminist scholars have problematised mainstream notions of home as a haven or a sense of belonging by highlighting the more disturbing and negative ideas of home as a place of exclusion, domestic violence and domestic work (for example, Bowlby, Gregory, & McKie, 1997; Wardhaugh, 1999). Thus, power relations within the home have been re-examined through feminist research as home is no longer regarded as a neutral space, but rather differentiated by gendering. Along these lines, Gregson and Lowe (1995) suggest that "we need to think of home in terms of dominance and resistance; to consider how and why a particular ideology of home maintains its hegemonic position and how this might be contested through alternative interpretations" (p. 226). However, rather than examining this dominance and resistance from a feminist viewpoint, I have examined it through a wider lens informed by cross-cultural studies in terms of returned travellers and their geographically stable significant others.

Thus, I draw here upon, cross-cultural adaptation and migration literature, as described in Section 2.3 - Moving beyond the physical return (page 27), whereby

tensions with social and cultural norms arise on the travellers' return. These tensions with social and cultural norms provide evidence of 'resistance to home' as returned travellers and their friends and family question notions of identity and belongingness. Yet, concepts of home remain critically unchallenged within intercultural literature, as meanings of home (as the country of origin) are largely assumed rather than critically examined.

Moreover, the resistance to home proposed here is conceptually distinct from, but also connected to, concepts of homelessness prevalent (mainly) in feminist and cross-cultural studies. The resistance manifests itself in disagreements with dominant meanings and discourses accompanied (sometimes) by an *unwillingness* to express oneself due to greater concerns, for example, regarding relationships, as Margaret's and Simon's silences illustrated. In contrast, 'homelessness' is traditionally conceptualised as feelings of discomfort, unfamiliarity and an *inability* to express oneself and have that expression accepted by others (the antonym of concepts of home). Therefore, although the difference between 'homelessness' and 'resistance to home' may be subtle, the conceptual distinction lies within the power struggles that emerge within relationships. For example, where the returned traveller chooses not to express their thoughts and feelings, they retain the power or 'freedom' as Brewis (2004) terms it. Indeed, this conceptualisation aligns with Brewis' comments that it is the ability to resist, and therefore the ability to make the choice of whether or not to resist, that provides the freedom or power to the individual. On the other hand, the power is transferred to the 'other' within the concept of homelessness, as the returned traveller's expression is unaccepted by others, making them feel uncomfortable, like they no longer belong and are unable to express themselves. Returned travellers traverse these conceptual distinctions of 'resistance to home' and 'homelessness', as they experience feelings of discomfort (homelessness) and respond to the tensions and contradictions they face in the social environment to which they return (by either continuing their 'resistance' or choosing to conform to social norms). Nevertheless, the 'resistance to home' is proposed here as an 'alternative interpretation' to traditional notions of 'homelessness' (Gregson & Lowe, 1995).

5.4 *“I was negotiating all this stuff and adjusting” – (re)Negotiation*

(re)Negotiation was a substantial theme to emerge from the data and was evident in returned travellers’ extensive reconsiderations of what was important to them, what they wanted from their lives and how they had changed through their travel experiences, as they reflected on their relationships with friends and family, and as they renegotiated how they fitted in to the wider ‘New Zealand cultural’ structures and their pre-sojourn peer groups. Thus, they renegotiated their ‘personal identities’ as they questioned their decisions to return and reconsidered their values, for example, career vs. sport (Simon), money vs. creativity (Kylie, Teresa), family vs. boyfriend (Teresa), and helping others vs. career (Dillon). Additionally, they renegotiated the meaning of interpersonal relationships as they considered who was most important to them and why, for example Teresa’s boyfriend who made her “spiritually settled”, Simon and Margaret’s friends (“there is nothing quite like your friends”), and Dillon and Kylie’s family with all the pieces “fitting together”. Moreover, returned travellers found themselves renegotiating their ‘social identities’ as they considered what gave them a sense of ‘belonging’, for example, local communities or meaningful people and places, and what made them feel like they did not belong, such as “fabricated” national identities. Within this (re)negotiation phase, returned travellers were faced with a way of life and life choices that were sometimes unexpected and certainly different from the way of life and choices they had experienced while they were away. Thus, a phase of renegotiation was necessary for them to reconcile their differences with the social environment they had returned to.

Conceptually, negotiation occurs through dialogue, contains elements of persuasion and centres around dispute. Disputes resolved by negotiation are commonly considered to occur between two or more parties; however, negotiation can also occur within individuals to resolve tensions between what they want or do versus what they think they should want or do (Bazerman, Tenbrunsel, & Wade-Benzoni, 1998). Indeed, as Williams & Van Patten (2006) explain, in a world in which “localities are thoroughly penetrated by distant, global influences... self-identity becomes a reflexive *negotiation* of several distinctive dilemmas that must be resolved in order to maintain a coherent identity narrative”

[italics added] (p. 35-36). Thus, this section discusses returned travellers' internal, personal renegotiation of identities, which occurred through dialogue with themselves, with others and with me.

This theme of (re)negotiation overlaps the other themes of historicity, emotion and resistance. Indeed, although the context of return may have exacerbated the 'disputes' returned travellers experienced with themselves and with others, the renegotiations occurred beyond the context of return as travellers considered their (historically situated) personal identities, as they resisted presumed social identities and as they emotionally reengaged with interpersonal relationships. Moreover, this thesis conceives the self and culture as a "multiplicity of positions among which dialogical relationships can develop" (Hermans, 2001, p. 243) rather than viewing the "self as individualised and self-contained, and culture as abstract and reified" (ibid). Nevertheless, for the purpose of clarity, I have conceptualised these renegotiations as occurring on three sub-thematic levels as they seemed to be revealed from the data: Renegotiating personal identities, renegotiating the meaning of interpersonal relationships, and renegotiating social identities. However, I also acknowledge that these layers overlap and are complex within themselves. The following section draws on examples from the returned travellers' stories to illustrate the renegotiation that occurred at the levels of personal identities, social identities and meanings in interpersonal relationships, then discusses each of these layers of renegotiation within the context of return.

5.4.1 (re)Negotiating personal identities

Returned travellers found themselves renegotiating their personal identities, as they questioned their decision to return, considered what they wanted from their lives and negotiated a new way of living. They felt 'at home' within themselves by doing what they wanted to be doing at that stage in their lives, in knowing themselves, in realising their goals and priorities and in having a place to call their 'own', where they could do what they wanted and thus express themselves. However, the impossibility of a desired way of life also made returned travellers reconsider what was important to them as they renegotiated their personal identities. If they were unable to do what they wanted, they felt uncomfortable

and 'homeless'. Therefore, part of the returned travellers' renegotiation of their personal identities was identifying what they wanted to be doing, what they enjoyed, found therapeutic and relaxing, and conversely what made them feel uncomfortable.

Specifically, Kylie negotiated her personal identities as she considered what she wanted from her life. For example, she struggled with questions of domesticity versus nomadism. She valued her family's historically nomadic lifestyle, felt she could be happy living elsewhere, and often said to her husband, "Let's go". She also felt "centred" and "relaxed" when she baked and sewed, had "wifely aims" to get her "home-making groove on" and saw herself as a "home body". She had thought she would always be transient and rootless, "awesome and nomadic", but realised that she really wanted "to be a housewife". This change in priorities from nomadism to domesticity led Kylie to renegotiate her personal identities as she realised she had an "absolute need" to "exercise this [domesticated] part of [her]self". Initially, she felt this domestic life need not occur in New Zealand, but that she could also be happy living in France or England with her mixer and her sewing machine. However, by the end of our interviews, Kylie had convinced herself to stay in New Zealand, as she realised the importance to her of other things she would miss if she left (her connection with family here, her space that was her own and her good friends in the area).

A second aspect of Kylie's renegotiation of personal identities manifested itself in her prioritisation of creativity over materialism. She realised she was "not entirely driven by money", did not understand her peers wanting to "own stuff" (like an expensive coffee table, houses and new cars) and preferred to live a "creative life" through which she could express herself. However, the impossibility of Kylie leading the life she wanted (a domestic life with children and her own business) caused her to feel "flat", "displaced" and thus, 'homeless'. Her "rosy idea" that "everything would be awesome" was not realised, and she felt "not part of it" on her return. Nevertheless, by the end of our interviews, she had quit her corporate job and established her own business, making her feel "decisive" and "free", and as though she was "living a totally different life" and reportedly giving her purpose.

Simon negotiated his personal identities as he considered whether his sport or career was more important to him. He realised that where he would live would always be dependent on his priorities at that stage of his life, as his sport was best practised in New Zealand, with its rural opportunities for cycling and its “clean swimming pools”, and his career would be better developed by further international opportunities. This negotiation of personal identities was also evident in his videos of Waikanae beach and Auckland city. He still called Waikanae ‘home’, but realised it did not fulfil his needs at that stage of his life, and his perception of Auckland had changed through his exposure to larger more metropolitan cities. Through his negotiation of personal identities, Simon had become more “focussed”, more “comfortable with who [he was]” and more “confident”. Indeed, renegotiating his personal identities had helped Simon to “figure things out a bit more”, as he thought about what he needed to make himself comfortable with his life. Yet, there were still “a few question marks” regarding his future, as he was undecided what his next goals would entail.

A further example of Simon renegotiating his personal identities manifested itself in his comments about the way he would treat ‘black people’. Despite his proclaimed open-mindedness, his comments indicated an underlying tension in Simon’s prejudices as he admitted he found his black friend’s English accent strange and would not necessarily approach a black person, but rather would talk to them if approached. He stated that he would “talk to them like they were just another person.” His use of a simile underscores his underlying prejudice as he would talk to a black man ‘like’ he were just another person; said as a comparison (to a non-person) rather than a statement of fact. Also his inclusion of ‘just’ in this sentence implies the black person could be something other than simply a person. This passage illustrates Simon’s negotiation of his personal identities as he wants to be more open-minded as a result of his travel experiences, but remains haunted by his historic prejudices.

Dillon’s renegotiation of his personal identities manifested itself primarily in his new-found comfort with the “global citizen” label. He realised he was “not so precious about being a New Zealander [and] what is home” and indeed that it

“didn’t matter” whether he was comfortable being a New Zealander. This comfort with the label of global citizen emerged as he realised he associated with a variety of ethnicities including New Zealand, Chinese, Latin America and Māori (evident in the way he completed surveys, in his cutlery drawer, the food in his pantry, and his music collection), and that he was comfortable standing out from a crowd (and wearing clothing that reflected his uniqueness). In contrast, he had “struggled with [his] identity” growing up, and at the time of our interviews, he felt “torn” between New Zealand and Colombia. Nevertheless, he felt that if he had his “own” space, in which he could do what he wanted, express himself, place his belongings, and if he had “control over what I do in this place”, that place could be anywhere and he would feel ‘at home’. Thus, in renegotiating his personal identities, Dillon had let go of the singular New Zealand identity he had sought in his childhood, and had become comfortable with the concept of multiple identities.

However, Dillon was also negotiating what was important to him at the time of our interviews, in terms of helping under-privileged people and further travel versus settling down with a mortgage and children like his peers. He noticed that his ‘progress’ at the age of 35 was different to what he had expected to achieve by this age, and the “perception of where someone in their mid-30s should be”. Thus, he questioned what he wanted from his life in his renegotiation of his personal identities.

Teresa was negotiating what was important to her (“reengaging” with her family relationships versus her boyfriend in Germany to whom she “belonged”; her current job versus the ambiguous and “not very feminist” opportunities in Germany; the importance of Mattias versus the doubtful logistics of living in Germany which was “quite different from [her] other homes”) and what she wanted from her life (to live in New Zealand or move to Germany, a creative or a corporate career). She was also torn between staying in New Zealand (to save money, get work experience, reengage with family) and wanting to leave again (to be with Mattias and be “really far away” from her family). Thus, at the time of our interviews, Teresa was unsure what her future would hold and was negotiating her personal identities to help her make this decision.

Margaret felt confident in her newly developed intercultural opinions, and in the importance she placed on long term travel having experienced it herself. As she considered what made her comfortable, she realised she was a “home-body” as she “looked hard” at herself during the research process and realised the importance to her of owning her own home. However, Margaret’s renegotiation of her personal identities is better illustrated by her significant other’s comments:

It’s hard travelling overseas and doing the big O.E. at that time of life, so it has just been awesome. She has gained a lot more confidence. She is more passive and understanding, caring about everybody and everything. It has done her wonders. It has just brought her out as a person. She has probably grown, immensely. I just feel she has found her place in life... Every time she came back from the U.K. she had done something else or accomplished something else that she hadn’t done in the previous six or seven months... I think being on her own for a long, long time with no male support is hard on any woman. That’s just my idea, because she brought those kids up on her own and I don’t think that’s easy. Going through trials and tribulations with your teenagers at that stage on your own, a woman. So I just think everything that happens to her now is good, she deserves it.

Thus, this friend identified significant changes in Margaret’s attitude and way of being as a result of her experiences abroad. She noticed Margaret’s increased confidence and caring attitude compared to her pre-sojourn unhappiness. She believed that accomplishing new things abroad and caring for others had led Margaret to grow “immensely”. Another of Margaret’s friends shared these views of Margaret’s increased confidence and new outlook on life as a result of her experiences abroad, as follows:

Her life is broader and fuller and she’s more confident now. She was confident in certain ways before, like dealing with tradesmen, because she brought up her children alone. So she was already confident in that sense, but now she’s more fully confident, a more rounded person, because she’s had more experiences, she has seen and done a lot.

Therefore, according to her friends, Margaret's attitude to life seemed to have changed as she had discovered her 'self' and her 'self worth' by facing new challenges and experiences and growing in confidence as she "accomplished" them and as she decided to "make the most" of opportunities as they arose. She had also developed a new outlook in terms of her personal identity, as she strongly believed people "need to" travel and live and work abroad.

Thus, the returned travellers negotiation of their 'personal identities' was evident in their changed attitudes, priorities and values as they questioned their pre-sojourn assumptions, as they considered who they were (what was important to them, what made them (un)comfortable) and reflected on who they wanted to become (what they wanted from their life in the future, what were their goals and priorities). For some, this meant letting go of prejudices, such as the values of nomadism over domesticity (Kylie), materialism over creativity (Kylie, Teresa), metropolitan cities over smaller centres (Simon), family over romantic relationships (Teresa), or the importance of a national identity (Dillon). Sometimes, this negotiation of their 'personal identities' required a new attitude or outlook, for example, identifying with black ethnicities (Simon), identifying with global citizenship (Dillon), or developing a new level of confidence (Margaret, Simon). Certainly, this process of negotiation and reflection enabled returned travellers to better 'know' themselves (and thus their concepts of home) to a greater, and deeper extent than they perhaps had before their sojourn, or indeed before taking part in this research. The following section ruminates on the meaning of negotiating multiple identities in the context of long term travel and concepts of home as a wider discussion to the above.

5.4.2 The multiple selves of 'home'

The transformative power of long term travel is well documented. As White & White (2004) explain, long term travel offers "a space in which the process of disintegration and reintegration of personal identity can occur" (p. 216).

Moreover, the return phase of travel, in particular, offers an opportunity to reflect on pre-sojourn ways of being and to reconsider these in light of the travel experience. Thus, as they renegotiated their personal identities, returned travellers

sought their ‘selves’ and thus their ‘home(s)’. On some levels, they realised what was important to make them feel comfortable within themselves; however, some “question marks” still remained. Indeed, just as they travelled and saw otherness which eventually became part of themselves (Wearing & Wearing, 2001), the otherness of the social environment to which they returned equally became part of themselves. This led to a (re)negotiation of their personal identities as they reconciled their newly acquired values and perspectives with those pertaining to their pre-sojourn way of being, to renegotiate the personal identities of their futures. As Rutherford (1990) explains:

Identity then is never a static location, it contains traces of its past and what it is to become. It is a provisional full-stop in the place of differences and the narrative of our own lives (p. 24).

Therefore, their return from long term travel has potentially contributed to a wider and life-long process of identity construction and negotiation.

Similar to concepts of home, the process of identity construction is always in tension (Jackson, 1995) or under ‘dispute’. Indeed, “by its very nature... identity... is ‘provisional’ or in flux. [Thus,] the boundaries of... home [and identity] are permeable and unstable... [and] must be constructed and negotiated” (Mallett, 2004, p. 70), as explained within Section 2.4.1 - Homes and identities (page 41). The challenge for returned travellers was to negotiate which combination of their multiple selves to employ in the social environment to which they had returned. Thus, returned travellers questioned and negotiated their ‘multiple selves’ as they considered who they were in the context of their return and who they wanted to be. This (re)negotiation of multiple selves aligns with Wearing and Wearing’s (2001) postmodern theory of the self, which reflects a degree of agency of the ‘I’ but also takes the social construction of various ‘me’s, as discussed in Section 2.4.1 - Homes and identities (page 41).

5.4.3 (re)Negotiating the meaning of relationships with others

Returned travellers also found themselves renegotiating the meaning of their interpersonal relationships on their return as they considered who was important to them and why. This renegotiation occurred with physically present and

physically absent relationships alike. They found that close personal relationships, like-minded people, and shared experiences or histories with people gave them feelings of comfort and familiarity, whereas missing relationships (whether missing the physical presence of specific people or missing the former emotional connection of a particular relationship), unexpected changes in relationships and dissonance within a relationship made them feel uncomfortable, and thus, 'homeless'. All returned travellers agreed that close personal relationships were important to them and their concepts of home. Some valued friends over family and vice versa. However, all returned travellers also found themselves reassessing the meaning of these relationships within the context of their return and their concepts of home.

Specifically, Kylie was "searching for some kind of identity, or some kind of tie", and believed she would find that tie if she could have a child. Moreover, she missed the physical presence of her parents, making her feel "weird" and "disjointed". Having her parents nearby created a "comforting environment" for her, and her ideal home was a "family commune", "where the doors are never closed". However, she also felt she could "live without them" being physically present, as she would always know they were "behind" her. Indeed, she did not "totally need them to be here", but that "it would feel more like home if they were here". Thus, Kylie realised that it was more the unexpectedness of not having her parents physically present that made her feel disjointed, rather than any fundamental need to have them near her.

Kylie also found herself renegotiating the meaning of her relationships with friends on her return. She considered one friend in particular, with whom she felt the relationship had changed and she no longer felt "the same bond" as they no longer understood each other. Nevertheless, she felt they would remain friends, but that it was "not the friendship it was". In contrast, other friendships became more meaningful to Kylie as she shared a "common bond" with people who had also "been away and just come back". Thus, in her renegotiation of friendships, Kylie missed the connection she had had with one friend, but still valued the personal history they shared. On the other hand, she enjoyed shared experiences

and like-mindedness with other friends who had travelled and with whom she felt an instant connection.

Simon was also faced with changing relationships on his return, as his untravelled friends were not interested in his experiences, were “closed minded” in his perception, and he therefore had less time for them. His family members who had not left New Zealand also did not “understand [his] need to travel”. Whereas, he felt “more drawn” to those who had travelled and were “of the same sort of mind set”, on his “wavelength” and “in the same boat”. However, as he renegotiated the meaning of these relationships, he realised his “ignorant” friends were not “harming anybody”, were not “nasty or vindictive” and did not “hurl abuse at people”. Thus, in renegotiating the meaning of these relationships, Simon realised he could not “blame them” for their ignorance, and chose not to argue with them as he “valued” their support in the situation with Amanda and his father. Furthermore, he feared that if he “forced” his opinions on everyone he knew, he would eventually “know no-one”. Indeed, he admitted he sometimes joked along with their prejudiced remarks. This indicates that in Simon’s renegotiation of his relationships with peers, his acceptance and the relationships themselves were more important to him than differences of opinion, experiences or values.

During the course of our interviews, Simon also renegotiated his relationship with his father, through internal dialogue with himself and through dialogue with his father. Initially, he was “angry”, “ashamed” and “burdened” by his father’s behaviour, and felt he would not be able to return to the U.K. if his father was still living there. However, by the end of our interviews, and after some constructive emails with his father, which “made [him] feel more comfortable about what [his father was] thinking”, he wondered whether he could live near his father after all. Nevertheless, he remained “undecided” with “everything... up in the air” at the end of our interviews. In this case, further renegotiation of the meaning of this relationship was perhaps needed before Simon could find clarity regarding his father.

Dillon also renegotiated the meaning of his relationships with friends on his return. Although he had felt “disappointed” and “distant from them” when they

had refused to support his charity, he recognised they had chosen a different path, were a “product of [their] experiences” and he decided not to “hold that against them”. He also appreciated their reasons for not contributing (different financial priorities) and accepted that it was “part of getting older and growing up”. In contrast, Dillon found little need to renegotiate his family relationships, as he felt “emotionally close” to them despite prolonged physical distance. He valued the concept of whanau (whereby emotional bonds are just as important as blood bonds) and saw his extended family as a ‘lego’ family, with “all the little blocks fitting together”. Thus, close personal relationships were very important to Dillon and to his notion of an “emotional home”.

Teresa’s interpersonal relationships were an important aspect of her renegotiation in terms of her concepts of home. During our interviews, she considered what these relationships meant to her, in particular her relationships with individual family members and her relationship with Mattias. She found solace in her relationship with Mattias, which made her feel “spiritually settled” and which she thought was “more healthy” than her parents’ relationship; however, she also described her relationship with Mattias as “cringy”, indicating that she was not entirely comfortable with its intensity. Her relationships with her mother and youngest sister, Sarah, were changed, tense and loaded with conflict and misunderstandings. These misunderstandings were exacerbated by John’s presence in the house, which was unauthorised by Teresa, and perhaps also by Teresa’s jealousy of Sarah as she felt that “everything revolves around what [Sarah] wants”. However, her relationships with her mother and sister were still important to her, as she tried, in particular, to be a “stabilising influence” for her parents and was disappointed when her efforts were ignored. These underlying tensions were historically prominent in Teresa’s family life as “no one ever apologises, no one ever resolves issues; it’s just underlying tension that you are supposed to forget about it”. However, her exposure to Mattias’ happier and more attractive family life perhaps made Teresa question more deeply how “bothered” she was by the lack of her own “happy family”. She reflected that she still believed in the importance of close personal relationships in her sense of personal identity, as for Teresa, “that’s just a core part of what makes life”. Thus, at the time of our interviews, Teresa was still negotiating the importance to her of

particular close personal relationships. The Epilogue section (page 322) of this thesis indicates perhaps the conclusion she reached regarding these relationships.

Margaret's newly found confidence and surety in her intercultural or political opinions were challenged and sometimes rejected by her peers. For example, her views on the cost of living in New Zealand caused her to be called a "whinging pom", she silenced her views on immigration policies as she knew her friends would not agree with her, and she refrained from pestering her friends about opportunities to "get out there and do it" as she realised they had to make up their own minds. Therefore, Margaret found herself negotiating the meaning of her relationships with friends, who she deemed very important to her, and thus who she was "careful" not to "hurt" or "insult" by "going on" about her experiences and her views and disregarding their perspectives. Another aspect of Margaret's renegotiation in interpersonal relationships was evident the way she encouraged her daughter to leave for Australia, whereas she admitted she would not have done so if she had not lived and worked abroad herself. Thus, Margaret's renegotiation in terms of her daughter occurred more at the level of interaction and attitude, rather than *meaning* of the relationship.

Thus, returned travellers negotiated the meaning of their interpersonal relationships with physically present, physically absent, and even desired (in the case of Kylie's child) others. Some of these relationships were deemed important and influential to experiences of return regardless of physical presence. For example, Kylie's physically absent parents made her feel disjointed, whereas Dillon's "emotionally close" family needed not to be physically present. Moreover, like-mindedness seemed more important to some returned travellers than physical presence (Simon's friends on the same wavelength, Dillon's distance from 'different' friends, Kylie's common bond with people who had recently returned) and in some cases, physical presence was a limiting factor in the relationship (for example, Teresa's family relationships, Simon's relationship with his father). As returned travellers negotiated the meaning of these relationships, they sometimes adjusted their behaviour, for example, Margaret and Simon remained silent in their opinions among friends who might be insulted by them and Dillon justified his friends' lack of charity by rationalising that they

were at different stages in life. Therefore, in their negotiation of the meaning of interpersonal relationships, returned travellers identified who and what made them (un)comfortable and why, contributing to their concepts of home, as the next section conceptualises.

5.4.4 'Home' and others

For Wu (1993), home is “being-with-other(s)” (p. 193) and is manifested in “the intersubjective relationships that brings a self, person or I into being or existence” (Mallett, 2004, p. 83). Thus, home is understood as “fundamental to being” (ibid, p. 83), not necessarily a physical space or place, but manifested in acceptance of oneself by other(s). In contrast, some scholars would argue that one can also be ‘at home’ within oneself regardless of acceptance of others (McCaig, 1996), as an individual “cannot be totally controlled by the internalized attitudes of others” (Wearing & Wearing, 2001, p. 145) and that one may take into account others’ perspectives but not necessarily be determined by them.

The results of this thesis support a combination of these perspectives, as returned travellers maintained their personal views and prejudices and felt “drawn” toward like-minded peers who had shared similar experiences, but chose to remain ‘silent’ in their views in order to protect the personal relationships which they also valued. “Every dialogue is permeated by inequality and power relations, so that every identity remains not only internally contested, but also subject to questioning or undermining by other narratives” (Jansen, 1998, p. 107). Indeed, people construct their identities and make sense of their lives in relation to others (Andersen & Chen, 2002); however, their acceptance or rejection by those others is intricately tied up with relations of power (Easthope, 2009). Thus, as returned travellers found themselves struggling with others’ perceived ideas of who they were or who they should be, and as they attempted to have the newly acquired aspects of their identities recognised and accepted by their family and friends, the ways in which their identities were constructed through relations of power became apparent. Certainly, in renegotiating interpersonal relationships, returned travellers’ perceptions and values were questioned and contested as they reconsidered why the relationship was important to them and what the

relationship meant to them. In some cases, the returned travellers chose to distance themselves from the relationships, while in others they rationalised, and thus accepted, their significant others' disparate behaviour.

5.4.5 (re)Negotiating social identities

In terms of their social identities, returned travellers challenged many of the social and cultural norms, ways of being and assumptions they noticed on their return and as they reconsidered how they belonged within the socio-cultural environment to which they had returned. Indeed, they described frustrations with the socio-cultural environment and identities that they presumed would be comfortable to them, but which felt unfamiliar and dissonant on their return. For example, they noticed and were frustrated by perceptions of parochialism (Kylie), complacency (Margaret), conformity to social norms (Simon, Dillon) and “fabricated” national identities (Teresa, Kylie), which they perceived as occurring at the national socio-cultural level. In contrast, they felt comforted by the familiarity of more localised places, communities and people that were (historically) meaningful to them (Kylie's local community, Margaret's beach-side walk, Teresa's ‘normalness’ in Auckland, Dillon's history with Lower Hutt). Thus, as returned travellers negotiated their ‘social identities’, they became more familiar with their ‘personal identities’ as well.

More specifically, Kylie felt she “fit in less now”, but also that she had never felt like a “true” New Zealander. She had always felt connected to her local community, but saw her social identity as atypical and not something to be “out and proud” about. Indeed, socio-culturally, Kylie felt a lack of belonging at the New Zealand national level as her urban experiences did not conform with her perception of “wistful reminiscences” that comprised a New Zealand identity, as she was from a suburb of a large city and, therefore, did not have a distinguishable identity that was “recognised”. She also expressed frustration with the parochialism she perceived New Zealand culture comprised, as people were “up in arms” about “petty” issues, but thought she would eventually connect with the social environment and feel like “these are [her] people”. Moreover, although she thought she could happily live in France or England, she did not “feel particularly English [or French] either”. In contrast, Kylie felt a strong sense of belonging in

her local community, where she had lived since she was five years of age. Indeed, her local community (the local pizza shop, her neighbours, Peter, the friends she went to school with, who still live in the area), made her feel “ok”, and was where she was “from”. She wondered how she could suddenly “be from” anywhere else. Thus, Kylie negotiated her social identities at a local, rather than national, level.

As Simon renegotiated his social identities, he also questioned his priorities. He criticised the “sheep”-like and crowd-following behaviour he perceived to represent New Zealand, where “individual people are almost frowned upon”, and where people have “very fixed” and “conservative” ideas. In particular, the “set programme” of marriage, mortgage and 2.5 children “[drove] him insane”, and he was “scared” he would “end up going through the motions” himself if he stayed too long. However, this social expectation of “settling down” made Simon feel “unsure”, like “the odd one out” and made him question his own priorities and ways of being (“maybe I’m just not that kind of person that’s going to settle down easily”). Thus, the socio-cultural environment to which Simon perceived he had returned, made him feel “unsettled” as he no longer shared the values and priorities of many of his peers. Simon’s renegotiation of his personal identities in light of this perceived “settle down” cultural value is further elucidated by one of Simon’s significant others:

I think that he feels a bit like, “I don’t really care that I haven’t settled down and I don’t have kids.” You can tell that he probably still wants that, but right now he’s more focused on what he can achieve on his own. He’s realised that that’s who he is now, with the whole not being settled down thing. “Who cares, I’ve got all these other great things that are a part of me” and is focusing on that. So I think that’s given him the confidence to probably feel good, and that he can be accepted by people... I helped him in getting there, through confirming that sense of, “It is ok to be not settled” and I think just being able to bounce off the ideas about how he’s feeling now... I came home when everyone was settled and did that whole, “Ohhh I have to start doing that now.” I think he’s handled it a little bit better than I had when I came back. He has done the opposite to me, where he was like, “No I’m on my

own, I've got time to deal with all that stuff and I want to focus on the stuff that's really good"... I think Simon and I will always agree on that, that we are quite glad that we have done what we have done, and we can't understand people that just don't want to do it... I think deep down he'd want to settle down, but I think that he knows he's got all this time to do all this first. I think for the next say five years or so he would be quite happy to focus on his sport, meet new people and go traveling whenever he wants to... I think ideally he would like to be settled down with a person and have the whole kids thing. He would make sure they didn't play playstation and they were outside. I think he wants that, but I think he knows he's not ready for it and I think he also is not quite sure how to get there yet.

This friend understood that Simon did not 'fit in' to social assumptions of the need to 'settle down', but believed that he would want this lifestyle eventually. She realised that Simon's satisfaction depended on achieving his goals at that stage of his life and she appreciated the confidence he had in his knowledge of what he wanted.

In terms of Dillon's social identities, he felt the "pressure of growing older" and "society's perceptions of where [he] should be" as he was "not progressing career wise" and wondering whether he should settle with family or continue his more transient lifestyle of the last ten years. Certainly, he was "torn" between New Zealand and Columbia in terms of his social identities, with New Zealand, and specifically Lower Hutt, being the place he grew up and where he felt "most comfortable", but with Bogotá also being important to him and his sense of identity.

Dillon was also passionately frustrated by the lack of appreciation of Chinese history in New Zealand, which he perceived as a "nation of immigrants", and was offended by the presumption by New Zealanders that we would not be able to speak English because of his appearance. He had struggled with his social identity throughout his childhood, and (perhaps therefore) conformed to mainstream stereotypes of New Zealand culture (enjoying rugby, eating fish and

chips). Interestingly, he expected China to feel familiar and was surprised by the culture shock he experienced when he visited. Thus, he described himself ‘culturally’ as a New Zealander, but his identification with global citizenship also reflected his negotiation of his social identities, as he let go, or was no longer so “precious” about ‘being’ a New Zealander.

Teresa felt “normal” in Auckland city with its multi-ethnic and particularly strong Asian population. However, she resisted the “clichéd” representations of home in New Zealand as rural, mountains and beaches and preferred the more mobile way of life in Germany. However, this new-found international, mobile perspective and preferences was in conflict with her values and beliefs of what it meant to be ‘home’ (driving around, the local community radio, a commitment to stay in one place long enough to have a cat and not constantly saying ‘goodbye’ to people). Thus, Teresa’s negotiation of her social identities manifested itself in her consideration of a more mobile way of life (represented by her potential life in Germany) and her more traditional values of family, close friends and commitment to a place.

Margaret noticed things about New Zealand society on her return that she was “used to” or took for granted before she left (the aggressiveness of drivers, the bureaucracy, the high cost of living), leading her to the conclusion that New Zealand was “not the be all and end all” that she perhaps once thought it was. However, she was not “pining” to go back and felt she needed to “adjust back to [her] life”. In negotiating her social identities, she realised she looked at her ‘home’ in a “different light now”, appreciating the opportunities she had and no longer taking it for granted.

Thus, the returned travellers renegotiation of their ‘social identities’ manifested itself in their experiences and exposure to ‘other’ ways of life, which they drew upon to challenge assumptions and perceived norms in the social environment to which they had returned. Moreover, returned travellers noticed things they had taken for granted before they left, for example society’s expectations of life’s stages (Dillon, Simon), parochialism in terms of what people cared about (Kylie), ‘clichéd’ representations of New Zealand (Teresa, Kylie, Dillon), and the

relatively high cost of living (Margaret), which made them question their priorities and decisions as they compared these social expectations with the lifestyle they had enjoyed abroad. Therefore, as they renegotiated their social identities, returned travellers also reconsidered their personal identities, what they wanted from their lives and what made them feel 'at home'. The next section elucidates this discussion of social identities, which are constantly being constructed within 'blurred boundaries' of home.

5.4.6 'Home' and social identities

The "fixity of social roles, identities and cognitive frames... have to be renegotiated as subjects are forced to make uneasy decisions about their lives" (D'Andrea, 2006, p. 103). Indeed, "migrants are often faced with new situations and new experiences, requiring a re-thinking and negotiation of their understandings about the world and appropriate ways to deal with issues that arise in their everyday lives" (Easthope, 2009, p. 70). Thus, 'internalised' notions of home and away clash with more traditional, socially constructed definitions within the context of return from long term travel, and the fantasised memories of the pre-sojourn 'homes' may become impossible to return to (Ali & Holden, 2006). In order to achieve this renegotiation of social identities, returned travellers drew "on a wide range of cultural resources in the securing of their social identities" (Rapport & Dawson, 1998, p. 25). They no longer enlisted simply the originating environment they left behind, but rather a "global inventory of ideas and modes of expression" (ibid, p. 25). Thus, the returned travellers constructed their social identities in relation to 'others', but these others comprised not only the social environment and relationships they had returned to, but also the (imagined and actual) social environment and relationships they had recently left. Therefore, their social identities were hybridised or 'in-between' (Bhabha, 1994; Iyer, 2000), reflecting both the social environment they had left and the environment they had returned to. They were constructed within a 'third space' (Wearing et al., 2010) with disrupted or displaced, yet still influential, structures of meaning and power (Bhabha, 1994). Furthermore, these social identities were "no longer fixed, bounded, or discrete entities, [but] necessarily dynamic and positional [and blurred]" (Easthope, 2009, p. 68).

Clearly, for most returned travellers, their social identities were negotiated at a local, interpersonal level rather than at a national level, as they challenged socially constructed or “fabricated” national identities. Notions of a national culture are imagined, represented by selected symbols and icons and bounded spatially by human invention (Coles & Timothy, 2004). Thus, as the travellers had broadened their own social perspectives, they no longer ‘fitted’ the socially constructed national identity to which they returned. Instead, they connected on a more personal level with their local communities, places of special meaning and ‘significant’ interpersonal relationships. “Home plays a crucial role in people’s definition of their self-identity, acting as a dialogue between them and the larger community” (Despres, 1991, p. 101). Thus, in the case of these returned travellers, ‘home’ was localised, personal and situated, rather than conforming to dominant (national) constructions.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter presents four themes that emerged from the data as I reflected on what the returned travellers were telling me and what was important to them about their stories. The historicity theme recognised the importance of returned travellers’ personal and historical context, their worldviews, personality and prejudices as they interpreted their social worlds and discussed the situated elements of ‘historicity’ that contributed to their concepts of home.

The emotional component of returned travellers’ home(s) was important to them as they expressed to me how they felt about returning. Thus, the emotion theme exposed the embodied and affective elements of their experiences. Their emotional sentiments were then discussed within the wider discourses of transnationality and in terms of the social and cultural constructions that influenced their (emotional) concepts of home.

The theme of resistance (and conformity) arose through returned travellers’ discussions of the (unacceptable to them) socio-cultural ways of life and ways of being they perceived they had returned to. The returned travellers’ views and

experiences aligned with an individual and contextualised theory of resistance, rather than portraying a ‘unified’ voice. This theme led to a proposed ‘resistance to home’ that manifested itself in the returned travellers’ (sometimes silent) disagreements with dominant discourses and meanings in the socio-cultural environment to which they had returned.

The theme of (re)negotiation overlapped with the other themes, but was also important in itself as it distinguished the personal, interpersonal and social negotiations that returned travellers faced as they reconsidered their identities in view of their recent sojourn and the (physical) return to their previously identity-forming environment. Returned travellers reached ‘realisations’ about themselves, about the meaning to them of close personal relationships and about their ‘belongingness’ (or lack thereof) in the wider socio-cultural environment. These ‘realisations’ influenced their concepts of home as they reconsidered what and who was important to them (and why), what made them feel comfortable (and uncomfortable) and what they wanted from their lives.

This interpretation, based on the stories presented in the previous chapter, reflects emotionally constructed (Gurney, 1997) concepts of home, which are constantly being (re)negotiated, or as Malkki (1992) notes are “always mobile and processual” (p. 37). Moreover, the interpretation argues that concepts of home are influenced by social discourses, significant others, significant reference groups and cultural assumptions (which are sometimes resisted) (Gregson & Lowe, 1995; Wearing & Wearing, 2001). However, concepts of home are also influenced by personal ‘historicity’, namely the returned travellers’ past, present and emerging experiences, their worldviews, their relationships with others, and their priorities within the wider context of their life course. Therefore, this interpretation of returned travellers’ concepts of home incorporates the individual as a thinking, feeling and reflexive agent and also takes account of the influence of wider social structures (Wearing & Wearing, 2001). It also reflects the fluid and dynamic nature of ‘home’ by discussing emotional, sometimes resisted, and constantly negotiated concepts of home rather than attempting to establish a definitive truth.

6 Thickening the Plot

The previous chapter discussed one interpretation (my interpretation) of the returned travellers' stories. This chapter 'thickens the plot' of this interpretation in terms of my reflexivity. As researchers, only if we have an interest in something do we feel a desire to pursue it. Moreover, we often recognise ourselves in participant's responses and connect with them based on our own experiences. Indeed, "we are only able to grasp meaning because of what we already know" (Swift, 1997, p. 358), and "we need reference points of concepts already in place to make comparisons and then, if possible, to restructure our existing ideas" (ibid, p. 359). Therefore, the values, prejudices, assumptions and philosophical worldviews of the researcher are also an important consideration in conducting social research. In this chapter, I discuss more reflexively my 'entanglements' (Ateljevic et al., 2005) in the research and the emotional impact conducting this research had on me. As Dupuis (1999) suggests, "our selves and our emotions and personal experiences can [no longer] be removed from the research process... [Indeed,] the self [and] emotions... are central to strong, rigorous qualitative research and good science" (Dupuis, 1999, p. 59). Thus, this thesis attempts to offer 'authentic' accounts of travellers' experiences of return, by presenting the voices of participants themselves, but also interprets these stories clearly and honestly by situating the researcher (me) within the thesis. This approach aligns with the hermeneutic philosophy purported by this research, which recognises both the participants and the researcher as interpreters of the social world (Gadamar, 1976).

Examining my own historicity, including my prejudices and biases, 'entanglements' and 'struggles' (Ateljevic et al., 2005; Feighery, 2006; Caton, 2007) offered a level of enlightenment for me as the researcher and author of this thesis. Whether this enlightenment led to 'new horizons' is questionable, but certainly this examination (and 'overcoming') of prejudices and biases was important to my interpretation of the returned travellers' stories. It forced me to ask, "How did I relate to and voice the experiences of those I studied?" and encouraged me to examine my value-laden assumptions and question how I saw

myself and others (Harris, Wilson, & Ateljevic, 2007). It also made me question my own integrity and helped me to make decisions that ensured the trust I had established with participants was maintained. In short, it was the me-search (Ely et al., 1991) aspect of this research project.

This chapter also discusses the apparent effect being involved in this research had on returned travellers. As they were encouraged to reflect on their lives, they made decisions and reached conclusions that they admittedly may not have realised had they not taken part in this research. However, the chapter also notes that returned travellers struggled to reach 'new (hermeneutic) horizons' in terms of their 'unproductive prejudices', perhaps because they were still experiencing the immediacy of return and were thus unable to engage reflexively in other ways of thinking.

6.1 My 'entanglements' in understanding returned travellers' historicity

As well as the returned travellers' historicity contributing to the stories of return, my own personal history with the people and places they described, my personality, my prejudices and worldviews also influenced the content and context of their stories. For example, the level of rapport I was able to build with different returned travellers was shaped by our mutual understanding (or lack thereof) of places, people and things that were meaningful to them, and my own experiences in those places, with those people (in a broader sense, for example, in terms of our respective relationships with our parents, siblings and friends) and with the things they described. Moreover, my 'prejudices', experiences and worldviews shaped my reaction to their stories, and influenced various aspects of our relationships. For example, the degree of detail they felt was necessary to explain their experience may have differed among participants, depending on the degree to which they perceived I understood their experiences. Where mutual understanding was obvious by my reactions, the detail was perhaps reduced, whereas if I asked probing and clarifying questions, they elaborated more extensively on that aspect of their story. Moreover, the rapport and trust between us may have been influenced by their perception of my understanding of their

experiences. For example, when they perceived I understood their perspective they perhaps felt more comfortable trusting me with their stories. Therefore, this section examines my feelings of affinity and distance with the returned travellers as I moved between the ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ perspectives (Acker, 2001), and discusses the extent to which I ‘overcame’ unproductive historically based prejudices and ‘fused new horizons’ (Gadamar, 1976; Prasad, 2002; Schwandt, 2003) as I reflexively engaged with their stories and was challenged in my own thinking and assumptions. While Section 3.10 - Data collection (page 83) explained the rapport and understanding I achieved with participants, this section focuses more on the discrepancies and discords that also contributed to my understanding and interpretation of each returned traveller’s story.

Kylie’s personal history is quite different from my own, as I grew up within Kylie’s description of a ‘typical New Zealander’ (rural upbringing, beach holidays, rugby oriented) and, in contrast to Kylie’s experience, I have not lived in the same house for more than two years since I left for boarding school at the age of 13. In Kylie’s view, my more rural identity, being from a smaller and more distinctive place, was more ‘respected’ in New Zealand cultural representation than her urban sense of belonging (or not belonging). Thus, my conversation with Kylie was enlightening as it allowed me to reflect on suburban and community-based identity constructions. It also forced me to examine my own (rurally-based) identity construction in order to overcome my unproductive prejudices (of rural living, beach holidays and watching rugby as representing New Zealand culture) and understand Kylie’s priorities and way of thinking.

Moreover, while I understood the value she placed on travel, the ease with which she could “get herself sorted” and the way she “flailed for a bit” when she returned, having experienced similar things myself, I struggled at the time of our interviews to appreciate Kylie’s desire for domesticity, which was linked to her desire for and difficulty with having children. Thus, I needed to explore my assumptions regarding the (under)value of domestic life as this was something Kylie desired. However, regarding her inability to have children specifically, I struggled to overcome my sympathy for her and my desire to alleviate her experience. Rather than empathising with her, and thus understanding her

subjective experience (Wispe, 1986; Darwall, 1998), I became emotionally involved in her dilemma and struggled to ‘let go’. This emotional involvement with research participants is ruminated upon below and the discussion is expanded in the next section of this chapter.

Unlike Simon, I have never experienced terminal illness in a close family member and my parents are still married, thus, I could not empathise with Simon regarding these elements of his personal experience. However, I had experienced a corporate career and, while I had chosen a different path for myself, I understood Simon’s ambition regarding his career and his experiences of the corporate lifestyle. I also understood his frustrations with New Zealand culture, having returned from long term travel myself, and the bond one feels with friends (despite differing experiences and life paths), especially when difficult or challenging circumstances arise. However, I found it very difficult to distance myself from Simon’s plight regarding his parents, and was quite affected by updates of Amanda’s health and their relationship after our interview process was complete. With Simon, like Kylie, I was more concerned for his well-being and that of his family, than being able to understand or imagine his perspective, and found it difficult to ‘overcome’ my concerns for Simon’s historicity in my interpretation of his story. The poems “How can I help?”, “I need to let go” (page 340) and “Turbulent Times” (page 341) in Appendix VIII – Emotive poetry reflects my own turbulence regarding stories like Simon’s and Kylie’s. The reasons for the poems and effect writing poetry had on me are discussed in the following section.

Therefore, one of the ‘entanglements’ I faced with Kylie and Simon’s stories was a feeling of sympathy, which hindered my ability to empathise and understand their subjective perspectives. This entanglement was perhaps related to my own lack of self-awareness at the time of our interviews. Wispe (1986) connects empathy with self-awareness in her comparison of sympathy and empathy:

Sympathy refers to the heightened awareness of another’s plight as something to be alleviated. Empathy refers to the attempt of one self-aware self to understand the subjective experiences of another

self. Sympathy is a way of relating. Empathy is a way of knowing (p. 314).

Similarly, Darwall (1998) suggests that sympathy involves *concern* for others and their well-being for their sake, whereas empathy need not involve such concern as empathy consists of imagining another's feelings, rather than feeling them oneself. "Sympathy for a person and her [sic] plight is felt as from the third-person perspective of one-caring, whereas empathy involves something like a sharing of the other's mental states, frequently, as from her standpoint" (Darwall, 1998, p. 263). Thus, empathy involves understanding or imagining another's perspective, whereas sympathy involves concern or caring for someone's well-being. With Kylie and Simon, I became emotionally involved in their stories, struggled to distance myself and tended to share their feelings, rather than 'imagining' them. Certainly, I was more concerned for their well-being for their sake, rather than viewing their experiences from their perspectives. This 'entanglement' affected me emotionally and limited my ability to interpret their stories for a long time, as the next section discusses.

However, Campbell (2002) suggests that "'emotionally engaged research' ... can have a useful function in social science research" (p. 123), as sharing feelings can enhance understanding of the other and as thinking and feeling, intellect and emotion are not necessarily mutually exclusive. This notion of emotionality in research is reflected upon further in the next section of this chapter. In terms of understanding Kylie and Simon, however, with time, physical and temporal distance from the participants, a great deal of self-reflection and increased self-awareness, I was able to view their stories more 'objectively' (rather than focussing on their circumstantial difficulties as I had been doing), and create an interpretation of their stories for this thesis. It also helped me to receive (mainly) positive updates from Kylie and Simon, as detailed in the Epilogue section (page 322) of this thesis.

I was probably more like Dillon's friends than like Dillon. I had not lived with or helped underprivileged people (although I had travelled through developing countries and had some exposure to abject poverty). I had also never experienced an intercultural romantic relationship and was marrying a (relatively) like-minded

New Zealander, and although I had lived in multiple countries and cultures (Germany, Switzerland, England, Ireland, New Zealand), they were all Western cultures and my connection with them had largely dissipated by the time of our interviews. Moreover, I owned my own home, was career-oriented, wanted children, and spent little time or effort helping those less fortunate than me, all values that contrasted with and were more ‘mainstream’ than Dillon’s. My values regarding Māori culture are also quite “mainstream Pākehā” and I remember performing a haka outside a pub in Ireland, an act Dillon would have found “appalling”. Although I shared Dillon’s frustration regarding the parochialism and complacency in New Zealand in terms of interest in and reporting of international issues, I also tend to be complacent and, certainly, lacking in charitable tendencies.

Therefore, with Dillon, I found myself listening closely, making fewer assumptions that I understood his perspective and being consciously non-judgemental. Indeed, I was more likely to judge myself, than him, and at times felt embarrassed with the result, like with the haka performance and lack of charity. Through Dillon, I learnt a new way of thinking as I overcame my Western, white, middle-class prejudices and was particularly enlightened by his reflections on what it was like to grow up in an ethnic minority. Unlike many people Dillon encountered (and indeed more like his friends), I did not find myself judging Dillon for his (Chinese) ethnicity, but rather appreciated his thoughts and perspectives as an individual (global citizen).

I did not know what to do about Teresa. I felt I saw in her a ‘call for help’ as she described her lack of sleep, migraines, stress and her intense disputes with her family members. I wanted to counsel her, but did not have the skills or the relationship with her to pursue such an intuition. Thus, my relationship with Teresa felt different to me than with the other returned travellers, and affected me more deeply. I remain unsure exactly why her story affected me so deeply, perhaps because her emotions triggered my own uncertainties and vulnerabilities. Certainly, my role as ‘researcher’ was complicated in Teresa’s case by my more intense and intimate relationship with her, which arose through her considerable

openness and her more extensive ‘sharing’ of her thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Furthermore, both Dillon and Teresa challenged my subconscious prejudices as they forced me to examine my own identity construction in light of their experiences growing up in an ethnic minority. This examination posed an additional challenge for me, because at the time of our interviews I was making lifestyle decisions that reinforced my own ‘mainstream’ identity construction (getting married to a New Zealander, wanting to move to the country, settling down and no longer desiring a globally oriented lifestyle). Talking to Dillon and Teresa made me question some of these lifestyle decisions. Eventually, I was able to ‘overcome’ my unproductive prejudices, which limited my understanding of their perspectives, while still retaining my own values and priorities. Indeed, I realised I did not have to agree with or share their perspectives, but rather simply understand and interpret them from their own standpoints.

Margaret’s age difference, her strong ‘roots’ with New Zealand, enhanced by her history of bringing up family in places that had become meaningful to her, her retired lifestyle and her lack of a (semi)permanent lifestyle abroad contributed towards a lack of affinity I felt with Margaret, as these experiences differed from my own. On the other hand, I shared her ‘therapeutic’ connection with water and her enjoyment of nature. While I did not agree with some of her more controversial intercultural views, I appreciated her honesty in discussing them with me. However, Margaret also admitted to me she was a “private person”, and had chosen to be involved in the research to “help” me rather than for any cathartic desires. Therefore, I felt through our interviews that Margaret did not ‘open up’ as much as the other participants. This lack of emotional deluge (in contrast to the other participants) perhaps enabled me to interpret her story more easily. As there was no reason for me to feel ‘sympathetic’ towards Margaret, I was perhaps able to empathise more easily with her instead.

Talking to these returned travellers and reflecting on their stories led me to ‘new horizons’ in terms of my own self-awareness. I moved beyond caring for them and their well-being to understanding their stories from their own perspectives. It

was important to me to represent their stories in their own words, but my self-reflection enabled me to identify themes across the stories and ‘interpret’ their data. I had to distance myself temporally and physically from the participants to achieve this interpretation, as I needed to view the data as a ‘whole’, rather than the detail of the individual stories, in order to identify themes. I was then able to return to the individuality of each story in the description of each theme and also discuss the themes more theoretically. While I still ‘cared’ about each participant, I was not so emotionally involved that I could not create an interpretation of their stories. My ‘caring’ attitude also extended to the significant others and to the trust I had established with all participants in the research. It was important for me to maintain this trust for my own comfort and integrity. Therefore, the following sections discuss the emotional dilemma I faced in caring for returned travellers and the ethical ‘messiness’ I faced in representing their significant others.

6.2 My emotional dilemma

Revealing in-depth personal reflections may have been cathartic (Zahra & McIntosh, 2007a) for the returned travellers as I actively listened to their stories, which sometimes comprised a degree of ‘emotional deluge’. For example, as Simon described his experiences caring for Amanda in London after his father had left, and discussed his feelings towards his father, some tension was visibly released within him, and he was able to see the value of his close friends as they supported him through his traumatic experiences. Margaret clearly enjoyed talking freely about her intercultural views and her criticisms of New Zealand, which she was used to having rejected or at least disputed by her friends. Kylie was visibly relieved by her decision to give up her job and set up her own business during the course of our interviews. Teresa described at length and on multiple occasions her difficulties in dealing with family members, and her emotional and spiritual reliance on Mattias in making her feel “settled”. Whether this outpouring of emotion (in her words “ranting”) was cathartic for Teresa remains unclear; however, reading her story repeatedly during the analysis phase of the research was, for me, emotionally draining. Moreover, the effort of active listening, with little opportunity to reciprocate as the participant’s voice was privileged, left me with no outlet through which to release my own tensions,

concerns, fears and anxieties. Thus, with in-depth qualitative research, the emotional needs of the researcher may remain unresolved.

I expressed my emotional needs through 'poetry'. This approach offered a therapeutic way for me to emote the difficulties I faced with the 'messiness' of conducting deeply personal research, the ethical responsibility I felt towards the participants, my subsequent need to 'care for' them and the turbulence I felt in hearing their stories. Poetry has been used as a form of emotional therapy since preliterate times, when incantations were chanted over prescribed herbs by primitive healers (Blinderman, 1973). In more modern times, it offers a form of reflexive self expression that holds few boundaries or 'rules', as opposed to the correct grammar and sentence structure required by other forms of expression (Blanton, 1960; Mazza, 2003). Therefore, I wrote my poems with a stream of consciousness approach, rather than with any attention to form or structure. While they may not meet literary definitions of 'poetry', my poems enabled me to express myself effectively, to 'release' my emotional dilemmas and move on from those dilemmas.

The poems entitled "I need to let go" (page 340) and "Turbulent Times" (page 341) in Appendix VIII – Emotive poetry, illustrate my emotional dilemma each time I re-read the transcripts, as my mind was transported to my own (largely subconscious) uncertainties and vulnerabilities. In sympathising and identifying with the returned travellers, I was reminded of my own return from long term travel and the difficulties I had faced, and perhaps still not dealt with, myself. Each time I re-read the transcripts as I analysed the data and wrote the thesis, I felt like I had entered a different world that was not my own and I was reliving the emotions of that 'other' world. I was "co-opting the experience of [the returned travellers]... taking their symptoms and making them my own" (Ely et al., 1991, p. 115). For a long time, I denied these emotions rather than acknowledging and working through them. Furthermore, the feeling of not being understood by others, as illustrated in the poems entitled "The conversation moves on" (page 341) and "I don't know what I'm doing" (page 342) in Appendix VIII – Emotive poetry illustrate the loneliness and isolation I felt, which is a natural part of PhD research (Ely et al., 1991); however, knowing this did not alleviate my distress.

I also found myself feeling close to the returned travellers as they divulged their most private thoughts and feelings to me, and because I deeply appreciated their efforts in reflecting what ‘home’ meant for them, and their willingness to share their reflections with me. Therefore, I naturally developed feelings of protectiveness, closeness, sympathy, identification and warmth for them. My role as ‘researcher’ had become ‘blurred’ (Lecompte, Schensul, Weeks, & Singer, 1999). Yet, “it is natural to develop feelings toward one’s research participants” (Ely et al., 1991, p. 112). Moreover, “emotionally engaged research is guided by an ethic of caring – caring for the research participants, caring for what becomes of a research project, and caring for one’s self and one’s research team” (Campbell, 2002, p. 123). However, these emotions must be acknowledged, exposed and examined to create ‘good’ qualitative research.

For quite a long time, I cared for the participants, but not for my own well-being. Perhaps I could have given more consideration earlier in the research process as to how I could be supported, whether through a supervisory panel, a peer support group or even through counselling, as I attempted to understand the deeply personal journey of the participants. My supervisors were very supportive of me and I established a peer support group through which I could discuss some of the difficulties I was facing. However, I found it difficult to express myself through these forums, perhaps because I did not understand myself the extent of my emotional dilemma. Moreover, this being my first reflexive research project, I did not anticipate these feelings emerging. Therefore, the poetry outlet enabled me to reflect and emote my experiences more effectively than I was able to through the interpersonal dialogue that these forums offered.

Furthermore, the researcher-researched relationship is a unique one, somewhere between acquaintance, friend, and counsellor. Qualitative researchers are often confronted with emotionality in their research, whereby feelings (both positive and negative) may develop between researchers and participants, as researchers empathise, sympathise and identify with participants in their attempt to understand participants’ perspectives (Ely et al., 1991). Thus, being human themselves, researchers often have personal responses to what they see and hear

(Dupuis, 1999). Values, beliefs and assumptions are exposed, challenged, and re-defined, a process that can be difficult for researchers to endure (Ely et al., 1991).

Some scholars, such as positivists, argue that emotional involvement in research may taint findings, or pose an ethical dilemma as the intimacy may be deemed 'false' and potentially damaging (Kirsch, 1999). In my case, my relationships with the returned travellers may have been deemed 'damaging' (to me at least), such as in the case of my 'emotional dilemma'. However, within the philosophical hermeneutic approach, such approaches do not 'taint' understanding but rather strengthen it. Moreover, scholars like Dupuis (1999) suggest that:

Emotional responses are an integral part of scientific inquiry... we needed to stop viewing emotions as only problematic in good science and examine how our emotions actually could be informing us about other's experiences... In order to understand other's experiences, we as researchers [need] to sympathetically ascribe our own emotions and experiences in the situation to those we were studying (p. 51).

Thus, by acknowledging and examining one's own emotions, researchers may gain deeper insight into the emotional life of the people they study. Moreover, being part of the researcher's 'self', emotions influence every stage of the research process. Indeed, "it would be abnormal for someone to engage in qualitative research and not be emotionally engaged in the process" (Gilbert & Schmid, 1994, p. 6). In Dupuis' (1999) view, "good qualitative research involves a search for knowledge that makes full use of the whole self, cognitive and emotional" (p. 53). Indeed, emotionality in research need not be considered a negative or interrupting influence on the research itself, as "the task of successfully stepping into the shoes of another person is greatly facilitated by feelings of sympathy, compassion and... unconditional acceptance for that person" (Ely et al., 1991, p. 112). I felt I understood the returned travellers with whom I shared a stronger emotional connection (Kylie and Simon) more than those with whom the emotional connection was weaker (particularly Dillon and Margaret). Nevertheless, as I developed a caring attitude toward all of the returned travellers, as they shared their innermost thoughts with me, and as I wanted to soothe their concerns, I found myself understanding their perspective intuitively the closer we became.

Yet, sometimes I wondered whether they remembered that they were being ‘interviewed’ as they shared their more in-depth experiences with me. Were they exposing their thoughts and feelings because of the rapport I had worked so hard to achieve? I was sometimes taken aback by the candour and depth of their disclosures. Therefore, in my interpretation, I considered removing some of their testimonials in order to present them in a ‘better’ light (Ely et al., 1991). For example, I considered removing Simon’s descriptions of his father, Margaret’s more controversial opinions and Teresa’s (self-confessed) “bitchy” attitude towards John. However, I realised that the removal of these aspects of their stories would be dishonest and a greater betrayal of their trust than if I left them in, as I would be judging them based on my own values and experiences, rather than allowing them to tell their own story. “Being able to see the ‘maze of many’ truths requires an openness of mind, a willingness to confront one’s own beliefs directly, and the strength of character and intellectual honesty to let go of cherished assumptions” (Ely et al., 1991, p. 127). I hope I have reflected this ‘maze of many truths’ throughout this thesis.

6.3 The ethical messiness of research

As we attempt to understand, interpret and represent the social world, we encounter struggles, entanglements and difficulties (Ateljevic et al., 2005). To ‘untangle’ these challenges, we need to reflexively consider what is most important. For example, is the research itself most important, or reporting the stories we have heard, or is our personal integrity as researchers most important? Certainly, researchers need to feel comfortable with what they are reporting (Ely et al., 1991) and this ‘comfort’ represents an element of trustworthiness in the inquiry.

The significant others’ voices presented an ethical dilemma for me. I deliberated extensively over how I might incorporate these perspectives. For example, I considered writing one narrative or set of narratives to represent their voices. However, as Section 3.12.3 – Representation of ‘significant others’ (page 113) explains, the differing perspectives precluded such an approach, as each

relationship between the returned travellers and each of their significant others was different, and as the experiences of the significant others themselves differed so extensively. Indeed, the significant others differed significantly in terms of their own travel experiences, the nature of their travel and return experiences, and the degree to which they understood or empathised with the returned travellers.

Therefore, I decided that creating one ‘condensed’ narrative or set of narratives would be unrepresentative of the significant others’ voices. This dilemma may reflect a new ‘crisis in representation’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998), namely, how to represent a diversity of perspectives for the purpose of understanding while staying ‘true’ to the original voice. Indeed, by reflexively privileging the voice of the ‘other’, acknowledging multiple perspectives and opening analysis up to multiple interpretations (including interpretations that allow the readers to reach their own conclusions) (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004a), the question arises as to how to construct such open interpretations when the diversity of voices is so vast. Perhaps I could have ‘parametised’ these significant others, for example by only talking to those who either had or had not travelled or by interviewing only friends or family members, in order enable a more cohesive interpretation to emerge. Chang (2009), for example, studied mothers’ perspectives in order to discuss patterns of social interaction between study abroad students in China and their mothers during visits home. However, such an approach would have ignored the diverse nature of interpersonal relations, even within one ‘type’ of relationship (Heider, 1958; Knapp & Daly, 2002). Moreover, the purpose of this particular method was to deepen my understanding of the primary participants rather than to construct a story to represent significant others, and as Section 3.12.3 – Representation of ‘significant others’ (page 113) explains, meeting the significant others did indeed enable me to better understand the returned travellers.

Furthermore, the personal and honest way in which the significant others spoke to me raised additional ethical dilemmas. Indeed, as discussed in Section 3.12.3 – Representation of ‘significant others’ (page 113), it was important for my own integrity to maintain the trust of all participants, to continue to respect their privacy and care for their anonymity. It became methodologically problematic to conduct anonymous interviews with people who knew each other, including

keeping the significant others' voices confidential from returned travellers, although the extent of this dilemma was not anticipated and only became apparent as the research progressed. At times I felt caught 'in the middle', especially where relations were strained and particularly when returned travellers asked me what their significant others had said. In my responses to such questions, I remained positive and 'impersonal' (for example, "her perspective was quite similar to yours because she had travelled herself" or "she was the first sister I have spoken to, so that was really insightful, and helped me to understand a bit about my own sister as well") and certainly never disclosed the more negative aspects of the significant others' perspectives regarding the returned travellers. Therefore, I also felt it would be unethical to include such perspectives in a thesis that would reach the public domain.

This ethical messiness raises questions, such as how can we ethically report the understanding we gain by exploring the social worlds of others, particularly when 'significant others' are involved? Reporting my understanding of the perspectives of the returned travellers was less problematic as I was able to present the stories in their own words. This approach also enabled me to represent the diversity and contextualised subjectivity of individual perspectives. However, although talking to significant others deepened my understanding of the returned travellers, the ethical dilemma arose as I attempted to report this understanding.

6.4 How I affected their lives: Fusing new horizons

The previous sections discussed my 'entanglements' with the returned travellers as I attempted to 'overcome' my prejudices in order to understand their experiences and the ethical difficulties I faced in representing significant others' voices. This section returns to the travellers' experiences, specifically in terms of the way being involved in this research affected their lives, and the extent to which they 'overcame' their own prejudices to fuse 'new horizons'.

Engagement of one's biases, according to hermeneutic philosophy, may only be achieved through dialogical encounters with what is not understood, or what is alien. "Understanding is participative, conversational, and dialogic... meaning is

negotiated mutually in the act of interpretation; it is not simply discovered... [and] meaning is not necessarily... constructed (i.e., created, assembled) but... negotiated (i.e., a matter of coming to terms)” (Schwandt, 2003, p. 302). Through such dialogue, and the suspension of unproductive biases, a ‘fusion of horizons’ may occur. “In this ‘fusion’ that is understanding, the interpreter expands her or his own horizon of prejudices to integrate the horizon of the [other]” (Prasad, 2002, p. 20). Thus, this fusion of horizons incorporates the historic horizon (beliefs and attitudes based on previous experiences), the contemporary horizon, which “allows certain categories of understanding but does not allow one to see beyond them” (Arcodia, 2005, p. 6), and the emerging horizon (developing through the dialogue, where many possibilities of meaning are understood and interpreted).

However, this ‘overcoming’ of unproductive prejudices, and ‘fusion of horizons’ did not necessarily occur for the returned travellers who took part in this research, as they were still experiencing the ‘turbulence’ of return at the time of our interviews and found it difficult to reflectively engage with ‘other’ ways of thinking and being. The ‘other’ in this case pertains, for example, to the local social environment to which the traveller returned. One exception was Simon’s realisation of the importance of his friends’ support over their experiential differences and his reasons for not confronting them on their narrow worldviews. However, most returned travellers described their experiences, thoughts and feelings with little reflexivity or consideration for ‘other’ perspectives, and thus were unable to ‘reach new horizons’ by ‘overcoming’ unproductive prejudices. Perhaps if I had taken a more action research approach, engaging them in more dialogue and challenging them on their assumptions and biases, they may have reached ‘new horizons’. However, I preferred the active listening approach that is appropriate for more ‘inductive’ forms of inquiry, and thus, listened to and encouraged their views rather than challenging them. Perhaps if they had been back for longer than the six to nine month timeframe, their reflections may have been different and more understanding of others’ perspectives. For example, Pocock and McIntosh (forthcoming) found that with time, returned travellers’ priorities aligned more closely with the social environment to which they had returned as they ‘let go’ of their travel experiences. However, this thesis sought to

explore travellers' concepts of home within the 'immediacy' of the return experience, namely, the period when returned travellers may 'be' emotional and socially elsewhere and when concepts of home are likely to be questioned (Storti, 1997; Ahmed, 1999).

Nevertheless, through my dialogue with returned travellers in the interview settings, some felt they had reached a level of 'realisation' in terms of their own priorities and preferences. For example, Kylie "really started thinking" about her concepts of home and started to feel more "involved" as a result of this reflection. After talking to me, she "started looking around more", considering what was important to her and why, and started to "appreciate things more". Likewise, the research project "made [Simon] think" and "figure things out" about where he wanted to be and what he needed in his life and Teresa found the in-depth reflection, especially in terms of her family relationships "enlightening". However, a 'fusion of horizons' as described by hermeneutic philosophy was largely missing from the returned traveller's accounts, as was evident in their 'frustration' and 'annoyance' with (as opposed to understanding and acceptance of) aspects of the social environment they had returned to.

Nevertheless, the stories clearly illustrate the way my questioning and their reflecting affected their lives. Indeed, being involved in this research may have altered some returned travellers' life courses, as they reflected on what was important to them, what they wanted from their lives and made decisions of whether to stay or leave again. For example, Kylie decided to stay in New Zealand so she would not "miss" the things that had become important to her, and Simon realised New Zealand was not the "hole" he had previously perceived it to be. "The act of asking a question is not a neutral act" (Ryan, 2005, p. 9), thus, their involvement in this research perhaps enabled some returned travellers to come to some decisions they may not have reached had they not been involved in the research.

Moreover, the participants were interested in my opinions and experiences, and in some cases perhaps saw me as an 'authority' on the subject of return from long term travel (an identification I felt quite uncomfortable with). In the interview

settings I had to balance answering their own questions of me and encouraging them to express their own opinions, as was the objective of the philosophical hermeneutic approach. In addition, for some returned travellers, interest in the research topic endured beyond the interview setting, for example, one returned traveller asked me to present my findings to her work colleagues, while others stated the importance of the research in terms of social understanding and policy decisions. Thus, the returned travellers and I shared a mutual search for understanding and were collaboratively immersed in developing meaning through our conversations and interactions (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Dupuis, 1999). As we collaboratively and reflectively searched for meanings in the experience of return from long term travel, reciprocal influence on each other's views seemed to be inevitable.

6.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have reflexively acknowledged my own 'entanglements', particularly the way I struggled with sympathy as I attempted to interpret the returned travellers' stories. I have specified the level of affinity (or lack thereof) I felt with each returned traveller and discussed the effect this had on my own identity construction. I have expressed my 'emotional dilemma' in terms of the impact the research had on me and the way I dealt with this emotional involvement. I have discussed the ethical messiness of conducting research, particularly in terms of representing the significant others' voices. I have also alluded to the effect I (may have) had on the returned travellers by asking them questions about their experiences of return and requiring them to reflect on their concepts of home. This reflexive chapter contrasts with the previous interpretive chapter and the following 'concluding' chapter, as it openly and honestly positions me within the research and the thesis. This reflexive approach aligns with the hermeneutic philosophy that underpins this thesis as it acknowledges the historicity in which the interpreter (in this case, me) is inevitably immersed (Phillips, 1996).

7 Wrapping Up

This chapter ‘wraps up’ the thesis by providing an overview of the main conclusions of the thesis, drawing together the main line of argument and addressing the research objective of exploring the experiences of return from long term travel through concepts of home. The chapter then reiterates the contributions the thesis makes, and therefore its significance in terms of wider tourism scholarship, and suggests avenues for future research.

7.1 *Thesis overview*

I commenced the thesis by openly and honestly situating myself within the thesis, by explaining my interest in the topic and my reasons for taking a reflexive approach. The Prologue chapter also identified some ‘realisations’ that I reached in writing this thesis, and specified my interpretive approach as presenting a ‘joint story’ that comprised just one interpretation of the data, while acknowledging that the reader may reach their own interpretation. This reflexive approach was reflected further throughout the thesis, in line with the fifth moment of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) and hermeneutic philosophy within which this thesis was positioned.

To conceptualise this research theoretically, the ‘scene setting’ chapter reviewed the literature and conceptualised long term travel, moved beyond the physical return to explore more emotional and social aspects of return and presented ‘home(s)’ as important constructs through which to explore the personal, emotional and social aspects of return from long term travel. More specifically, this chapter argued for broader and more critical approaches to tourism research that foreground the subjective experiences and perceptions of individual travellers. Such approaches move away from dualisms such as ‘home’ and ‘away’ in their philosophical ‘framing’ of constructed meanings of tourism phenomena and consider instead new ways of knowing by embracing pluralist, multi-dimensional epistemologies (Morgan & Bischoff, 2003). Thus, this chapter suggested that an exploration of experiences of return from long term travel

through concepts of home might offer one 'phenomenon' through which such pluralistic epistemologies could be employed.

The chapter continued by conceptualising long term travel through a mobilities perspective. This mobilities perspective enabled long term travel to be conceptualised based on individuals' intentions, rather than a discreet timeframe, as part of a circulation of movement across the life course of an individual. Long term travel was then contrasted with permanent and temporary migration as a point of reference, and also with more traditional notions of 'tourism'. Uriely's (1994) concept of a permanent sojourner and Wilson *et al.*'s (2009b) 'middling' types of migrants were also considered to position long term travel within tourism scholarship.

The chapter then established the return to be a significant phase of the travel experience, but conceptualised this 'return' as physical, rather than necessarily emotional or social in returned travellers' experiences. Indeed, the chapter argued that for some returned travellers, their emotional and social 'beings' may remain elsewhere, as they struggle to renegotiate their belongingness in previously familiar environments and relationships. The chapter argued further that the pre-sojourn way of being may be impossible for travellers to return to due to their changed worldviews and identities, and that distinct phases of travel such as 'before', 'during' and 'after' (and similarly distinct conceptualisations of 'home' and 'away') may be blurred or even redundant, as travellers bring their experiences with them. This chapter also acknowledged the personal lived experience of (physical, emotional and social) return as a significant phase of life that deserved specific attention. It suggested that while travel or mobility might provide the context within which experiences occur, the personal, emotional experience may take priority in the mind of the individual traveller over the context of physical movement. Thus, the chapter reiterated the importance of considering a person-centred approach (Wearing, 2002) to capture multiplicities of experience.

Finally, the scene setting chapter presented concepts of home as important constructs through which to explore the personal, emotional and social aspects of

return from long term travel. 'Home' was conceptualised as a complex, often contradictory, ideological construct that was emotionally based, and reflected partly self-construction, partly categorisation by others, and partly wider social influences (Malkki, 1992). Certainly, within the context of long term travel, home was deemed to be elusive and uncertain, and feeling 'at home' was deemed potentially impossible. The place attachment literature was drawn upon to explain embodied negotiations with place, but this literature was also dismissed due to its philosophically spatial basis. In contrast, this chapter argued that 'home(s)' could also be discovered in close personal relationships, the pursuit of meaningful activities and other non-spatial situations or experiences. Thus, 'being at home' was conceptualised as more a presence or absence of feelings than a physical space, and was viewed as a state of being that was constantly in flux.

This chapter also considered the link between concepts of home and concepts of (personal and social) identities, whereby identity was conceptualised as a process of constructing many, often fragmented, selves (Pullen & Linstead, 2005). These 'selves' were deemed to be influenced by a combination of the individual project, influential others and wider social constructions, and were less about who we are than who we might become (Hall & du Gay, 1996). This concept of identity construction was presented within the context of return from long term travel, through which questions of belongingness are reportedly renegotiated as travellers question their decisions and consider what they want from their lives (Sussman, 2002). Therefore, as with concepts of home, constructions of identity also became elusive and uncertain (Ali & Holden, 2006) within the context of return.

The Creating the Story chapter then specified the philosophy and methodology that informed the research design. Alternative philosophical paradigms that were considered and deemed inappropriate to address the research question were also discussed within this chapter. The hermeneutic philosophy, and in particular the 'fifth moment' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) approach that informed the research design were outlined. The fifth moment approach was described as advocating reflexivity, recognising the possibility for multiple interpretations and privileging the reader's own judgement in interpretation (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b). Thus, this approach was aligned to the hermeneutic philosophy that underpinned

this research, as it acknowledged interpretation as a fundamental element of human existence, rather than viewing the researcher as the ‘all-knowing’ creator of knowledge. As well as allowing the reader to reach their own interpretation under the ‘fifth moment’ methodology, philosophical hermeneutics assumed that participants would be able to interpret their own experiences. This assumption informed the methods chosen and the design of the thesis in terms of presenting the individual stories of return in the travellers’ own words.

Yet, philosophical hermeneutics was also criticised for being ‘uncritical’. Indeed, this chapter argued that while ‘unproductive prejudices’ are theoretically ‘overcome’ in order to ‘fuse horizons’ through dialogue within philosophical hermeneutics, these prejudices are not necessarily deconstructed or critically evaluated (Habermas, 1990). Moreover, the philosophical ‘overcoming’ of prejudices assumes a level of reflection that may not be achievable within the ‘turbulence’ of experience. Therefore, while philosophical hermeneutics informed the methodological design of the research, the thesis itself also considered broader social discourses and ideological critiques within the wider discussion of the ‘story of return’.

This ‘story creating’ chapter also outlined the methodological contributions of the thesis to tourism scholarship, particularly the video diaries approach, which recognised the highly visual nature of tourist experiences, and which gave direct ‘control’ of interpretation to the participants. This approach to research was noted as rare within tourism studies, and thus offered an important contribution to tourism scholarship. The chapter also described the research methods employed, comprising descriptions of the parameters that constrained the research design, the participants who took part in the research, details of the data collection process, details of the thematic data analysis process, and considerations of other analysis techniques. The chapter then reflected upon various methodological aspects of the research. In particular, the video diaries method was reflected upon in comparison to more traditional methods, such as interviews. The video diaries, while providing ‘richer’ and more nuanced insights, were deemed useful as a mechanism to enhance the interview data, rather than providing the stories of return within themselves. One potential limitation of the video diary method was

noted as the lack of analysis techniques through which films may be understood. However, as the video diaries formed just one part of the overall methodology, they needed not to be analysed separately in order to present the returned travellers' stories of return, but could be incorporated into the analysis along with the other interview data. The verbatim approach I took to representing returned travellers was also discussed, and the exclusion of specific quotes in representing the significant others' voices was justified primarily by ethical considerations and my need to maintain my integrity. Further ethical considerations were also considered and were elucidated further in Chapter 6 - Thickening the Plot (page 284).

Once the story was 'created', it was time for the reader to 'get to know the characters'. Thus, each returned traveller was 'introduced' to the reader, beginning with a brief overview of their demographic information and followed by their in-depth verbatim stories of return. The stories were formatted in the order they were told to me, and thus built towards the deeper conceptualisations of what 'home' meant to the returned travellers. These deeper questions of 'home' were reflected upon towards the end of the data collection phase for each returned traveller, and thus were presented towards the end of each story of return. Video diary extracts in video format were presented within each story to allow the reader to better understand the returned travellers. The stories also described the influence of the research on each returned traveller, as this formed an important aspect of the reflexivity within the wider thesis.

After introducing the characters, I created *a* (not 'the') plot, that is, an interpretation of the returned travellers' stories. The first theme of historicity was presented as being important to returned travellers, who seemed to feel it was important to situate their stories within wider contexts of their personal life histories, their past, present and emerging experiences and their personal worldviews. Certainly, they seemed to feel it was important to contextualise their stories of return, to enable me to understand their experiences, thoughts, feelings, and indeed, their concepts of home. Thus, the returned travellers couched their stories of return within personal statements that emphasised the way they interpreted the world, that outlined their values and that reflected their own

prejudices and positions. They also explained the way life circumstances, relationships with others and their pre-sojourn ways of being (such as not ‘fitting in’, searching for ‘an identity’ or holding a strong national identity) were important to their experiences of return and their concepts of home. This theme of the returned travellers’ personal historicity indicated that their worldviews, priorities and personal histories had shaped their individual stories of return and their concepts of home.

This theme was deemed philosophically important within interpretive approaches to research, as the situated voice of participants enabled deeper understanding of the fractured, contradictory and context-rich nature of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Botterill, 2007). Moreover, the situated individuality, presented through the personal historicity of each returned traveller, uncovered deeper meanings, tensions and circumstances that shaped the personal experiences of return and constructed meanings of home. This approach was deemed to offer a ‘richer’ story of return that a less detailed and specific approach may not have achieved.

The second theme arose through the emotive language returned travellers used to describe their experiences of return. Each emotion arose within its specific context, and emotions portrayed were diverse both across the returned travellers and within each individual story, as the chapter described through the individualised examples drawn from the stories. However, viewed across the data, the theme of often unexpected and transitional emotion was deemed an underpinning aspect of returned travellers’ stories of return.

The theoretical discussion of the meaning of emotions related emotions of home to the context of return from long term travel. The chapter drew particular attention to the social and cultural constructions of emotions, as influenced by personal history and interpersonal relations, rather than taking a ‘universalist’ approach to examining emotions. Thus, the wider socially and culturally negotiated emotions were considered within the stories of return.

The returned travellers who contributed to this research also described an (often passive) resistance to perceived social norms, assumptions and ways of being. Indeed, they seemed passionately opposed to what they perceived to be cultural norms and accepted social attitudes and tended to select and critique aspects of the way they perceived life to be in New Zealand. They reportedly felt that their travel experiences had given them an opportunity to observe otherness, and viewed their untravelled peers' worldviews as "narrow", "conservative" and "limited". Yet, although they openly discussed these views with me, they rarely confronted their peers directly, and indeed preferred to remain "silent" than potentially jeopardise their relationships by voicing these 'resistant' opinions.

This theme of resistance was conceptualised within Thomas and Davies' (Thomas & Davies, 2005a, 2005b) view of resistance as a constant process of identifying contradictions and tensions with 'mainstream' discourses, and subtly changing meanings and understanding in order to deal with these tensions. Rather than a unified voice of resistance, this theme reflected subtle, low level forms of struggle and challenge. Moreover, rather than viewing this resistance as an inability to express oneself or as an un-acceptance by others of one's newly acquired beliefs, values and priorities (Wu, 1993), this chapter purported that disagreements with dominant meanings and discourses may be accompanied by an *unwillingness* to express oneself due to deeper concerns, for example, of maintaining close personal relationships. Thus, this theme of (often passive) 'resistance to home' offered a new way of conceptualising the adaptation process that occurs with the return from long term travel, as travellers chose to prioritise other aspects of their interpersonal relationships and social identities over experiential differences and disparate worldviews.

The final theme of (re)negotiation became evident as returned travellers reconsidered what and who was important to them, what they wanted from their lives, how they had changed through their travel experiences, how they 'fitted in' to wider social and cultural structures, and as they faced a way of life and life choices that differed, sometimes unexpectedly, from their pre-sojourn choices and the way of life they had experienced while they were away. Thus, their (re)negotiation was conceptualised for the purpose of clarity across

(re)negotiations of personal identities, meanings of relationships with others and wider social identities, and was deemed to occur through dialogue with themselves, with others and with me.

More specifically, their personal identities were renegotiated as they realised what made them feel 'at home', and equally what made them feel 'homeless'. They felt 'at home' doing what they wanted to be doing, in knowing themselves, in realising their goals and priorities and in having place to call their 'own', where they could express themselves. In contrast, they felt uncomfortable or potentially 'homeless' when faced with the impossibility of a desired way of life or if they were unable to do what they wanted. The (re)negotiation of personal identities was discussed in terms of their multiple (and 'dialogical') selves, which was also related to the literature in Section 2.4.1 - Homes and identities (page 41).

The meanings of their relationships with others were also (re)negotiated as they considered who was important to them and why (including both physically present and absent relationships). They felt 'at home' in emotionally close personal relationships, in like-minded people, and in shared experiences or histories with people, whereas missing relationships, unexpected changes in relationships and dissonance within a relationship made them feel 'homeless'. This (re)negotiation of meanings of relationships was discussed in terms of the influence of others on concepts of home and eluded to the relations of power that can emerge across interpersonal relationships within the context of return.

The returned travellers' social identities were (re)negotiated as they considered how they belonged within the socio-cultural environment to which they had returned. Their exposure to 'other' ways of life had enabled them to question and challenge some of the perceived assumptions and social norms they noticed on their return, and which they had often 'taken for granted' before they left. Yet, their pre-sojourn way of being and the social environment to which they returned also influenced their social identities. In their (re)negotiation of social identities, returned travellers drew upon both their travel experiences and their pre-sojourn ways of being to construct hybridised or 'in-between' social identities. These hybridised identities tended to be more defined by local and interpersonal

connections rather than national ‘fabrications’ of identity. Thus, ‘home’ was conceived in localised, personal and situated terms rather than conforming to dominant (national) constructions.

Following the Creating a Plot chapter, I reflexively ‘thickened’ the ‘plot’ by reflecting on my own ‘entanglements’ with the research, particularly the emotional impact the research had on me, the ethical difficulties I faced in representing the significant others and the apparent effect being involved in the research had on returned travellers. In this Thickening the Plot chapter I described the way I ‘overcame’ my prejudices and reached new enlightenments as I listened to the returned travellers’ stories. I reflected in particular on my ability to understand or empathise with their perspectives (as opposed to sympathising) and ruminated further that emotionally engaged research need not be considered limiting. Indeed, my emotional dilemma perhaps enabled me to gain deeper and more intuitive insights into the emotional lives of the returned travellers, and certainly led to deeper insights into my own ‘selves’. I also noted that with in-depth qualitative research, the emotional needs of the researcher need to be acknowledged, exposed and examined to create ‘good’ research (Ely et al., 1991).

This chapter also elaborated on the discussion in Section 3.12.3 - Representation of ‘significant others’ (page 113) to explore the ethical ‘messiness’ of conducting qualitative research. The chapter raised questions such as how may qualitative researchers ethically report the understanding they gain through exploration into the social worlds of others. Pertaining to this research, both the personal and honest way in which these significant others spoke to me and the diversity of significant other perspectives raised issues or ‘crises’ of representation. It was therefore noted that although the significant others’ perspectives deepened my understanding of the returned travellers, the ethical difficulty and my integrity precluded me from reporting their perspectives explicitly.

This chapter then discussed how being involved in this research led some returned travellers to life choices they may not have made had they not been involved in the research process. Indeed, some returned travellers had chosen to remain in New Zealand, for example, after reflecting through the research process on what

and who they would ‘miss’ if they left. Others had reconsidered what was most important to them in light of their travel and return experiences and had become less “precious” about various aspects of their identities. However, this chapter also reflected that although returned travellers reached certain realisations, most did not seem to reach ‘new horizons’ in terms of ‘overcoming unproductive prejudices’, perhaps because they were still experiencing the immediacy of return and were thus unable to reflexively engage with other ways of thinking. This summary has drawn together the main findings and conclusions of the thesis in order to enable a discussion of the contribution of the thesis and to suggest avenues for future research, as the following sections elucidate.

7.2 Contribution of this thesis

This thesis moves beyond spatial assumptions of ‘home’ as a contrast to ‘away’ which are prevalent in mainstream tourism studies. Instead, the thesis aligns with more critical conceptualisations, which view ‘home(s)’ as a personal, often ideational constructs (Somerville, 1992; Rapport & Dawson, 1998; Uriely, 2010), that are not necessarily represented by a place or space. Therefore, this thesis contributes to the philosophical ‘framing’ of tourism studies (Tribe, 2009) by problematising assumptions of ‘home’ and ‘away’ upon which mainstream tourism studies is based, and suggesting alternative epistemologies of (knowing) ‘home(s)’.

As such, the epistemologies represented by this thesis reflect multiple, subjectively constructed and pluralistic concepts of home, rather than seeking a, or even multiple, definitive truths. Indeed, a ‘richness’ of home is presented within this thesis that explores the meanings and struggles of returned travellers. Within the thesis, therefore, concepts of home emerged through reflections around (dis)comfort, (un)familiarity and (a lack of) belongingness, and were influenced by a multiplicity of relationships and experiences. Concepts of home for the returned travellers, for example, emerged in emotionally close personal relationships, the pursuit of meaningful activities, personal growth, and familiar places, communities, situations or events. Equally, ‘homelessness’ for returned travellers was represented by the impossibility of a desired way of life,

unexpectedly changed relationships, and the dissonance with or ‘resistance to’ presumed familiar social assumptions, norms and ways of being. Such concepts of home reflect “emotional”, “fluid” and “dynamic” home(s) that sometimes depend on priorities at differing stages of wider life courses. Thus, concepts of home in this thesis were emotionally constructed, constantly (re)negotiated and influenced by both social structures (which were sometimes resisted) and personal historicity.

Such concepts of home make important contributions to tourism scholarship, as they move beyond dualistic assumptions and consider instead multiple ways of knowing. Future research may therefore consider such subjectively constructed, ‘rich’ concepts of home, as opposed to definitive truths of home, across other groups of tourists. For example, shorter term tourists, domestic tourists, people visiting friends and relatives, and other types of long term travellers such as volunteer tourists, backpackers and migrants may contribute new insights into the ways tourists conceptualise their home(s). Approaches that critically discuss assumptions of ‘home’ and ‘away’ upon which tourist studies research is often based would arguably enhance the contributions made by this thesis and may potentially broaden the philosophical horizons of tourism studies (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b; Tribe, 2009).

The importance of the changing nature of ‘home’ becomes more prevalent as travellers stay longer and integrate more intensely with the destination communicates. While such travel experiences have long been acknowledged, little research has been conducted to critically explore concepts of home within the field of tourism studies specifically. The more recent mobilities perspective has re-highlighted questions of belongingness, identity and ‘home’ and this thesis contributes to this discussion by providing an initial starting point through which to explore the socio-cultural effects that the return experience has on the tourist. As the thesis explores the personal, subjectively constructed ‘homes’ of individual travellers, home is discovered in non-spatial constructs and assumptions of home and away are challenged. Beyond the field of tourism studies and the mobilities perspective, this thesis may also contribute to, for example, theories of place attachment, intercultural studies and leisure and recreation studies. It may

contribute to place attachment theories by moving beyond the fundamental premise that belongingness is inherently linked to being-in-the-world and exploring instead non-spatial representations of home. It may contribute to intercultural studies by introducing situated and contextualised person-centred perspectives of return that recognise and indeed value individual stories for their uniqueness and subjectivity, rather than reporting generalised findings regarding a returned traveller 'population'. Finally, the thesis may contribute to leisure and recreation studies, as this field similarly recognises the on-going effect of travel on individual's lives beyond the experience of physical return.

This thesis also contributes an important emotional aspect of return from long term travel to further 'widen the horizons' of tourism scholarship (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b). Emotional aspects of social research have often been ignored in favour of the rational and intellectual aspects of being (Dupuis, 1999; Milton & Svašek, 2005; Hedican, 2006). However, since feminist scholars have attempted to "rescue emotion from its discarded role in the creation of knowledge" (Fonow & Cook, 1991, p. 11), starting from an emotional standpoint in social science research has become more accepted. Certainly with the present research, my emotional engagement with participants deepened my understanding of their stories and also of myself. However, good qualitative research must acknowledge, expose and examine the researcher's emotionality (Ely et al., 1991). Therefore, the poetry included in this thesis makes an important contribution to this 'exposure' and 'examination' of researchers' emotions. In particular, the discussion of why I chose to use poetry and how it worked for me may help future scholars to cope with aspects of emotional involvement they encounter with their participants. Qualitative researchers need to understand their own emotions in order to gain insight into the emotional life of others (Dupuis, 1999) and this reflexive approach was certainly apparent in this thesis. Indeed, by putting reflexivity at the heart of the thesis, I have attempted to take a methodologically self-conscious approach and thus establish trustworthiness and credibility with the reader.

However, the paradox of researcher voice and power arose throughout the research process, as I tried to be sensitive to and favour the voice of participants,

but necessarily inserted my own voice, power and control over the data through my decisions on how to represent the returned travellers, what to include in their stories and how to interpret these stories. This conundrum reflects a crisis of authority (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) relating to who controls the research process, the research findings and the interpretation and dissemination of these findings. In the data collection phase of the project, I relinquished at least partial control to participants, in interviews as I 'let them talk' about things that were important to them, through the video diary method which allowed them to represent their own voices, and in the stories I presented in their own words. However, in the interpretation of the data, I reclaimed the control and thus authority over the data. I enforced the normalising tendencies of academic discourse (Cary, 1999) in my framing of their stories within a series of themes. An alternative analysis might have explored, for example, participants' understanding of their own experiences. Indeed, I could have explored more extensively the ways and conditions by which participants formed their interpretations of their experiences. If the listener's response influences the way stories are created (Bakhtin, 1986), and if stories are thus created within a social context that influences the story itself (Freeman, 2000) then an analysis of the unfolding interaction between participants and me may have offered an alternative approach to thematic analysis. Hermeneutics is concerned with the question of understanding and "understanding is not just about sharing stories, it is about questioning the role these particular stories have in shaping our understandings of our experiences" (Freeman, 2000, p. 367). Therefore, in future considerations of this research, I may build on my thematic interpretation by exploring the interactive performance that took place between the returned travellers, their significant others and myself.

On another level, questions arose throughout the research process regarding how to balance the voice of participants with my own voice, raising concerns of representation. Some functionalist scholars would argue that the researcher is the 'expert', having perhaps read more literature on the topic and engaged more theoretically, and sometimes philosophically, with the concepts involved. For these scholars, the researcher's more 'intellectually grounded' voice would take precedence over those of the research participants. The idea of an expert researcher, however, emerges from the positivist paradigm, where things can be

'known' and thus 'truths' can be predicted. Moreover, in terms of researching the lived experience of others, such 'expertise' necessarily lies with the research participants, as it is their personal experiences that are being explored. As Freeman (2000) points out:

Many of the questions we ask ourselves about representation and voice seem to be driven by the belief that validity is what counts. A search for validity pushes us to think about data as something that can be confirmed by the speaker, voice as actually being representable, and meaning as something that can be gotten right (p. 367).

However, with interpretation the description of experience moves away from the experience itself as textual representations are only shadows of the experiences themselves (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Therefore, in this thesis, I did not seek to replicate the experiences themselves, but attempted to enable participants to describe their experiences while acknowledging the subjectivity, selectivity and interpretation that accompanies such descriptions. I also did not claim to understand their experiences, but offered instead one interpretation of them. In doing so, I acknowledged that the very depth and richness of experience that qualitative researchers seek are often most effectively presented by minimising the dominating voice of the researcher, prevalent in much academic writing, and favouring instead the personalised voices of the participants.

This personalised voice is sometimes effectively expressed through alternative (not traditionally academic) formats, such as visual records, poetry, music, journal entries and other such personally expressive approaches (Richardson, 1992). Of course, such accounts are often difficult to publish through mainstream academic channels. For example, the full stories of return presented in this thesis format would have to be significantly reduced for publication in an academic journal, yet the depth and richness of these stories, including the non-evident aspects, are what gives them their qualitative strength. Thus, questions of voice and power arise on a different level, in that, if the material cannot be published and thus 'heard', the power of that voice (whether primarily the researcher's or the participant's) may be lost.

The ‘messiness’ of conducting research was also discussed in this thesis, whereby the ‘reality’ of doing research does not ‘fit’ predefined philosophies, paradigms and methodologies. Although philosophical hermeneutics underpinned the research design, the actuality of conducting the research raised issues with this approach. For example, the lack of critical analysis, in terms of viewing all voices as ‘equal’, ignored the power structures and ideologies that may influence these voices. Moreover, the assumption that participants may interpret and understand their own experiences did not allow for the ‘turbulence’ of experience itself impacting on this ability to interpret. Indeed, the hermeneutic goal of ‘fusing new horizons’ was deemed too difficult for returned travellers in this research, who were still experiencing (rather than reflecting extensively upon) the emotional and social aspects of the ‘immediacy’ of return, and had therefore not ‘overcome’ their ‘unproductive prejudices’. Future research may therefore comprise a more longitudinal approach that would capture both the ‘immediacy’ of experience and the longer term reflection on that experience. Such an approach might, for example, challenge participants’ ‘unproductive prejudices’, perhaps through a more action research approach, and thus encourage new horizons to be fused through the reflexive dialogue that would ensue.

Paradigmatically, the philosophies regarding what can be known, what is knowledge and how knowers are viewed in relation to what is known overlap between paradigms. Therefore, research approaches do not ‘fit’ within a particular paradigm, but should instead be viewed through the philosophical questions relevant to the particular research objective. The present research, for example, did not take a paradigmatic approach per se, but rather drew from a range of philosophical considerations. For example, the belief in multiple realities and versions of ‘truths’ was evident in the research design which considered both returned travellers’ and their significant others’ views. The subjectively constructed nature of home(s) incorporating wider social influences was evident in the discussion of the findings, particularly in terms of the (re)negotiation theme. The importance of reflexivity in social research especially in terms of the researcher’s (emotional) relationship with the researched was evident throughout the thesis, particularly in the Creating the Story and Thickening the Plot chapters (pages 48 and 284 respectively). The need to critically challenge ‘known’

assumptions, such as 'home' as a contrast to 'away' was evident in the theoretical underpinning of the thesis. Such an approach contributes to recent calls from tourism scholars to philosophically engage with research objectives and to select philosophies, paradigms and methods that suit research questions, rather than selecting methods in order to produce 'valid' and 'objective' research (for example, Walle, 1997; Botterill, 2001; Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001; Tribe, 2004). This approach may also be viewed from a postmodern perspective, whereby a diversity of meanings, constructs and ways of knowing becomes possible within the acknowledged complex, interconnected and dynamic social world. In particular, the privileging of returned travellers' interpretations of their own experiences enabled a multiplicity of meanings to emerge within the context of participants' concepts of home and thus reflected the pluralistic epistemology within which the thesis was positioned.

Methodologically, the aim of exploring social phenomena (such as concepts of home) may be hindered by ethical considerations, contributing to the 'messiness' of research. The present research, for example, questioned how to represent participants, particularly considering ethical difficulties that may arise when reporting controversial points of view and when vastly differing voices are evident. The thesis therefore also questioned how a researcher might decide what she feels comfortable revealing on behalf of participants. Such discussions contribute to the ethical and epistemological questions that occupy many qualitative researchers (for example, Ely et al., 1991; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004b) by reflecting on the ethical messiness of research.

Methodologically, this thesis also contributes to social science research by discussing the process and limitations of giving 'control' of interpretation to participants themselves. Sections 3.5 - Methodological contributions to tourism scholarship (page 67) and 3.12.1 - Video versus more traditional methods (page 106) in particular discussed the contributions of the video diaries method to tourism scholarship and reflected upon the limitations of video diary methods. One of these potential limitations was the diversity of depth and reflection within the video diaries based on the participants' personality, the length of time they had with the camera, their technical ability, and degree of confidence with a camera.

However, such diversity also reflects the qualitative ‘richness’ of social research and may be viewed as a strength rather than a limitation. Certainly, further research is needed in this area to explore participants’ characteristics and their impact on the quality and reliability of video diary data. Furthermore, the publishing format of academic media largely limits the possibilities for publishing visual material. Arguably the ‘richness’ of the video diaries was reduced in this thesis when they were transcribed into text. Therefore, the video diaries in video format were presented to deepen the reader’s understanding of the returned travellers’ stories. The visual is arguably important in understanding lived experience as it offers ‘richer’ and more nuanced insights into the lives of others (Collier & Collier, 1986). Therefore, perhaps the critical question needs to be raised as to whether academic traditions are in concordance with the social phenomena scholars are trying to understand. How should scholars with visual data share their findings with their academic colleagues? Perhaps gate keepers of academic publishable material need to argue for new ways of representation that include the possibility of visual publications.

7.3 Avenues for future research

Future research may learn from the limitations discussed within this thesis regarding representing the voices of significant others, and further explore alternative perspectives of the return from long term travel. For example, the significant others’ voices could perhaps have been incorporated into wider discussions of experiences of return, without comprising individual anonymity, if a different representational approach, such as removing the returned travellers’ individual stories and presenting only significant others’ voices, were undertaken. Similarly, I could have captured significant others’ voices using a different methodological approach, such as group interviews, participant observation, or third party filming to avoid issues of anonymity, and thus presented an alternative perspective of experiences of return from long term travel. Future research may explore such methodological alternatives. Furthermore, the significant others often found it difficult to talk about the returned travellers’ perspectives and preferred to discuss their own experiences. This made it difficult to stay ‘on topic’ in the interviews, but still contributed to my understanding of the returned

travellers, if only because I witnessed a lack of understanding by some of the significant others of returned travellers' experiences. This approach also widened my understanding of differing perspectives of return from long term travel, and the perspectives of those who had not travelled themselves I found particularly illuminating. Future research may expand upon these perspectives.

The historicity theme presented within this thesis highlighted the importance of detailed, personal, situated, contextualised 'stories' in understanding personal experiences and constructed meanings within the fractured, contradictory and context-rich social world. Thus, future research may usefully incorporate more depth and detail of personal historicity, so that the personal and situated context of individual experiences may be acknowledged within interpretations and understandings of constructed meanings of tourist experiences. Such approaches may seek more depth of understanding than the present thesis, with potentially fewer participants and a more intensive data collection phase. Pertinent research questions along these lines may explore, for example, meanings of relationships for travellers and their significant others, longer-term effects of travel on life course decisions and directions, and meanings of lived travel experiences on tourists' understanding of themselves and others. Such approaches may also consider, for example, meanings of home for tourists from alternative cultures, ethnicities, classes and sexual orientations. A gendered approach may also distinguish between meanings of home for men and women. Such approaches would contribute to epistemologically-centred studies that privilege the plurality of worldviews and cultural differences (Uriely, 2005; Pritchard & Morgan, 2007) to offer richer and deeper insights into individual experiences within the socially-constructed world.

Tourism studies scholars may also consider taking a more emotional approach to research. An emotional approach to understanding would acknowledge feelings as a fundamental aspect of knowing (Milton & Svašek, 2005) with the mind, body and 'culture' of the individual tourist being no longer rationally separated, but viewed as inherently interconnected. Indeed, emotional (both positive and negative) descriptions make an important contribution to understanding the social world. Thus, this thesis supports Skrbiš' (2008) theoretical call for emotions to be

viewed as constitutive of the social experiences, rather than being used as “convenience and occasional resources” to explain social life. Indeed, emotion has “value as a way of talking about the intensely meaningful as that is culturally defined, socially enacted, and personally articulated” (Lutz, 1988, p. 5). Certainly, more research is called for to explore emotional connections to ‘home’, particularly within travel and tourism discourse (Williams & McIntyre, 2001), to broaden understanding of subjectively constructed meanings within lived experiences.

Other epistemological approaches may also be considered to move this research forward in future. For example, a more extensive and critical examination from a postmodern perspective of the social discourses and patterns of power and dominance that influenced returned travellers’ experiences of return may shed further light on their concepts of home. As another example, by viewing the data through a social constructionist lens, I may have reached a more nuanced, less descriptive, interpretation of returned travellers’ ‘home(s)’. Future publications of this research may also adopt a critical theory philosophy as I examine more deeply the power structures that emerged between returned travellers and their significant others. Thus, alternative epistemological approaches are encouraged through which experiences of return and concepts of home may be further explored.

The approach I have taken within this thesis may also be deemed ‘post-disciplinary’, as knowledge was “pulled from the complexity of the problem being studied rather than pushed from the prevailing disciplines” (Tribe, 2010, p. 10). The post-disciplinary approach moves beyond interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary debates (Jafari & Ritchie, 1981), where researchers from different disciplines merely bring together points of view “to compete behind a thin disguise of cooperation” (Sayer, 2001, p. 88) with neither scholar actually abdicating their own discipline (Echtner & Jamal, 1997). Such inter/multi/ or trans-disciplinary approaches are a reaction to, but still based within, the disciplinary model (Leiper, 2004). They draw on the in-depth knowledge of other disciplines and apply this knowledge to the context of, for example, tourism. Alternatively, they attempt to blend disciplines systematically to generate a

cohesive understanding of multifaceted nature of the phenomenon under study (ibid). In contrast, the post-disciplinary approach addresses a “deep epistemological conundrum” (Rosamond, 2005, p. 24) by rejecting disciplinary conceptualisation of knowledge. Indeed, the world outside academia is not structured by discipline, yet many disciplines identify themselves through ‘ways of seeing’ or through lenses, which are based on unchallenged ontological and epistemological assumptions. In contrast, the post-disciplinary perspective surmounts disciplinary boundaries and limitations, and examines social phenomena from philosophical beginnings to logical ends, rather than to the border of a particular, or even multiple, disciplines (Tribe, 1997; Sayer, 2001; Painter, 2003; Coles, Hall, & Duval, 2005; Tribe, 2005; Tribe, 2006)

Therefore, I have drawn from a range of literature across ‘disciplines’ such as psychology, geography, sociology, anthropology and philosophy, and ‘fields of study’ such as intercultural studies, tourism, migration and mobilities to conceptualise meanings of home for travellers (physically) returned from long term travel. Moreover, the alternative epistemological approach I have taken within this thesis has enabled me to pursue ideas from philosophical beginnings to their logical (and reflexively acknowledged) ends. For example, rather than viewing ‘home’ as spatially manifested, as a geographer might do, I moved beyond spatial conceptualisations of home and thus enabled alternative epistemologies of home to emerge. Similarly, rather than constructing a solely social perspective of home, which a sociologist might pursue, I incorporated the individual and subjective nature of home with the wider social influences of concepts of home to produce more integrated concepts of ‘home(s) that were personally situated, emotionally constructed, and (sometimes) socially resisted. Thus, future tourism scholars may also take a more ‘post-disciplinary’ approach to research (Coles, Hall, & Duval, 2009). Indeed, rather than lamenting tourism studies’ inability to form irreducible, disciplinary-based concepts, scholars may instead celebrate tourism studies’ diversity and opportunity to contribute broader and deeper understandings of human phenomena through its endorsement of various philosophical, epistemological and methodological approaches (Echtner & Jamal, 1997; Tribe, 1997). One such ‘post-disciplinary’ approach is the person-centred epistemology purported within this thesis.

Indeed, through a person-centred epistemology, tourism scholarship may also recognise tourists' multiple homes (and indeed their multiple selves) and thus philosophically 'reframe' tourism studies in terms of its fundamental assumptions of 'home' and 'away'. Such philosophical advances in tourism scholarship may raise questions of belongingness and identity, some of which have been partially addressed by this thesis, but which would be beneficially informed by other situated contexts. For example, questions may be asked regarding belongingness and identity transformation for shorter term tourists, regarding the longer term effect of travel beyond the immediacy of experience, and regarding belongingness and identities in other types of semi-permanent migrants. A mobilities perspective offers one lens through which to explore such a multiplicity of experiences; yet, such a perspective may not view the return as a significant phase of the travel experience. Thus, new approaches to understanding tourists' experiences may shed further light on the often contradictory multiple perspectives that arise through such person-centred epistemologies and thus stimulate future research within tourism scholarship.

8 Epilogue

Since talking to the returned travellers, I have kept in touch with them, although some are more forthcoming and in-depth with their updates than others.

8.1 *Kylie*

Kylie gave birth to a little girl in August 2009, two and a half years after she returned from the U.K. She rents a house with her husband in Auckland, approximately one and a half kilometers from her parents' house. She is still working in her own photography business, co-managed with her good friend and business partner, who was overseas at the time of my data collection. Her parents have also returned to New Zealand, and are living in the family home again.

8.2 *Simon*

Before Simon went to the world championships, his father and Amanda were talking again, and Amanda's cancer was in remission. He did well at the world championships and met, his "future wife", who was also competing on the New Zealand team, and with whom he is now living. She is from the U.K. and has no desire to live there again, although they are visiting the U.K. soon so Simon can meet her parents. They feel very settled in New Zealand at the moment, but their career progression may lead them toward Australia. Simon is still uncertain where he might be in two to four years time, and is "still open" to overseas opportunities. Amanda lost her battle with cancer in July 2010 and Simon's father was her primary caregiver for the final 18 months of her life. Simon has developed a sports injury which is limiting his participation in competitive events, but has taken up swimming as an alternative and plans to attend some races later in the year.

8.3 *Dillon*

Dillon and Maria took a holiday to Colombia towards the end of 2009, where Maria stayed for six months while Dillon had to return to New Zealand for work after six weeks. They bought their first home in Lower Hutt at the end of 2010.

8.4 *Teresa*

Teresa moved to Germany in June 2009, 20 months after returning to New Zealand. She is "silly happy" living with Mattias and feels "fairly settled" there. She is busy working for a small marketing firm across Europe and the world and has learnt German to a sufficient level that she can understand conversations and read newspapers. Her parents have sold their house and now live separately, and her sister and John are moving to Sydney together.

8.5 *Margaret*

Margaret went to Brisbane to see her daughter for a few weeks. She returned to New Plymouth and is still living in the same home, socialising with friends, going for walks and enjoying her retirement.

8.6 *Me*

I am now married, living in the country and spend my holidays at the beach – a 'typical New Zealander' by some standards. I have learnt a lot about myself through this research process, and though I would never want to complete another PhD, I have enjoyed my involvement with the academic community, especially at the international conferences I have attended. I am unsure what my future holds, but have learned to live in the present. My peaceful serene country lifestyle certainly helps with that.

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix I – Initial contact message (advertisement)

Greetings Returnees from Long term Travel

Have you returned to New Zealand within the last six months?

Were you away for more than a year (and no more than ten years)?

Do you hope to settle in New Zealand now that you are back?

Were you a New Zealand resident prior to your departure?

If you answered “Yes” to all of these questions, you have a unique opportunity to have your say! We know it can be hard to return... here’s your chance to explain why.

Naomi Walter, a PhD student at the University of Waikato, wants to hear your views, and has asked us to distribute this message to you. We encourage you to participate in this research, if you are able, so that together we may make returning to New Zealand easier for others. Please feel free to pass this message on, if you know someone else who can answer “yes” to all of the questions above.

If you are interested in being a part of this study, please contact Naomi on njw3@waikato.ac.nz or (07) 8384466 xtn 8212 directly.

Message from Naomi:

Thank you for reading this far 😊 I would like to hear about your experiences, your expectations of New Zealand, how you feel now you are back, and your relationships with friends and family. As a result of this research, I hope to recommend ways to make the transition easier for future returnees.

If you are willing to share your thoughts and experiences with me, whatever they may be, I would appreciate your input. My research is designed to be open and conversational, with you “taking the floor” in explaining your experiences and impressions.

I would like to begin with an initial chat with you to explain the research objectives, and discuss your initial thoughts. I will then lend you a video camera and ask you to complete a video diary over a one week period. Following this week, I would like to visit again to discuss your ideas together and to make sure I truly capture your thoughts. The research will take about three weeks in total, and we will meet approximately three times over that period. I will also ask to interview any friends or family, who you feel may be significant in your experience of “home”. All of this interviewing is important to make sure I interpret your experiences correctly in my thesis.

I will produce a PhD thesis and academic journal articles as a result of this research. A summary of my results may also be sent to leading New Zealand organisations like the Department of Labour, Ministry of Economic Development, Kiwi Expats Abroad and Global Career Link.

Please be aware that your responses are confidential and that you are welcome to withdraw from this study up until the data analysis stage (1st June 2008). You will also be welcome to a summary of my results (at the end of 2010!).

I would really appreciate your input into this research, as without you, it won't happen. So please contact me directly on njw3@waikato.ac.nz or (07) 8384466 xtn 8212 if you are interested, have questions, or if you have read this far!

9.2 Appendix II – Information sheets

Information Sheet for Returnees

An interpretation of returned long term travellers' concept of and relationship with home.

Thank you for offering to participate in this study. Please be aware that all responses and data gathered are **confidential**. You are welcome to **withdraw from this study** up until the data analysis stage (1st June 2008).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of New Zealanders, who have returned from extensive travel overseas. The **aim is to examine the returnees' concept of and relationship with "home"**, and establish recommendations to make the transition easier for future returnees. More specifically, you will be asked about your **expectations** of New Zealand, **how you feel** now you are back, and your **relationships** with friends and family. For you, "home" may or may not be New Zealand. The key is that you **share your thoughts and experiences**, whatever they may be.

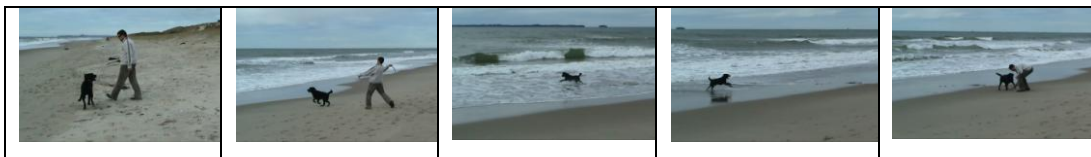
Our **initial meeting** enables me to explain the research objectives, discuss your initial thoughts, and start thinking about what 'home' means for you. I will then lend you a video camera and ask you to complete a **video diary** over (approximately) a one week period, reflecting on your thoughts of 'home'. Please note, this video diary is **not 'a day in the life of'**, but rather a **reflection on your concept of home**. It is entirely your choice whether to show your video diary to your friends and family.

Following this week, I will **visit you again** to discuss your ideas together and to make sure I truly capture your thoughts. The research will take about **three weeks in total**, and we will **meet approximately three times** over that period. After the first interview, I will also ask to **interview any friends or family**, who you feel may be significant in your experience of "home". All of this interviewing, videoing and revision is important to make sure I interpret your experiences correctly in my thesis.

During this research process, I will also ask you some **demographic information**, which will help with categorising responses and explaining any differences between your experiences and another returnee's experiences.

My research is designed to be **open and conversational**, with you "taking the floor" in explaining your experiences and impressions. Therefore, at any stage please feel free to **raise any additional topics** regarding the experiences you encountered on your return. These may relate for example to your impression of the New Zealand culture or your career experiences. These insights into your personal experiences and any lessons you learned from them may help to make the "transition" back home easier for future generations of returnees to New Zealand.

I will produce a **PhD thesis** summarising the results of this research, combining it also with academic literature. You are welcome to a **summary of the thesis results**, which I will send you if you email me on njw3@waikato.ac.nz. A summary of results may also be sent to leading New Zealand organisations like the Ministry of Economic Development, Kiwi Expats Abroad and Global Career Link. While direct quotes will be used from the interviews and films, they will not be associated with any personal or identifying information. However, in some cases, it may be necessary to print a sequence of film to demonstrate a point in the thesis or publications, for example:



For this participant, watching her partner and pet playing together in the surf on a long, deserted New Zealand beach makes her feel 'at home'.

Information Sheet for Significant Others

An interpretation of returned long term travellers' concept of and relationship with home.

Thank you for offering to participate in this study. Please be aware that all responses and data gathered are **confidential**. You are welcome to **withdraw from this study** up until the data analysis stage (1st June 2008).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of New Zealanders, who have returned from extensive travel overseas. The **aim is to examine the returnees' concept of and relationship with "home"** and establish recommendations to make the transition easier for future returnees.

A major part of interpreting a person's 'home' is understanding their relationship with significant people in their lives, like friends, family, work colleagues, mentors etc. This is because our perception of 'home' relates to how we interact with other people and how comfortable or 'at home' we feel in a particular environment. Therefore, when a person returns from long term overseas travel, the important people in their lives have a significant impact on their concept of 'home'.

As people travel for extended periods, **they usually change slightly** (and sometimes a lot!). This change can occur in different ways from new personal values and goals, to a new accent, learning to cook new foods, or by thinking or behaving differently. When these travellers return to their previous country and culture, they **often no longer 'fit in' properly**. Sometimes they are also quite **critical about 'home'** and often talk more favourably about the place they lived overseas.

Today I would like to discuss with you _____'s (hereafter known as 'the returnee') concept of home. I have already talked to the returnee at length, and today I would like to gather your interpretation of his/her experience, so that I can gain a **full understanding of the returnee's 'home' for my thesis**. This

interview is **not a test** of how well you know the returnee, just **your perspective** of his/her experience.

During this research process, I will also ask you some **demographic** information, which will help with categorising responses and explaining any differences between your perspective and the returnee's perspective.

My research is designed to be **open and conversational**, with you "taking the floor" in explaining your thoughts and impressions. Therefore, at any stage please feel free to **raise any additional topics** regarding your perception of the returnee's experiences. These insights into your perspective of the returnee's 'home' will **ensure that I interpret the whole experience accurately**, and may help to make the "transition" back home easier for future generations of returnees to New Zealand.

I will produce a **PhD thesis** summarising the results of this research, combining it also with academic literature. You are welcome to a **summary of the thesis results**, which I will send you if you email me on njw3@waikato.ac.nz. A summary of results may also be sent to leading New Zealand organisations like the Ministry of Economic Development, Kiwi Expats Abroad and Global Career Link. While direct quotes will be used from the interviews, they will not be associated with any personal or identifying information.

9.3 Appendix III – Consent forms

Consent Form for Returnees



An interpretation of returned long term travellers' concept of and relationship with home.

I have read the **Information Sheet for Returnees** for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the **Information Sheet** form. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study up until the data analysis stage (1st June 2008), or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out on the **Information Sheet**.

In my video diary, I will endeavour to **get the verbal approval of any third party** I film, prior to commencing with that segment of my diary (excluding people in public spaces, who may appear in my film without me obtaining their consent).

I agree to take **responsibility for damage to and accidental loss** of the video equipment, except through theft and other unforeseen circumstances (natural flood, fire etc).

I am happy for my interviews to be recorded Yes No
I am happy for my video diaries to be used in academic publications Yes No

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name and contact information: Naomi Walter Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105 Hamilton Ph:(07)8384466 xtn 8212, Mob: 027 6622000 Email: njw3@waikato.ac.nz	Supervisor's name and contact information: Associate Professor Alison McIntosh Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management Waikato Management School The University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105 Hamilton Phone: +64 7 838 4962 Email: mcintosh@mngt.waikato.ac.nz
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Consent Form for Returnees' Significant Others



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

An interpretation of returned long term travellers' concept of and relationship with home.

I have read the **Information Sheet for Significant Others** for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the **Information Sheet** form. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study up until the data analysis stage (1st June 2008), or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out on the **Information Sheet**.

I understand that my responses are confidential and anonymous.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the **Information Sheet** form.

I am happy for my interviews to be recorded Yes No

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name and contact information:	Supervisor's name and contact information:
Naomi Walter Chalet 37, G.02 Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105 Hamilton Ph: (07) 8384466 xtn 8212, Mob: 027 6622000 Email: njw3@waikato.ac.nz	Associate Professor Alison McIntosh Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management Waikato Management School The University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105 Hamilton Phone: +64 7 838 4962 Email: mcintosh@mngt.waikato.ac.nz

9.4 Appendix IV – Interview guidelines

Initial Interview

Prompts for Initial Meeting with Returned Traveller – approx 1.5 hours

***** Information Sheet for Returnees *****

***** Consent Form for Returnees *****

Aim of Initial Meeting

- Provide background information to set context
- Build rapport
- Get them thinking about concept of home
- Set expectations about video diary process
- Explain how to work the camera
- Explain the research process again
- Enable contact with signification others

***** Draw travels on the world map *****

Tell me briefly about what it has been like for you to return.

What makes you feel comfortable (like you want to settle somewhere) and what makes you uncomfortable (like you want to leave)?

How do these feelings compare here with how you felt when you were overseas?

Right now, do you feel like you belong, or do you feel a bit lost?

Who has helped or hindered your return?

- How have they helped, or how have they made your return more difficult?
- How has your relationship with them changed since your travels?

Is there anything else you would like to mention?

Can I interview the people you mentioned?

- If yes, names, contact details
- If no, who can I interview who has had a significant – either positive or negative- impact of your return?

Key themes covered?

- Travelling vs 'Home' home
- Making home
- Physical home vs internal home
- Home & identity
- Homelessness
- Ideological home

***** Prompts for Video Diaries (information sheet) & Tips for Filming *****

***** Demonstrate how to use the camera *****

Explain research process again

1. This interview
2. One - two weeks of video diary
3. I interview significant others separately
4. I review interviews, put together my interpretation of their home
5. I re-visit for second interview to discuss my interpretation and come to a common understanding of their home. Pick up video.
6. If necessary, we review diary together, cut bits if necessary, make sure everything is included. Produce final interpretation of their home.

Interview Prompts for Significant Others – approx 1 hour

***** Information Sheet for Significant Others *****

***** Consent Form for Significant Others *****

Aim of Significant Other Meeting

- Build upon the returnee's concept of home (from interview)
- Obtain a more holistic understanding of the interpretation of the returnee's experience

- 1) What has it been like for you to have [name] return?
- 2) What do you think it has been like for [name] to return?
- 3) How easily do you think [name] settles in a new location? How easily has [name] found it to settle here? Why do you think it has been easy/difficult?
 - a. What aspects make [name] fit in here, and what aspects mean he/she doesn't seem to belong here?
 - b. How has travelling impacted [name]'s ability to fit in or be accepted?
 - c. How do you think [name] has changed since his/her travels?

3. You are welcome to move, change, delete or add any items or ideas
4. The main aim is for us to have a common understanding
5. PRESENT MIND-MAP – blank circle in the middle
6. **SILENCE**
7. **Let them start talking first. I ACTIVELY LISTEN.**
 - What do you feel belongs in the middle? – why? (eg ‘me’ -> identity?)
 - Is anything missing?
 - What is most important to you right now? – why?
 - Has anything changed for you through this research? (eg thoughts of what’s important, feelings)
 - What gives you a sense of belonging in the world?
 - What does ‘home’ mean for you? – why?
 - Is there anything else you would like to mention?

***** Demographic Sheet for Returnees *****

9.5 Appendix V – Video Prompt Flash Card

Take shots of:

- what/who makes you feel **comfortable** or 'at home'
- things/people that are **familiar** or make you feel like you want to **settle** here
- things that you **can identify with**
 - that represent who you are
 - that **enable you to express yourself**



This may include friends, family, mentors, things that represent your culture, a particular geographical location, a political system or organisation, a memory of your old home, something else from your past or something that fits with your vision for your future

Take shots of:

- what/who makes you feel **uncomfortable** or 'homeless'/not 'at home'
- things/people that are **unfamiliar** or make you feel like you want to **leave** again
- things that you **can't understand**
 - that conflict with who you are
 - that **prevent you from expressing yourself**



Compare and contrast here and overseas whenever it seems relevant to you.



Tips for Filming

- ❖ Record scenes from your personal perspective
- ❖ Talk to the camera to explain why a particular scene is meaningful to you
- ❖ Your thoughts and feelings are more important than the technical aspects of filming (zooming, focussing, moving while filming etc)
- ❖ Please don't remove any scenes, as removing unwanted scenes is an important part of the research process
- ❖ Don't worry if your scenes don't fit together nicely – it's your overall perspective that counts
- ❖ Don't try to 'film everything' – sample shots of meaningful scenes will be sufficient
- ❖ Video strangers at a distance so as not to invade their private space with the camera
- ❖ If you are videoing people you know, please make sure they are comfortable with you videoing them first
- ❖ If you are unsure when to 'start' or 'stop' recording, think to yourself 'Does this scene mean home to me?'

9.6 Appendix VI - Demographic questions

Demographic Sheet for Returnees

For categorisation purposes, please could you complete the following questions? This data will be kept **confidential** with **no personal information or identification attached** to your responses.

1. **How long** were you overseas for (approx)? _____
2. What year and month did you **return** to NZ? _____
3. Where do you live in **NZ** (city)? _____
4. Where did you mainly live **overseas** (country)? _____
5. What is your current **housing** arrangement? (you may tick more than one box)

<input type="checkbox"/> Flating	<input type="checkbox"/> Living with parents	<input type="checkbox"/> Living with partner
<input type="checkbox"/> Own house	<input type="checkbox"/> Renting	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify)	_____	
6. What is your current **family** arrangement? (you may tick more than one box)

<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Defacto partner	<input type="checkbox"/> Single
<input type="checkbox"/> Have child/ren	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify)	_____
7. How many of the following do you have in your **family**? (you may complete more than one box)

<input type="checkbox"/> Older brothers	<input type="checkbox"/> Older sisters	<input type="checkbox"/> Daughters
<input type="checkbox"/> Younger brothers	<input type="checkbox"/> Younger sisters	<input type="checkbox"/> Sons
8. What do you do (**job/profession**)? _____
9. Would you consider your current job a **career advancement** compared with your job overseas? Yes No
10. What is your current **salary** range (needed for categorisation purposes)?

Less than \$20,000	\$20,001 to \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$60,000	\$60,001 to \$80,000	\$80,001 to \$100,000	More than \$100,000
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11. What is your current **age**? _____ years
12. What is your **gender**? Male Female

Thank you for your input, it is very much appreciated!

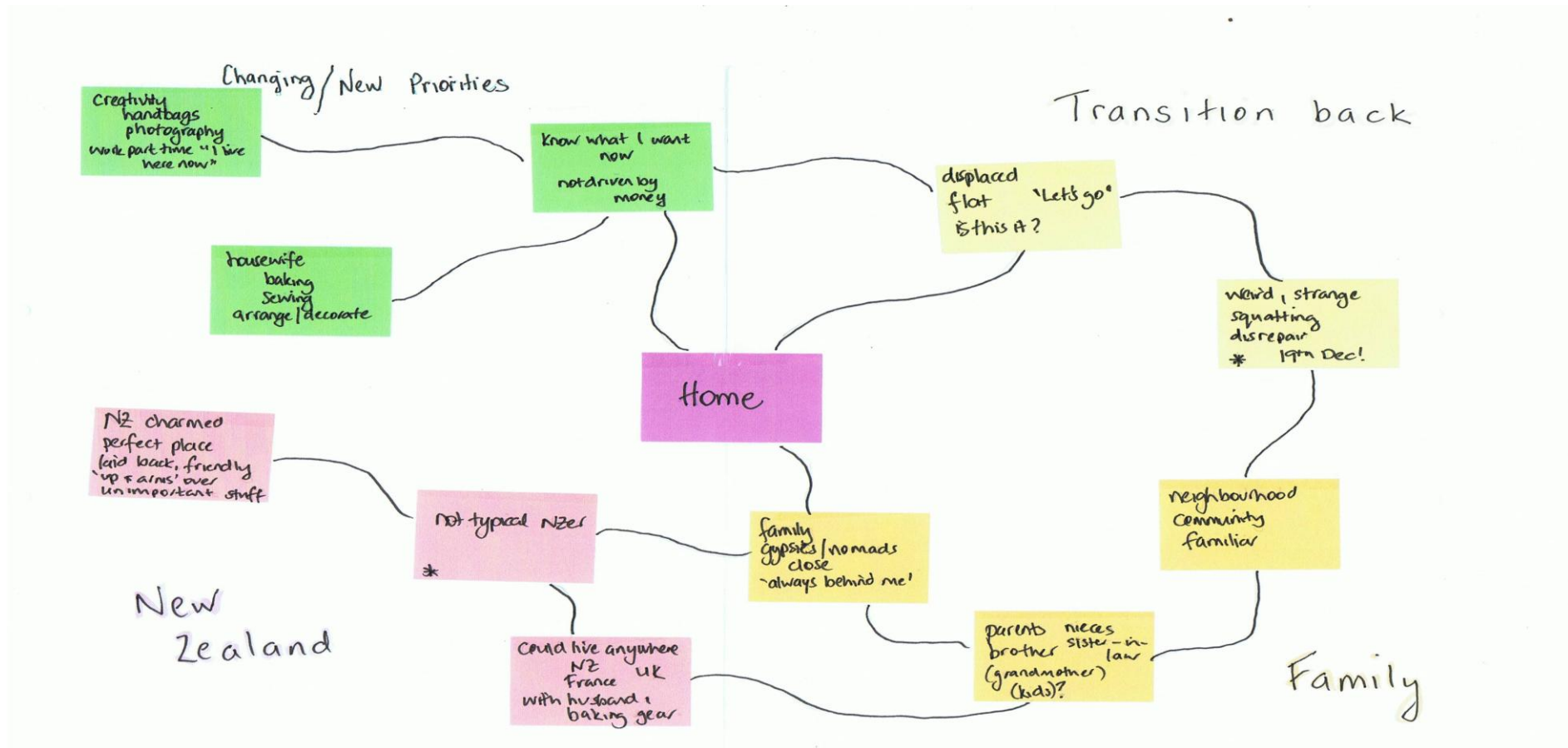
Demographic Sheet for Significant Others

For categorisation purposes, please could you complete the following questions? This data will be kept **confidential** with **no personal information or identification attached** to your responses.

1. **How long** have you known the returnee for? _____ years
2. Have you been **overseas yourself**? Yes No (go to 3)
- 2a. If yes, **how long** were you overseas for? _____
- 2b. What year and month did you **return** to NZ? _____
3. Where do you **live** in **NZ** (city)? _____
4. How would you describe your **relationship** with the returnee?
 Sibling Returnee is my child Returnee is my friend
 Returnee is my work colleague
 Other (Please specify) _____
5. What is your current **family** arrangement?
 Married Defacto partner Single
 Have child/ren Other (Please specify) _____
6. What is your current **age**? _____ years
7. What is your **gender**? Male Female

Thank you for your input, it is very much appreciated!

9.7 Appendix VII – Example mind-map



9.8 Appendix VIII – Emotive poetry

How can I help?

The participants give me time
A relationship I didn't seek
It's too complicated
I try to help them
But how can I?

Can I even help myself?
There are elements that resonate
Like mentoring one's parents
Or fighting with siblings
Emotional
Connected
Or 'disconnected' (depending how you look at it)
Deep
Personal
Scary.

I know this happened to me
But I don't understand it
How can I help them
If I can't even help myself?

I need to let go

I personalise your issues
Every time I read your transcript
It's me
Not you
But me.

I need to let go
Counselling helps
But then I forget
And I'm back there again.

Turbulent Times

Studying the turbulence of an experience
During the turbulent times
Awakens my own turbulence

Uncertainty and confusion breeds uncertainty and confusion
So every time I read a transcript
I'm back there again
In my childhood
In the turbulence
In the uncertainty and confusion

They've moved on
But I'm still there
Every time I read their stories
It drives me nuts!
I cry, I emote, I despair
Maybe next time, memory work?
At least then I can see they have moved on.

The conversation moves on

'So how's your PhD going?'
An uncle asks at a family gathering
'Difficult at the moment,
The point where 60% give up'
'You won't give up though, will you?'
'No, but it's hard.'
The conversation moves on.

'I've been crying lately'
A daughter tells her father
'Hmmpmp'. A snicker.
A disbelieving look.
'Why?' he asks, contrite.
'Because it's hard, Dad!'
Another teary eye
'I'm sure it is.'
The conversation moves on.

'At least some of us work!'
A husband tells his new wife.
Wide eyes. A shocked look.
'You try understanding my chapter on ontology and epistemology!'
'Alright, I'll read it'
'Yeah, right.'
The conversation moves on.

We're not understood, as we try to understand
We're misrepresented, as we attempt to represent others
We're isolated and lonely, even as we are talking to others
We're unexplained, we can't even explain ourselves
So the conversation moves on.

I don't know what I'm doing

Lost
Alone
Frightened
Scared
I don't know what I'm doing
And I'm not used to that

A gen x-er

I need to succeed
I don't like failure
Or rejection
But that is what I'm experiencing.

This land of academia, the path to PhD
It's like a minefield.
If I knew where the mines were, in advance
It would be much easier.

Why do I bother?
Where will it take me?
In this world of stagnant truths.
What can my post-everything approach offer?
Practically? In the 'real' world
Of stagnant truths?

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