

Multiple Stakeholder Perspectives and Discourse Analysis Investigating  
Marketing and Local Realities of Disaster Tourism: Christchurch Earthquakes

by

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BSc, University of Victoria, 2009

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

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in the Department of Geography

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University of Victoria

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## **Supervisory Committee**

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Beginning in September 2010, seismic events shook the city of Christchurch, New Zealand, resulting in significant losses for the tourism sector, most notably the devastated Central Business District. Tourism had to adjust especially following two major earthquakes, with visitors able to partake in disaster-themed tourist attractions or viewing the destruction as part of a self-guided tour of the city. Such activities fall into the realm of ‘dark tourism’, or travel to sites of death, disaster or destruction. Following a major disaster with significant media coverage, tourism organizations often scramble to alter the outsider’s perception of the disaster-struck destination. Using a qualitative case study, this thesis explores two dominant themes associated with post-disaster tourism. First, it gathers perspectives of disaster tourism experiences and tourism industry recovery from multiple stakeholders to explore how tourism following a major disaster is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon. Second, it investigates how tourism advertising campaigns represented Christchurch, New Zealand and its inhabitants following the earthquakes.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Christchurch, New Zealand experienced a major seismic tremor, the first notable earthquake that affected Canterbury since a tremor in Arthur's Pass struck in 1995. This September earthquake triggered several aftershocks. Notably, on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011, a 6.3 Moment magnitude (Mw) earthquake devastated the city. The Canterbury Earthquake was the first earthquake in New Zealand's history where a state of national emergency was declared (Becken, 2012); further, it was the second most deadly "natural" disaster to impact the nation (Simmons and Sleeman, 2012). The city's tourism industry was drastically affected, largely due to physical damage to commercial accommodation, notably the Christchurch Convention Centre, the Central Business District (CBD), shopping centres, and visitor attractions (Simmons and Sleeman, 2012). Shortly after the disasters, visitors to Christchurch could learn about the Canterbury Earthquake and/or the long-term recovery process of the city by touring the city to see remaining evidence of the disaster, participating in organized 'disaster' tours, or by visiting tourist attractions and commemorative exhibitions that speak about the earthquakes.

Earthquake tourism, or travel to areas that have experienced a significant and apparent seismic disaster, has proven to be a polarizing topic in Christchurch. A reporter for *The New Zealand Herald* denounced the phenomenon of disaster tourism as a global trend that "prov[es] that there really is no scene so grim, no atrocity so gross, no loss of life so appalling, that hordes of tourists won't want to visit and take photos to show the folks back home" (Bridgeman, 2012). Expressing dislike for terminology, Mayor Lianne Dalziel offered a more cautious opinion, stating that there is a "difference between disaster tourism and visitors from outside Christchurch who were 'coming to grieve the loss' (Backhouse, 2013a). Visitor's motives may be more complex than this simple

dichotomy. To illustrate, a *New Zealand Herald* reporter reflects on his experience in Christchurch this way, “There is a queasy moment when the thought insinuates: is this earthquake tourism? Am I conspiring in this? Ghoulish, as charged?” (McDonald, 2012). Feeling uneasy, this journalist questioned the morbidity of his role as a visitor in the aftermath of the city’s devastated regions.



*Figure 1.* Christchurch in relation to the larger region of Canterbury on the South Island of New Zealand. (Source: <http://maps.google.com>)

A growing number of tourism scholars examine travel to sites of death, disaster, or destruction, often referred to as ‘dark tourism’ or ‘thanatourism’ (*Thanatos* derived from Freudian theory, meaning the ‘death instinct’). Examples of tourism destinations

associated with death, disaster, or atrocity include New York's Ground Zero memorial (Lisle, 2004; Potts, 2012); genocide museums (Biran et al., 2011; Cohen, 2011; Hughes, 2008; Lennon and Foley, 1999; Miles, 2002); prison museums (Shackley, 2001; Strange and Kempa, 2003; Walby and Piché, 2011); sites of war or battle; (Dunkley, Morgan, and Westwood, 2011; Henderson, 2000; Muzaini, Teo, and Yeoh, 2007; Seaton, 1999); attractions concerning violence or massacre (Kang et al., 2012; Robb, 2009); and disaster tourism (Pezzullo, 2009; Rittichainuwat, 2008). Dark tourism research concerning disasters caused by natural hazards includes the 2004 Indonesian earthquake and tsunami (Rittichainuwat, 2008) and Hurricane Katrina (Pezzullo, 2009; Pezzullo, 2010; Robbie, 2008). However, few existing tourism studies have explored a seismic disasters and their subsequent destruction in relation to visitor interests, with specific links to dark tourism scholarship.

When examining visitation to sites of death, disaster, and/or destruction, tourism scholars often do not take visitor perspectives, experiences, and motivation into account (Biran, Poria, and Oren, 2011; Dunkley et al., 2011). Stone (2005) argued ten years ago that scholarship pertaining to participation in dark tourism activities and motives is underdeveloped both theoretically and empirically. This remains true today. According to Poria et al. (2003), the subjective perceptions and behaviour of tourists is central to the tourism experience (Uriely, 2005). Furthermore, motivation and 'potential' behaviour are linked to a tourist's perceptions of the site (Poria et al., p. 247). Thus, the complexity of the disaster tourism experience is best understood through visitor perceptions.

### **1.1 Research Goal and Objectives**

The goal of my Master's research is to explore tourism perspectives following a major disaster that has caused significant destruction in an urban area. While a number of scholars have examined the intersections between tourism and disasters from a managerial perspective, often focusing on response, recovery, and/or emergency preparedness (see Faulkner, 2001; Ritchie, 2008), this research takes a different approach by focusing on the disaster tourism experience and relevant contextual elements, such as the political climate of the city, post-disaster tourism advertising, and mental health

recovery following disaster. This study will not draw from the disaster management body of literature since I am not concerned with approaches to recovery for tourism organizations.

This thesis uses a qualitative case study methodology to explore multiple perspectives on visitations to the earthquake-devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand. A first objective of this study is to differentiate disaster tourism from dark tourism, while the second objective of the thesis is to inform the tourism management literature by offering a different understanding of the subjective perceptions and behaviours of tourists participating in disaster tourism. The third objective of the thesis is to explore how Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism, a Canterbury tourism marketing organization, has depicted the post-disaster local 'reality' for different market segments.

The thesis is developed as a series of papers. The first paper addresses the first objective of this study, which is to explore the disaster tourism phenomenon through empirical research on the perceptions of tourism by visitors, locals, and industry professionals to post-disaster areas. This makes up Chapter 4.

The second objective investigates broader social, cultural, and political themes through the critical discourse analysis of regional tourism marketing. Specifically, the second objective examines tourism representations of Christchurch through the critical discourse analysis of destination branding strategies in relation to the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes that impacted the city. Critical discourse analysis is used to explore representations of Christchurch conveyed in tourism advertisements. Since advertising discourse aims to persuade rather than inform (Wang, 2000), specific attention is paid to how Christchurch is presented to potential visitors in advertisements and how this construction compares to a local 'reality'. This objective is addressed in the second paper presented in Chapter 5. Refer to Appendix D a conceptual diagram of the thesis.

## **1.2 Significance of the Research**

The study advances the literature on dark- and/or disaster tourism by offering a fuller understanding of the subjective perceptions and behaviors of visitors participating in disaster tourism to inform tourism management. Furthermore, this research advances literature in a minimally explored area. With the exception of a paper by Uribe et al. (2015) on tourism advertising following the Chilean earthquake of 2010, little research has examined how marketers navigate a ‘natural’ disaster event within the realm of post-disaster advertising. Even so, this objective does not seek to specifically examine how certain messaging tactics could improve visitor numbers. Instead, it aims to explore how tourism advertisers approach the post-disaster environment, especially one characterized by destruction and death.

## **1.3 Organization of Remainder of Thesis**

The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows: Chapter Two summarizes relevant literature to position research in an existing body of knowledge, dark tourism and disaster tourism. Chapter Three explains and justifies the methodologies and methods used in the research. As noted, chapters Four and Five are the papers which address the two research questions introduced above. These chapters are organized and formatted to suit submission to appropriate academic journals. Writing a hybrid thesis like this results in a certain degree of repetition of background, context, literature review, methodology and methods. The author apologizes for any associated inconvenience to the reader. Chapter Six offers a summary, concluding remarks and recommendation for further research.

|

## Chapter Two

### Context and Literature

#### 2.1 Dark Tourism: What is it?

Dark tourism studies often begin by seeking ways to classify dark sites. Biran et al. (2011) considers this as a supply-oriented perspective, which assumes a descriptive understanding that highlights the individual's presence at dark sites. For instance, influenced by Strange and Kempa (2003), Stone (2006) developed a spectrum or continuum of dark tourism shades, which refers to varying degrees of darkness. At the 'darkest' end were sites of death and suffering, which were associated with high political influence and ideology, an education orientation, and perceived authenticity of interpretation. At the 'lightest' end were sites associated with death and suffering, which were characterized by low political influence and ideology, an entertainment orientation, and perceived inauthenticity of interpretation. The continuum informed a typology of death and macabre-related tourist sites, attractions, and exhibitions, which included categories such as Dark Fun Factories, which were considered the 'lightest', and Dark Camps of Genocide, which were considered the 'darkest' (Stone, 2006, p. 152).

Sharpley (2009) believes that although Stone's typology may oversimplify the intricacies of dark tourism supply, it provides a suitable conceptual framework for further supply-oriented research and a foundation for understanding the dark tourism phenomenon. However, Bowman and Pezzullo (2010) argue that the identification of 'shades' and the creation of typologies adds further confusion and raises more questions in a field of study described as "eclectic and theoretically fragile" (Sharpley, 2005, p. 216). As a further critique, Biran et al. (2011) believe that Stone's typology reflects an inadequate understanding of dark tourism since it shows an ignorance of "the diversity of the individual's inner experience and motives" (p. 822). Disregarding the complexity of the tourist experience means that Stone risks combining discrete experiences arbitrarily (Biran et al., 2011).

A universal typology or commonly accepted definition schema does not exist for dark tourism (Stone, 2012). Sharpley (2009) notes that dark tourism is an increasingly unfocused term due to the accumulation of experiences, attractions, and sites that are classified under the dark label. Lennon and Foley (2000) are credited with the creation of the 'dark' term. Although they did not explain why such terminology was chosen, these scholars distinguished between 'primary' sites, where death or destruction occurred *in situ*, e.g., Pompeii, Auschwitz, and 'secondary' sites, where death and tragedy are commemorated, e.g., the United States Holocaust Museum (Lennon and Foley, 2000). In response, Cohen (2011) argues that the legitimacy of a destination should not be related to geographic locale since it implies that distance is related to a level of authenticity. Thus, Cohen (2011) proposed the term *in populo*, which "describe[s] sites [that] embody and emphasize the story of the people to whom the tragedy befell" (p. 194). Examples of *in populo* would include dark tourism attractions that offer an immersive experience. For instance, at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., role-play is used to engage visitors. Upon entry, a tourist is given a card that contains their new identity as a Jewish citizen of Germany who is living at the time of Hitler (Lennon and Foley, 1999). Since guides share personal stories with visitors, some disaster tourism experiences on Christchurch's earthquake-themed tours could be classified as *in populo* even though disaster-related attractions in Christchurch do not strive to immerse the visitor in the experience. However, due to ongoing and numerous aftershocks, there is a chance that visitors could experience an earthquake firsthand.

Dark tourism scholars often consider an attraction or site as 'dark' due to it having attributes that relate to death, dying, or destruction. Due to this assumption, much research assumes that visitors are drawn to dark sites by similarly 'dark' motives such as curiosity regarding death and dying. Smith and Croy (2005) argue that the assumption is flawed; instead claiming that the individual's perception of a site as dark or not is key in determining whether tourists are drawn by dark motives. Since many visitors may not have an experience tied to morbid motivation, this research prefers the term, 'disaster tourism' and strives to examine a diverse range of perspectives, which is achieved

through the inclusion of local perspectives of those residing in the post-disaster tourism destination.

In dark tourism research, a demand-oriented perspective assumes that all visitors travelling to dark attractions or sites are motivated by some degree of dark curiosity or an underlying attraction to death (Biran et al., 2011). Examples of research in this realm include examinations of death-related curiosity as a motivating factor for travel to dark sites or explorations of the relationship between the tourism experience and the broader socio-cultural aspects of death and dying (Seaton, 1996; Seaton, 2009; Sharpley and Stone, 2011; Stone, 2012; Stone and Sharpley, 2008; Walter, 2009). For instance, Seaton (1996) defines thanatourism as travel “motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death.” Similarly, Lennon and Foley (2000) believe that travel to sites of death, disaster, or atrocity is a small part of a trip to satisfy a visitor’s curiosity.

Not all scholars believe that a fascination with death is a prime motivator for dark tourism consumption. However, much dark tourism research from the tourist perspective assumes that a degree of death-related curiosity exists for all visitors (Biran et al., 2011). Slade (2003) argues that the notion that an inherent attraction to death exists to some degree with all dark tourism experiences is flawed. With respect to a battlefield tourism attraction, Slade (2003) insists that some tourists are not necessarily motivated to travel to an historic site by their attraction to death. Through a study of the tourist experience at Auschwitz, Biran et al. (2011) sought to uncover motivations for visitation to a dark tourism site. They explored which benefits of on-site interpretation tourists wished to seek, and considered the meanings tourists attached to sites of death and atrocity. Proposing a new definition, Biran et al. (2011) believe that dark tourism should be re-conceptualized as “purposeful movement to spaces displaying acts and sights that are commonly absent from the social realm, which involves a sense of unease in seeing or participating in them” (p. 837). Furthermore, such sights and acts may not involve death, and if so, the death may not be macabre in nature. This seems a good starting statement for this section as well as a concluding one. According to Robb (2008), dark tourism will

always include a mix of tourists who seek different experiences and are driven by different motivating factors.

## **2.2 Existential Approaches and the Tourist Experience**

Understanding the dark tourism experience is key since it lends support in addressing the broad question of why tourists visit dark sites (Stone, 2005). Tourism research was once heavily influenced by structural theory. This view was deterministic in nature, and tourists were often portrayed as mindless consumers whose behaviour was merely a product of societal structures (MacCannell, 2001). Early conceptualizations were also concerned with the plurality of the tourist experience, which was dominated by typologies that indicated different types of tourists. Since typologies do not address important cultural, social, and environmental factors, they are not widely accepted today (Wearing et al., 2010).

Sharpley and Stone (2011) refer to the tourism experience as embedded in the meaning or significance attached to the experience in relation to everyday life. The individualized, subjective tourist experience is a significant topic for contemporary researchers (MacCannell, 2001; Wearing et al., 2010), especially in line with broader cultural developments associated with postmodernity or late modernity (Uriely, 2005). The tourist experience can also be related to Wang's (1999) concept of existential authenticity. Instead of exploring whether toured objects are real, existential authenticity is concerned with the authentic self, an ideal that manifests as a way to counteract the rational order. Existential authenticity believes that visitors feel "freely self-expressed," or authentic, when engaging in activities that they perceive as separate from everyday life (Uriely, 2005, p. 207). Visitors seek experiences of culture and history that "transcend the sanitized version of reality that tourism has traditionally offered" (Robb, 2009, p. 51).

## **2.3 Visitor and Resident Perspectives**

Many dark tourism studies avoid the perspective of the local, instead favouring the opinion of tourists and attraction employees. For Muzaini et al. (2007), this omission was due to the fact that visitors comprised a larger proportion of an attraction's clientele. Deviating from this logic, this research views the avoidance of the local perspective as

problematic. The local viewpoint is especially important in the disaster context since local residents are influenced most profoundly by disaster recovery. Furthermore, the psychosocial impacts of a disaster affects residents directly and significantly. Christchurch is unique in terms of its ongoing aftershocks that continue to affect the region. Due to this, many Christchurch residents suffer from severe mental stress and fatigue (McCrone, 2013). In a February 2013 newspaper article, Associate Professor and general practitioner Dee Mangin spoke of the rampant post-traumatic stress disorder in Canterbury communities following the quakes (Carville, 2013). Mangin states, “many Cantabrians were initially very strong, but the siege mentality’ (where the community pulls together to survive) has worn off...now it is just frustration and lack of control” (Carville, 2013). Thus, persistent psychosocial issues could lead to mounting anguish towards tourism-related activities because they prevent a kind of local healing that needs to occur.

Coats and Ferguson (2013) explored how Christchurch residents perceived commercialized disaster tours of the Central Business District following the February 2011 earthquake. Despite the fact that residents were generally accepting of the disaster tours and empathetic towards tourists, many believed that it was unacceptable for tourists to view the damaged residential areas in Christchurch as part of the tour package (Coats and Ferguson, 2013). A participant stated: “rubbernecking over our misery, and that is where the real misery is, the suburbs” (Coats and Ferguson, 2013, p. 53). However, Pezzullo (2010) believes that commercialized disaster tours can sustain memories and aid in the long-term recovery process. In line with these findings, Coats and Ferguson (2013) found that many Christchurch residents supported disaster tours because they wanted the disaster to remain fresh in the minds of outsiders. One resident stated, “...the more outsiders who are coming in and realizing what we are living the better. They go away and are talking about it so that people will continue to help. We need help” (Coats and Ferguson, 2013, p. 43).

In the realm of the emotional experience of dark tourism, Prayag (2016) sought to understand the emotive experience of locals visiting post-earthquake tourism sites in

Christchurch. This study was conducted since previous research on the emotive experience of visiting dark sites has focused on tourists' perspectives rather than on residents'. Further, existing studies have not explored positive emotions at dark sites, rather focusing on negative ones such as grief and sadness. Through 12 semi-structured interviews with Christchurch residents, Prayag (2016) found that understanding emotions that residents experience could aid in the development and design of future disaster memorials. Residents can also shape the nature of disaster tourism sites through the integration of locals' personal stories and perspectives of the disaster. Furthermore, sites play a role in the disaster recovery process through processes such as emotional venting and emotional support. Although Coats and Ferguson (2013) and Prayag (2016) sought to uncover resident perspectives, few studies have explored the resident, tourists, and industry perspectives simultaneously.

The first objective of this research then is to explore the disaster tourism experience through multiple perspectives, which includes the views of local residents, tourists, and tourism industry professionals. Further, in line with the qualitative case study methodology, this objective will look beyond the disaster tourism experience into contextual elements connected to the phenomena. Relevant contextual elements include disasters as an opportunity for urban change, and how post-disaster government organizations can pose barriers to creative possibilities for urban core regeneration. This first objective is explored in Chapter Four.

## **2.4 Post-Disaster Advertising**

A major disaster will receive significant media coverage that will influence a potential visitor's perception of a tourism destination. Destructive images and disaster-related commentary will often deter a potential visitor. Although many may not wish to visit immediately following a catastrophe, others maybe curious to visit places associated with death, disaster, or destruction. In the post-disaster environment, advertising is used to counter negative perceptions and enhance positive aspects of places, peoples, and products (see Chacko and Marcell, 2008; Gotham, 2007; Scott, Laws, and Prideaux, 2008). For instance, Chacko and Marcell (2008) examine strategies undertaken by

tourism marketers to reposition New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, largely to counteract the negative images shown by the national media in the months following the disaster. Pearlman and Melnik (2008) found that negative perceptions associated with the Katrina-related destination image decayed over time and visitor perceptions improved. Furthermore, potential tourists living further away had more positive views of New Orleans than those living nearby.

Various marketing strategies often emerge following a crisis or disaster. In a review of tourism literature, Mair, Ritchie, and Walters (2014) highlight the importance of such promotional strategies following a disaster. Mair et al. (2014) found that the main goals of post-disaster marketing include re-establishing confidence in a destination and rectifying misperceptions about the disaster. They reported that although physical damage to a destination's infrastructure and facilities are often remedied swiftly, long-term challenges include repairing a poor reputation and salvaging a lacklustre destination image (Mair et al., 2014). Through a literature review, Walters and Mair (2012) determined commonly used tourism marketing messages following a disaster, including: 'business as usual', community readiness, messages of solidarity, celebrity endorsement, confidence restoration, using an unsafe message as an asset, curiosity enhancement, short-term discounts, and visitor testimonials (p. 89). A common theme in recovery marketing messaging is we are 'open for business'. Despite its prevalence, Walters and Mair (2012) believe that advertising a disaster-struck destination as 'open for business' to be one of the least credible messaging types.

According to Tribe (2006), tourism scholarship draws most heavily from business and economics, which also abstracts many cultural and social practice studies. The prevalence of managerialism and economics led to the dominance of positivist approaches, which posed challenges for scholars to pursue alternative methodologies (Tribe, 2006). Since economics is dominant in tourism business studies (Tribe, 2004), it can be estimated that many tourism professionals value rational and analytical approaches to marketing. In the post-disaster advertising research, often times focus is

put on strategies in returning visitor numbers to pre-disaster levels rather than exploring how a disaster-struck region is represented in advertisements.

Significant research in tourism has focused on marketing, branding, and the creation of destination representations. Such promotion is grounded in power relations, dominance, and subordination (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Used in marketing and branding strategies, tourism representations are bound by political, cultural, and historical discourses (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). Although research has examined the effectiveness of images used in destination marketing, few have investigated what such images reveal about societies (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Through images, tourism marketers create identities that reflect particular views of reality in accordance with dominant value systems. In post-disaster tourism marketing, emphasis is placed on how marketers can re-establish pre-disaster tourism numbers.

#### **2.4.1 Disaster Discourse**

Image creation in advertising involves a process of discourse, which can play an influential role in a tourist's choice of destination and travel motives (Wang, 2000). Central to discourse is that certain groups or individuals within a society have the authority to represent others; furthermore, certain ways of talking about a subject are considered acceptable while others ways are rejected (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Discourse analysis, a social approach to textual analysis, is a technique used for the examination of constructions or representations of tourism destinations (see Ateljevic and Doorne, 2002; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). According to Wang (2000), travel decisions occur due to being consciously or unconsciously persuaded by exposure to a discourse. The discursive environment of advertising can influence a tourist in what experiences they should expect, where they should go, and what they should see at a potential destination (Wang, 2000). Further, images and the representations of places, peoples, and products are often used to target key markets. Pritchard and Morgan (1998) argue that segmentation is an inherently ideological process. The marketers' perceptions and priorities determine which segments are valuable, and which are ignored.

Through visual advertisements, marketers create identities that represent particular ways of seeing reality, and images that reinforce and reflect certain societal relationships (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). The marketer presents the unfamiliar, and in doing so, certain interpretations are promoted while others are discarded (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Thus, the potential tourist is steered towards a particular representation of a place and its people – a constructed ‘reality’. The second objective of this research is to use critical discourse analysis to explore how the local ‘reality’ of Christchurch was represented in tourism advertisements following the earthquake disasters. Moreover, this second objective will juxtapose how this constructed representation compares to the local ‘reality’ of the city through the exploration of a mental health campaign in Christchurch. This second objective is explored in Chapter Five.

## Chapter Three

### Research Design and Methodology

#### 3.1 Methodology: Qualitative Case Study

The broad goal of this project was to use a qualitative case study methodology to explore tourism perspectives following a disaster that has caused significant destruction in an urban area. The thesis has three objectives within this overall goal:

**Objective 1.** The first objective of the thesis is to explore how Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism, a Canterbury tourism marketing organization, has depicted the post-disaster local ‘reality’ for different market segments. The first objective is addressed in Chapter 4.

**Objective 2.** The second objective, addressed in Chapter 5, is to investigate broader social, cultural, and political themes through the critical discourse analysis of regional tourism marketing.

In support of the case study methodology, Flyvbjerg (2006) insists, “behaviour cannot be meaningfully understood as simply the rule-governed acts found at the lowest levels of the learning process and in much theory (p. 223). In this research, the constructivist paradigm is at the root of the case study. Constructivism supports the view that there is no single, objective truth. Instead, truth is relative, or dependent on one’s perspective (Baxter and Jack, 2008). A key assumption of social constructivism is that individuals seek to understand their surroundings by forming subjective meanings of their experiences that are heterogeneous, multiple, and malleable (Creswell, 2009). Since complexity is embraced, the researcher often conducts in-depth discussions with participants. Through the interview process, views of reality can be shared, which enables the researcher to understand the participant’s actions (Baxter and Jack, 2008). One construction cannot be deemed more truthful than another; however, through the hermeneutical/dialectical process where opposing constructions are juxtaposed, knowledge can become more ‘sophisticated’ and ‘informed’ (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). This constructivist notion of knowledge accumulation through juxtaposition is reflected in the second objective, whereby perceptions of post-disaster tourism are

contrasted with advertising discourse and the local “reality” of the long-lasting psychosocial impacts of the disaster. The second objective is addressed in Chapter 5, specifically how the bottom-up transitional projects faced barriers from the top-down government-led rebuild, did not benefit from this juxtaposition. This is due to lack of interest in research participation from the Christchurch Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA).

In a case study methodology, a phenomenon, process, event, or place, can be studied idiographically, meaning in-depth rather than broadly (Baxter, 2010). This is especially true of single site, non-comparative case studies. Yin (2003) insists that the phenomenon must be contemporary and be investigated within its real-life context. The contextual conditions may either be highly pertinent to the phenomenon or not easily divisible from it (Yin, 2003). In this instance, the broader context includes: tourism advertising, physical destruction, ongoing seismic aftershocks, and the recovery process of the city. The broader context of the first objective and first paper relates the phenomenon of disaster tourism to the broader context of tension between grassroots transitional organizations with the bureaucratic process of the city rebuild efforts. The specific context of greatest interest for the second objective and second paper is the focus on tourism advertising by Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism and mental health in Christchurch. Understanding the connection between the disaster tourism phenomenon within this broader context is key in understanding the complexity of post-disaster tourism.

This qualitative case study based on data gathered from face-to-face interviews aimed to be exemplary, meaning to do more than merely document a case. Instead, it aimed to achieve this by producing insightful work that went beyond the technical aspects of the methodology (Beeton, 2005). According to Yin (1994) exemplary case studies are atypical, significant, complete, consider alternative perspectives, display sufficient evidence, are composed engagingly, of general public interest, and combine discovery and theory development. In this research, tourism in the wake of a disaster, especially one where the recovery process is still ongoing, is considered to constitute an

atypical case. Since earthquake-related tourism continues in Christchurch through disaster-related tours and attractions and the recovery process is still very much apparent in the central city, this case study is also of general public interest. Finally, little research has been conducted on disaster tourism experiences and discursive processes associated with post-disaster tourism advertising. Thus, a qualitative case study methodology aided in both theoretical development and discovery, as well as providing a broad research design applicable to the two main research objectives.

## **3.2 Methods**

The following section discusses the details concerning methods used in this research: 1) recruitment of interview participants and qualitative interviews, 2) participant observation, 3) thematic analysis 4) and critical discourse analysis, respectively.

### **3.2.1 Recruitment**

It was a distinct possibility that local participants were still affected by the psychosocial impacts of disaster. Due to this, special attention was paid to the ethics review process. Before fieldwork was conducted, an ethics review was approved the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics board.

Five groups of participants were recruited and interviewed through purposive and snowball sampling methods. The five groups were: tourists; local residents; tourism industry professionals other than front-line staff; tourism industry professionals who were front-line staff; and advertising professionals. A distinct interview guide was developed for each group though there were many overlapping sections (See Appendix for interview guides). Questions asked of the groups focused on their perceptions of the devastated central city, reasons for traveling to Christchurch, personal connections to the area, emotions felt seeing the devastated CBD, and thoughts on earthquake commemoration.

Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants from among groups of tourists and local residents because a purposeful selection of individuals aided in understanding the specific phenomenon at hand, i.e., disaster tourism. Purposive

sampling assists in ensuring credibility since information-rich cases are sought after, rather than a random sampling of participants (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). The interview process consisted of approaching tourists and local resident groups while they were walking in the devastated central city. They were consciously or unconsciously partaking in self-guided disaster tourism since destruction and vacant spaces were evident nearly everywhere in the CBD. The majority of visitor and local resident participants were approached outside the Christchurch Cathedral in Cathedral Square and interviewed outside the structure's cordon. All interviewees gave permission to be recorded using a handheld recording device. Initially, it was expected that I would recruit research participants while on board disaster-themed tours in the CBD. However, in the field, plans deviated to on-the-spot interviews in the CBD. This shift occurred since recruiting attendance on board the disaster themed tours proved problematic. On the spot interviews were recognized to be more effective and appropriate.

Key informant interviews with tourism industry professionals, front-line staff, and advertising professionals were conducted at a location of the participant's choosing, typically their personal office or a coffee shop. Tourism industry professionals and advertising professionals were recruited through emails made out to their respective tourism organizations, which is considered key informant sampling. Snowball sampling occurred in two instances. First, a tourism industry professional in a management position put me in touch with a tour guide within the same organization. Second, a person employed with a transitional organization put me in touch with a founder of a volunteer organization. Since key informants were also residents, they were also asked additional questions from the interview guide for locals. Questions ranged from asking the participant to describe their role within their company, to speak about their perception of Christchurch tourism before and after the earthquakes, if they believe visitor interest in the earthquakes will fade, and how they communicate disaster-related topics to visitors (see Appendix A).

### **3.2.2 Qualitative Interviews**

Of the sets of interviews that were conducted in the Central City, 16 were with visitors and 10 were locals. Four groups were comprised of a local and a visitor, while the remaining 13 interviewees were interviewed individually (Table 1). Interviews with tourists and visitors ranged from 2 minutes to 7 minutes.

It is important to note that many of the locals visiting the central city, often accompanied by a visitor, were unfamiliar with the devastated environment of the CBD and only came to the central city to show it to their guests. Interviews with tourism industry professionals, front-line staff, and advertising professionals were face-to-face interviews that ranged in length from 45 minutes to two hours (Table 2).

**Table 1**

*Interviews with Locals/residents and Visitors*

<b>Type of group</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Visitor alone	4
Local alone	2
Visitors (multiple)	4
Locals (multiple)	3
One local/one visitor	4
<b>Total number of interviews</b>	<b>17</b>

**Table 2**

*Interviews with Industry professionals, front-line staff, and advertising professionals*

<b>Type of group</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Transitional organization	2
Tourism industry professional/tour guide	1
Tourism industry professional	3
Tour guide	1
Public health specialist	1
Volunteer organization	1
Advertising professional	1
<b>Total number of interviews</b>	<b>10</b>

### **3.2.3 Data Interpretation: Thematic analysis.**

Braun and Clarke (2006) believe that a theme “captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of *pattered* response or meaning within the data set” (p. 82). Before themes were identified, interview transcripts were first transcribed without outside aid, and then thoroughly read and reread. Rather than being determined deductively from the literature, meaning theory-driven, codes were inductively determined, meaning data-driven (Braun and Clarke, 2006). For qualitative interviews, Braun and Clarke’s (2006) phases for thematic analysis were used, which consists of the following steps: first, data familiarization (including transcription, reading, and re-reading data); second, initial code generation; third, searching for themes (gathering codes into themes); fourth, theme review (including the generation of a thematic map); fifth, defining and naming themes; and sixth, report reproduction.

### **3.2.4 Participant Observation.**

Participant observation activities were conducted on the following commercialized attractions: Welcome Aboard’s punting tour, tram tour, bus tour, gondola; Red Bus and Canterbury Museum’s Rebuild Tour; Canterbury Museum’s Quake City earthquake exhibition; and Christchurch Tours earthquake tour. Participant observation was employed to enable the researcher to gain a detailed understanding of the site at its particular time and place (Kearns, 2010). An in-depth interpretation of disaster tourism was gained through first-hand observations and participation on behalf of the researcher. Bryman, Teevan, and Bell (2009) maintain that the researcher must gain a certain level of familiarity with the research setting to put the participants’ perspectives into context. Two of the interview participants spoke at length about early and late versions of an earthquake-themed tour by Red Bus, i.e. the Red Zone tour and the Rebuild Tour, respectively. By partaking in disaster tourism myself prior to the interviews, I was able to speak at length to interviewees about their own experiences as earthquake visitors at attractions and on tours, or about their perception of disaster tourism in the central city. Notes taken on tours were not analyzed. Instead, they were

used as a reference point to compare with interview data, specifically interviews that referred to earthquake tours in Christchurch.

### **3.2.5 Critical discourse analysis.**

Tourism scholarship draws most heavily from business and economics, which abstracts many cultural and social practice studies (Tribe, 2006). Since economics is dominant in tourism business studies (Tribe, 2004), it is evident that many tourism professionals value rational and analytical approaches to marketing. However, valuing ‘rational’ knowledge stifles other discourses. Discourse analysis is a social approach to textual analysis, and is a technique frequently employed for the examination of constructions or representations such as for tourism destinations the chief interest here (see Ateljevic and Doorne, 2002; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). Central to the concept of discourse is that groups or peoples within a society have the authority to represent others; moreover, certain ways of talking about a subject are accepted while others methods are rejected (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). For example, tourism marketers can control a potential visitor’s initial impression of an area through advertisements.

Influenced by the work of Michel Foucault, discourse refers to the ways in which language organizes, shapes, and influences knowledge and practice (Tonkiss, 2004). Moreover, discourse explores how systems of knowledge convince people about meanings, or what exists in the world, attitudes, which drive what they say, and practices, which determine what they do (Waite, 2010). According to Foucault, knowledge and power are indivisible since all knowledge is discursive and all discourse is saturated with power. Further, a persuasive discourse relies on assumptions and claims that the knowledge underpinning it is true (Rose, 2012). The basis on which this “truth” is claimed varies throughout history, and is dubbed a *regime of truth* (Rose, 2012). There are two broad approaches to discourse analysis, one that is *descriptive* in character, which focuses on the particulars of how language works, and the second, dubbed *critical discourse analysis*, which delves into social problems, political issues, and controversies (Gee, 2011). This research is concerned with the latter approach as it sought out, through supporting documents and interviews, the particulars of why an advertisement was

created in a certain way, what was the logic in its creation, and what elements were left omitted within marketing campaigns.

Tourism scholarship often views power as something that functions in a top down manner. In other words, tourism marketers have power over an image created for a destination. For instance, a common thought in the market positioning line of work is that “perception is reality” (Chacko and Marcell, 2008, p. 229). Ries and Trout (1993) believe that the general approach to positioning is to manipulate what is already in the mind and re-tie preexisting connections, rather than create something different and new. Power has also been examined extensively through the language of “hosts and guests” milieu, often investigating the way each group perceives the other. Foucault, however, views power as web-like, and not merely as something that a minority at the top exercises over a majority (Pritchard and Morgan, 1998). Foucault’s understanding of discursive power is that power is ‘productive’ and creates new events, outcomes, agents, and actions, rather than merely being restrictive, controlling, and ‘repressive’ of existing agents and outcomes (Berg, 2009). Foucault does not see a need to speculate on an agent of power since subjects are “constituted in and through the power of discourse” (Berg, 2009, p. 217). This contrasts with views such as Marxism, for instance, that sees power as something that operates in a top-down manner from the superior ruling class to the inferior working class. However, power is most effective when it “is exercised by everyone, yet by no one in particular” (Berg, 2009, p. 217). Furthermore, power most successfully operates when it is anonymous. The aim of discourse analysis is to understand what social groups benefit from discursive power, but also how subjectivities are established in power relations (Berg, 2009). In this research, discourse analysis is employed largely to examine the power that tourism marketers have in creating a representation of post-disaster Christchurch and its people through advertisements.

Intertextuality is important in discourse analysis because texts are meaningless individually; they are only made meaningful through their interconnections with other texts, as well as in considering how they are produced, disseminated, and consumed (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). Although discourses exist beyond texts, they are exposed

within them (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). The belief that texts are meaningless individually is contrary to tourism research that uses discourse analysis to explore one advertisement or text at a time (e.g. Yan and Santos, 2009). This research assumes that the social context must be explored in order to understand the phenomenon at hand, in this case, post-disaster tourism.

In order to unveil a compelling narrative, specific interrelated texts were chosen in this research to expose an array of discourses pertaining to post-disaster tourism in Christchurch. These texts include the following: six All Right? YouTube videos, three research documents generated for or associated with the All Right? mental health campaign, 21 videos on the Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism (CCT) YouTube channel from 2010-2015, and annual reports by CCT from 2009-2014. The discourses are juxtaposed with the themes generated from all of the interviews, which were analyzed using thematic analysis. For the visual advertisements, Rose's (2012) steps for discourse analysis for visual materials were used, which include the following seven steps: looking at sources with fresh eyes, immersing yourself in your sources, identifying key themes in your sources, examining their effects of truth, paying attention to their complexity and contradictions, looking for the invisible as well as the visible, and paying attention to detail (p. 220).

In looking at data with *fresh eyes*, the researcher's preconceptions are put aside when first approaching the visual materials. This was aided by the fact that I was an outsider to Christchurch. The advertisements were viewed before I departed for my fieldwork, and viewed several times after I returned from Christchurch. The fourth step, examining *effects of truth*, refers to how a distinct discourse works to persuade (Rose, 2012, p. 215). To see how persuasion worked in advertisements, I not only looked at persuasion tactics in the advertisements themselves, but also delved deeper into the logic behind visuals by coding and analyzing supporting documentation in annual reports by the CCT, as well as conducting interviews with marketing professionals on why the advertisements were created and what they aimed to achieve. In this thesis, critical

discourse analysis was a method used exclusively in the second paper, which is found in Chapter Five.

## Chapter Four

### **Multiple Perspectives on Tourism Recovery and Rejuvenation Post-Seismic Disaster: Christchurch, New Zealand<sup>1</sup>**

#### **4.1 Abstract**

A qualitative case study explores multiple-perspectives on disaster tourism related experiences after the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand. Interviews with locals, tourists, industry, and community leaders investigate the complexities and tensions of tourism recovery and rejuvenation post disaster. Initial responses to the Christchurch earthquakes included creation of disaster-themed attractions. More long-term response required decisions, processes and procedures for how to re-develop destroyed attractions, and what to do with empty lots resulting from removal of destroyed buildings. The multi-perspective approach identified issues extending beyond the disaster tourism experience, including disasters as opportunity for urban change, and post-disaster government organizations posing barriers to creative possibilities in urban regeneration. Disaster tourism is often studied through a ‘dark tourism’ lens with primary foci on attractions and site-centric perspectives. This paper advocates a broader approach encouraging study of “disaster tourism” through a focus on stakeholder tensions and referencing ‘a broader picture.’

Keywords: disaster tourism, dark tourism, tourism experience, multiple perspectives, Christchurch, earthquakes

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<sup>1</sup> This Chapter is organized and written in academic journal manuscript style in preparation for submission for peer refereed publication. As a consequence, there is some duplication of materials already presented in Chapters 1 through 3.

## 4.2 Introduction

A growing number of tourism scholars examine travel to sites of death, disaster, or destruction, a phenomenon often referred to as ‘dark tourism’. This includes study of disasters caused by natural hazards, for example the Indonesian tsunami (Rittichainuwat, 2008) and Hurricane Katrina (Pezzullo, 2009; Pezzullo, 2010; Robbie, 2008). Few if any studies so far have explored cases where a seismic disaster and subsequent destruction generates visitor interest, as is the case after the Christchurch, New Zealand earthquakes of 2010 and 2011.

The purpose of this study is to explore the disaster tourism phenomenon through empirical research on the perceptions of tourism by visitors, locals, and industry professionals. The study takes a holistic approach by exploring multiple stakeholder perspectives to uncover possible broader social and political dimensions perhaps indivisible from the disaster tourism phenomenon. The research reported builds on dark tourism literature advancing understanding concerning tourism experiences and motivations when visiting a disaster site in recovery.

A tourism destination is often considered “dark” due to attributes at the site itself, such as exhibits that commemorate death, dying, or destruction. Research often assumes that visitors are drawn to dark sites by dark motives. i.e., morbid curiosity regarding death and dying. However, Smith and Croy (2005) argue that individual perceptions play a large role in determining whether tourists are drawn by dark motives (as cited in Biran et al., 2011). However, the dark tourism literature is also critiqued for not explicitly taking visitor perspectives, experiences, and motives into account (Biran, Poria, and Oren, 2011; Dunkley et al., 2011). Scholarship pertaining to dark tourism consumption and its motives therefore remains underdeveloped both theoretically and empirically (Stone, 2005).

With reference to visitor perceptions of heritage sites, Poria, Butler, and Airey (2003) contended that future research should focus on the subjective perceptions and behaviour of tourists, which they consider central to the tourism experience (Uriely,

2005). Furthermore, Poria et al. (2003) found that motivation, but also potential behaviour of visitors, were linked to a tourist's perception of the site. Along similar lines, perceptions are key in understanding the complexity of the disaster tourism experience.

This paper starts with a review of dark tourism as an approach to studies of disaster tourism, making the case that a broader research approach may be required. It goes on to explore disaster tourism experiences and motives as well as recovery strategies through empirical research capturing the multiple perspectives of disaster associated tourism through interviews with both tourists and locals including planners and industry professionals. Based on what we learned, discussions then focuses on the role of tours of the disaster sites, and tensions between government and grassroots initiatives to rebuild Christchurch and its tourism industry.

Christchurch, New Zealand experienced seismic activity that began with a fault rupture on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010, which caused significant damage to Christchurch and surrounding areas. Fortunately, no fatalities resulted from this earthquake. However, a second quake, on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 recorded a 6.3 Moment magnitude (Mw) and devastated the city and killed 185 people. Known as the second most deadly "natural" disaster to impact the nation (Simmons and Sleeman, 2012), the second earthquake was the first in New Zealand's history where a state of national emergency was declared. The disaster had significant repercussions for the city's tourism industry in large part due to physical damage to a significant part of commercial accommodation, the Christchurch Convention Centre, the Central Business District (CBD), shopping centres, and visitor attractions.

### **4.3 Literature and New Contribution**

Scholars have examined curiosity about death as a motivating factor for travel to dark sites, or when exploring the relationship between the tourism experience and broader socio-cultural aspects of death and dying (Seaton, 1996; Seaton, 2009; Sharpley and Stone, 2011; Stone, 2012; Stone and Sharpley, 2008; Walter, 2009). Biran et al. (2011) consider this a one-sided, demand-oriented perspective, which assumes that all

visitors travelling to a dark site are motivated by some degree of dark curiosity or an underlying attraction to death. Conversely, Lennon and Foley (2000) believe that travel to sites of death, disaster, or atrocity usually constitutes but a small part of a trip to satisfy curiosity. Not all scholars therefore believe that a fascination with death is a prime motivator for dark tourism consumption. Slade (2003), for example, does not believe that an inherent attraction to death exists with all dark tourism experiences, and Biran et al. (2011) believe that dark tourism should be re-conceptualized as “purposeful movement to spaces displaying acts and sights that are commonly absent from the social realm, which involves a sense of unease in seeing or participating in them” (p. 837). Furthermore, such sights and acts may not involve death and, if so, the death may not be macabre in nature. According to Robb (2008), dark tourism will always include a mix of tourists who seek different experiences and are driven by different motivating factors.

Tourist subjectivity and the individualized tourist experience is a significant topic for contemporary researchers (MacCannell, 2001; Wearing et al., 2010), especially for scholars who identify with broader cultural developments often referred to as postmodernity or late modernity (Uriely, 2005). The tourism experience refers to the meaning or significance attached to the experience in relation to everyday life (Sharpley and Stone, 2011), and relates to Wang’s (1999) concept of ‘existential authenticity’, which differs from objective and socially-constructed authenticity. Instead of questioning whether toured objects are real, existential authenticity is concerned with the authentic self. Wang (1999) believes that the authentic self is a product of the conditions of late modernity, an ideal that manifests as a way to counteract the rational order. In tourism, existential authenticity assumes that visitors feel more authentic when engaging in activities that they perceive as outside of everyday life (Uriely, 2005). Likewise, Robb (2009) insists that tourists seek experiences of culture and history that “transcend the sanitized version of reality that tourism has traditionally offered” (p. 51).

Most dark tourism studies avoid the perspective of the local community, instead favouring the opinion of visiting tourists and attraction employees. This implies that locals as tourists in their own town, and other locals’ perspectives and insights are

ignored. This research views the avoidance of the local perspective as highly problematic, believing that the local viewpoint is especially important in the disaster context, since it is the local residents who are influenced most profoundly by disaster recovery, and since persistent psychosocial issues for locals can lead to mounting anguish towards tourism-related activities especially where the consequences of the disaster itself are the main attractions. The research reported here therefore contributes by investigating and reporting perspectives from multiple stakeholders including local tourists and residents, planners and industry representatives.

One of the early responses to the Christchurch earthquakes was to initiate tours of the impacted areas, a response to disaster struck regions that while common, is not without controversy. Pezzullo (2009) and Robbie (2008) explored narratives given by tour companies in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, which included the messaging given on Gray Line's 'Katrina tour', where a tour guide provided commentary on a guided bus trip through the devastated regions of the city. Pezzullo (2009) believes that such tours are suitable spaces to discuss the consequences of a disaster beyond a dark, sensationalist narrative. In other words, interpretation can be a positive way to educate tourists on the complexities of disaster response and recovery for residents. In Katrina's case, the tour narratives avoided any local perspective thereby evading many of the intricacies surrounding guided tours following a major disaster. There has however been some local backlash against Katrina tours in New Orleans, A lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward lifelong resident proclaimed, "We're fed up and tired of them coming through the neighbourhood like we're some sideshow...after all the suffering we've been through, we deserve more respect than this" (Plaisance, 2012).

Many disasters receive extensive media coverage that can elicit feelings of concern and grief from those living outside the affected area. But when news coverage ceases, outsiders often forget the long-term needs of an affected area (Pezzullo, 2010). Pezzullo (2010) believes that disaster tours, conducted through commercial tour operators, can help to sustain memories and aid in the long-term recovery process. In support of this argument, Coats and Ferguson (2013) found that many Christchurch residents supported

disaster tours because they wanted the earthquake event to remain in the consciousness of outsiders. One resident stated, "...the more outsiders who are coming in and realizing what we are living the better. They go away and are talking about it so that people will continue to help. We need help" (Coats and Ferguson, 2013, p. 43). Sustaining memories for tourists is an important factor to consider in disaster tourism. This paper builds on existing literature by exploring locals' perspectives on tours offered at different stages after the Christchurch earthquake.

Little scholarship has examined the phenomenon of the post-disaster recovery of urban tourist spaces and central city regeneration (Amore and Hall, 2016), which is a gap that this research aims to address. Amore and Hall (2016) spoke of the slow recovery in Christchurch's central city, which was largely due to an overemphasis on anchor projects by agencies responsible for post-disaster urban redevelopment strategies and by national government policy makers. The Christchurch city council led planning inspired a vision of a more sustainability city by the public; however, this community-inspired approach was quickly dwarfed by the national government rebuild strategy (Amore and Hall, 2016). While Amore and Hall (2016) effectively speak of the necessity of an inclusive approach to long-term urban regeneration in the post-disaster context, they do not include the perspective of the transitional projects in the CBD, which this research considers key in discussions of the Christchurch rebuild. Finsterwalder and Hall (2016) explored the temporary nature of transitional and pop-up projects in Christchurch's CBD. Transitional architecture and pop-up projects are a part of the post-disaster renewal process, and allow for residents to maintain their relationship to the CBD (Finsterwalder and Hall, 2016). An issue with such projects is determining how they fit into the long-term rebuild so that the value they bring to a location is not vanquished (Finsterwalder and Hall, 2016). This research aims to argue the importance of the inclusion of transitional players in the post-disaster long-term city rebuild.

Research conducted on site revealed urban rebuilding initiatives as a politically-charged subject of relevance to both, locals and tourists. Tensions focused primarily on what to do with vacant lots, and who would have a say in what a future Christchurch

might look like. By reporting on this tension, this paper also adds insights and lessons from locals' perspectives regarding the process of urban rebuilding with relevance to tourism post-earthquake disasters.

#### **4.4 Methods**

This research addresses multiple perspectives and develops a better, more nuanced understanding of post-disaster tourism realities through a qualitative case study methodology. In-depth analysis of interview data gathered from multiple stakeholders yields insights into the disaster tourism phenomenon and pertinent context that goes beyond merely documenting a case, aiming for what Beeton (2005) calls 'exemplary' status by producing insightful work that extends beyond the technical aspects of the methodology. Yin (1994) notes that exemplary case studies are atypical, significant, complete, and consider alternative perspectives, of general public interest, and combine both discovery and theory development. The case reported here is considered atypical since earthquake-related tourism continues years after the disaster, and the recovery process is still very much apparent especially in the central city of Christchurch.

The lead author lived in Christchurch for seven months during fieldwork, in order to gain familiarity with attractions including the disaster-related tours, and to conduct participant observation during post-disaster tourism activities. All attractions that contributed to the livelihood of interviewees therefore were attended by the lead author, and many of the attractions have also been visited by the second author both pre- and post- the disaster. The range of attractions that formed the core of the analysis included a heritage related earthquake tour in the CBD, other earthquake themed tours, an Avon River boat tour, an earthquake-related exhibition, and the CBD. All data were collected between January and August of 2014.

An ethics review was undertaken before fieldwork commenced in January 2014. Purposive sampling was utilized in interviews with residents and tourists. Potential participants were approached in the Central Business District (CBD) where vacant spaces, destroyed buildings, and earthquake damage were heavily apparent. These

interviews were largely conducted on the spot within Cathedral Square and adjacent to the fenced-off earthquake damaged Christchurch Cathedral.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with five different types of participants: 1), tourists; 2), residents; 3), tourism industry professionals who are not front-line staff; 4), front-line staff; and 5), advertising professionals. In total, 17 different interviews were undertaken with locals and tourists. Some interviews took place with multiple individuals so that a total of 29 individuals were interviewed as shown in Table 1. The table shows that four residents visiting the central city were accompanied by a tourist visiting them in the city.

**Table 1 - General Public Interviews (Locals and Visitors)**

<b>Type of group</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Visitor alone	4
Local alone	2
Visitors (multiple)	4
Locals (multiple)	3
One local/one visitor	4
<b>Total number of interviews</b>	<b>17</b>

In-depth interviews were also conducted with key stakeholders who included tourism industry professionals, tourism business owners, tour guides, and those involved in the transitional movement (see Table 2). These interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. All interviews were taped, transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

**Table 2 - Interviews with key stakeholders**

<b>Type of group</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Transitional organization	2
Tourism industry professional/tour guide	1
Tourism industry professional	3
Tour guide	1
Public health specialist	1
Volunteer organization	1
Advertising professional	1
<b>Total number of interviews</b>	<b>10</b>

#### **4.5 Christchurch Tourism Before and After the Earthquake**

Before the earthquakes, Christchurch had become known as the gateway to New Zealand’s South Island in part because of its role as a regional transportation hub including an international airport, in part because the city and adjacent Canterbury region are tourism destinations by themselves. The city and adjacent Canterbury held many attractions, restaurants, accommodation, a conference centre, and events that tourists would partake in.

The Avon River meanders through the centre of Christchurch, and the South Pacific Ocean borders the Eastern portion of the city, with two local adjacent harbours on the Banks Peninsula, Lyttelton Harbour and Akaroa Harbour which served as ports for tourists to enter the region via cruise ship. The city’s Central Business District (CBD) featured an eclectic mix of heritage buildings, parks, and modern buildings from the 1960s, 1980s, and early 21<sup>st</sup> century (Swaffield, 2013). Bordered by four major roads, the CBD was approximately six square kilometers in size, a third of which is Hagley Park. With more than 3000 hectares of parkland, Christchurch was well known as “The Garden City.” Tourism was viewed as one of the newer forms of wealth creation over the 1980s

and 1990s in Christchurch, largely due to the decline of jobs in manufacturing and pastoral sectors in New Zealand (Schöllman et al., 2001).

Christchurch's tourism infrastructure and attractions sustained very significant damage during the two earthquakes and associated aftershocks, with not all parts of the city and adjacent neighborhoods being impacted equally. While the Cathedral received a devastating blow during the September 2010 earthquake, and the February 2011 event further desecrated the building, it is still considered to be a major icon of the city, and extensive debate continues today about whether the Cathedral should be partially salvaged or entirely scrapped and rebuilt. Currently, it stands in partial ruin, protected by fences. Tourists mill around Cathedral Square, many stopping to take a photo of the fallen icon through the fence and reading the informative signage in the Square.

After the February earthquake, much of the CBD was placed behind a security cordon given the extent of damage and unsafe buildings. The cordoned area was patrolled by the New Zealand Defence Force. Given exclusive access inside the cordon, a tour called the 'Red Zone' tour, which was later renamed the 'Rebuild Tour', started up soon after the 2011 quake as a partnership between the Red Bus company and the Canterbury Museum. This tour allowed residents and visitors to view the devastation in the CBD by city bus. The Rebuild Tour continued after the cordon in the CBD was removed on June 30, 2013, after 857 days of closure.

Other disaster-related guided tours set up after the quakes, including Christchurch Tours, which offers a 'Red Zone Tour', and advertises itself on a sign as '3.0 hours of the most amazing earthquake sights you will ever see'. This tours differ dramatically from the 'Red Zone' or 'Rebuild' tour. The Canterbury Museum provides a guide and driver for the Rebuild Tour, and stays within the CBD limits. The Christchurch Tour is privately operated, significantly longer, and operates out of a large passenger van; in addition to the CBD, it navigates through earthquake-affected neighbourhoods. Conversations with locals and media coverage made it evident that the distinct European heritage style of the pre-earthquake central city had polarized the local population before the quakes. While

some locals enjoyed the pre-earthquake style of Christchurch, others felt it was in need of drastic rejuvenation. In line with this sentiment of a lacklustre pre-earthquake CBD, an advertising sector respondent stated, “Let’s glamorize where the cafes are, that’s the tourist track, but bearing in mind that [Cathedral] Square is being left to die virtually, the South of the city has been left to die” (Schöllmann et al., 2001, p. 312). A local tourism business owner and former artisan shop owner described Christchurch as being a ‘buzzy city’ with culture and vibrancy, but revealed how he had watched areas of the CBD decay prior to the earthquakes:

I saw it from the time I was there from 2004 till 2010 when the earthquake hit. Over 6 years I watched it slowly die. So it wasn't, you know, the earthquake that killed the central city, it was dying.

(Tourism Business Owner, Christchurch Resident)

For some, the earthquakes provided an opportunity for positive change in the central city. An operations manager for a tour company states, “some of the streets where the buildings went down, good riddance. It was rubbish. And it was C class tenants. They're below par businesses that didn't really do anything.” While some participants believed the atmosphere of the central city to be one of decay, others believed the undesirable pre-quake ambiance could be attributed to low-end businesses.

A co-founder of a post-earthquake organization with aims to rejuvenate vacant sites, referred to as ‘transitional’ organizations in this research, describes the city before the earthquake as ‘conservative during the day with a dark side at night.’ Examples of this dark side include drug taking, violence, and alcohol abuse. Even after the earthquakes, she still sees the city as having violent dark undertones and states:

Christchurch had a lot of issues before the earthquake here. The first earthquake made it ten times worse, because people would stay away. There were buildings with fences around them, some buildings collapsed. It was a sad time and people were quite shocked because no one expected there to be an earthquake in Christchurch.

(Co-founder, Transitional Christchurch Project, Christchurch Resident)

This co-founder also believes that Christchurch's local population has become more open minded and willing to embrace change. However, despite these advances, she believes that aspects of Christchurch's 'dark side' have worsened, such as an increase in drinking and the rate of depression. Despite the earthquakes' negative impact on the central city, both socially and physically, on a different note, the Christchurch earthquakes provided a blank canvas for new possibilities in the downtown core.

For example, an early effort to return business to the CBD was the establishment of a small mall made out of shipping containers, called the Re:Start Mall. This mall soon became a significant tourism attraction in itself. The 'Quake City exhibition' by the Canterbury Museum opened in February 2013 in this Re:Start Mall. It includes earthquake artifacts and many displays that commemorate notable citizens, and the efforts of emergency response teams. A museum official, speaking about how the Quake City exhibition came to fruition following the February 2011 earthquake noted:

We developed this exhibition that brought in a lot of iconic items from the city, called Canterbury Quakes. But then we had, on our schedule, and we couldn't change it, a major international exhibition coming in...we had to dismantle that exhibition, but we were very aware that there was still a need in the city for something that told the story because there was just nothing that told the story. So, it was a break for the museum to undertake something that had a more commercial flavour to it...we didn't want it to be 'shrinal' in any way.

(Museum Official, Christchurch Resident)

The museum official believes that the Christchurch earthquakes will continue to appeal to visitors through an example of sustained visitor interest in other another part of New Zealand. She gives the North Island city of Napier as an example, "[the city was] annihilated in the 1930s with their major earthquake, and rebuilt itself in an art nouveau style. People are still interested and visit that museum." Due to this, she does not think that disaster tourism is a fading interest, believing that "it will always be something."

Concerning Christchurch's role as a transportation hub, the airport managed to remain open and the major highways leading in and out of the city remained functional or were soon repaired. However, following the seismic events, both adjacent harbours

closed. Akaroa Harbour has since reopened, but Lyttelton Harbour remains closed to cruise ships.

#### **4.6 Perceptions of the Post-Disaster Destination**

Coats and Ferguson (2013) explored how Christchurch residents perceived the commercialized disaster tours following the 2011 earthquake. They found that residents were generally accepting of the disaster tours and empathetic towards tourists. However, many believed that it was unacceptable for tourists to view the damaged residential areas in Christchurch, one participant stating, "...rubbernecking over our misery, and that is where the real misery is, the suburbs" (Coats and Ferguson, 2013, p. 53). Since only one commercialized disaster tour was in operation when their study was conducted, local opinions on commercialized disaster tourism may change significantly over time. Further, earthquakes in Christchurch pose a unique challenge to Cantabrians since the rebuild of particular suburbs of the city, including the CBD, has been slow.

Many tourists who visit the CBD participate in self-guided tours of the devastated central city. Many of the tourists were shocked or surprised that the CBD was still in such a state of disarray some three years after the media coverage of the February disaster. In-depth interviews with locals involved in the tourism industry revealed nuanced perspectives of disaster tourism. For instance, some locals had an adverse reaction to the early-commercialized tour that ran through the CBD:

Not everyone enjoyed the red zone tour, my wife for example was upset to see the damage because we were in our house when the earthquake struck and we had to evacuate that night, and we lost our church. And lost my optician and my doctor, they were killed in the buildings that collapsed. So for her it was not a pleasant experience and she'd been reluctant to go on that red zone tour until pretty well near the end when they've said, well it's changed so much that we're now going to call it the rebuild tour. So it was upsetting for her and I know that others felt the same way about it. I thought it was done well, I thought they did it appropriately.

(Tour Guide, Christchurch Resident)

The Red Zone tour offered an entirely different narrative to the later 'Rebuild' tour. A tour guide in Christchurch elaborates on the difference between the two:

It had to be a different narrative because [on] the Red Zone tour, you went past many more buildings that were being crunched up. Now, far more empty spaces, which the red zone tour went past, but they were still buildings being demolished, so you saw the destruction, the demolition in the red zone tour. You see the emptiness, in a way, the lack of progress, in the rebuild tour, because there are so many empty spaces, that there's no rebuilding yet, so although we're seeing some, I think the difference between the two is the rebuild tour shows a lot more empty spaces where there should be rebuilding at some time in the future. The other one showed much more destruction and demolition going on everywhere you looked.

(Tour Guide, Christchurch Resident)

Other tours began to capitalize on disaster. A business owner, who offers a commercial earthquake tour, spoke of how he dealt with local backlash that his tours received in the earthquake-affected suburbs of Christchurch. He speaks about being confronted while on a bus in an earthquake-ravaged suburb by a local man:

I was fully accepting, accepting of what [he] had to say... and I pointed out to him that I was not on any government financial assistance, and that I'd lost most of my business and I was doing the best that I can to help myself. And I pointed out that the people onboard were contributing to the rebuild of the city.

(Tourism Business Owner, Christchurch Resident)

Some disaster tourism literature speaks about the curiosity humans have to viewing the devastation following a disaster. However, few studies explore the nuances of this complicated phenomenon. Through in-depth interviews with multiple stakeholders, the intricacies of disaster tourism and voyeurism are revealed, especially during short-term recovery in Christchurch:

...there were red zone areas, not where people were excluded, but where the land was zoned red. And many people were still living there, and they put signs up, please keep out we are trying to get our lives back to normal. Because they had, what some call rubberneckers, they were driving around looking at all of this liquefaction, the broken houses and everything. And that to me was the disaster tourism, it wasn't organized disaster tourism, it was just people rubbernecking to see how bad things were in certain geographic areas.

(Tour Guide, Christchurch Resident)

Many studies refer to voyeurism by tourists or outsiders. However, perhaps due to the nature of the disaster in Christchurch where suburbs were affected disproportionately, it was local residents who were ‘rubbernecking’ within their own city:

That certainly annoyed people when you did get locals. I guess it was rubbernecking. And they weren't there to help, it wasn't like the student army who came with wheelbarrows and shovels. Now they helped dig all of the silt out and make things habitable. These were ones just looking. So, I can imagine if I were living [in New Orleans] and I saw the Katrina disaster tours, I wouldn't be very well disposed to anyone who came on one of those tours. I'd give them a shovel and say right, you come to see what's its like, now get working.

(Tour Guide, Christchurch Resident)

For those locals who admit to seeking self-guided disaster experiences in the severely damaged suburbs, feelings of guilt could ensue:

I brought my cousin, when my cousin came down from Auckland, we previously lived around the river, and he was really keen to see the family home. So we took him on the road, it was like off roading, it was just wicked. And I felt absolutely revolting doing it. He was keen, you know, he needed that memory. But, you know, the devastation that those people were living in, and you know, having to empty their toilets onto the tanks on the street and you know, they were surviving, they weren't living, and you felt really voyeuristic being in there. I said to him, ‘we've got to go, I can't handle dealing with this.’

(Museum Official, Christchurch Resident)

In terms of long-term city recovery and disaster tourism, a founder of a post-disaster volunteer organization likes that the CBD is open and enjoys that people come and take photos. On the tourists taking photos of the devastation in Christchurch, he states, “Don't be insensitive and take a photo of someone crying, but I have no problem with that... in a disaster situation it shouldn't be one of the wee things we get hung up on.”

Through conversations with those who participated in commercialized disaster tours, and through self-guided voyeuristic activities following the earthquakes, it is apparent that disaster tourism is a point-of-interest for both tourists and locals. Projects that aim to get people back into the central city, e.g., ‘pop-up’ projects such as the shipping container Re:Start malls and transitional projects such as a temporary music venue located in a vacant lot, reflected positive ways of channeling local energy in post-

disaster space. These aspects of the post-disaster central city are a focus and part of disaster tourism which will likely continue while physical damage is still readily apparent in the central city and in some heavily damaged suburbs. The elements of innovation and creativity evident in the transitional and ‘pop-up’ projects are also rejuvenating the CBD, and providing a fresh start from the drab central city that many locals expressed distain for.

#### **4.7 Rebuilding Christchurch**

Interviews conducted for this study, as well as local media coverage observed while living for seven months in Christchurch, brought to light that urban rebuild of Christchurch had become a politically charged subject concerning both, locals and tourism. Following the second earthquake, the Christchurch Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) was established to lead post-earthquake recovery in Christchurch. Reporting to the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Authority, Hon. Gerry Brownlee, CERA was a government-established Departmental Agency established to coordinate and lead the earthquake recovery effort. The Christchurch Central Development Unit (CCDU), a component of CERA, was then tasked with the central city rebuild. Fundamental to the CCDU is the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan (CCRP), The Blueprint plan was developed by a professional consortium working with the CCDU over a 100 day period. Their main task was to consolidate the central city so it functions in an effective manner, largely by defining the location of several anchor projects in the CBD (CERA, 2012). This was justified since single purpose organizations were believed to be the most efficient in rebuilding a city following a disaster (Anderson, 2014). Notably, CERA chose to forbid future building on liquefaction prone land or areas subject to rock fall; such areas were dubbed as ‘red zoned’ land. In July 2012, CERA published a ‘Blueprint’ for the CBD released by the Central Christchurch Development Unit (Wesener, 2015).

Some locals have been opposed to the very dominant role CERA played in the rebuild. When the CERA legislation was first introduced, one reporter stated that it would “strip Christchurch of the last remnants of its democratic processes” due to ultimate

control by a single minister (Hopkins, 2011). In an opinion piece for a local newspaper, a Christchurch citizen laments, “the government has made it clear it wants a private sector led recovery with government and Council as facilitators... We were told that unleashing the much-claimed efficiency of the private sector would see the city transformed more quickly than a central democratic plan could facilitate” (Minto, 2016).

Despite the extensive plans to rebuild the central city, progress remains too slow for many, as much of the current CBD is still vacant space. In November 2015, the New Zealand Treasury criticized the ‘bold’ recovery plan in two separate reports concerning government investment and the performance of major investment projects (Stylianou, 2015). The plan declares that the delivery of anchor projects in central Christchurch by the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery team to be in poor standing and designated as ‘red’, meaning that they believe the rebuild project to be unachievable. The treasury believes that the rebuild has “major issues with project definition, schedule, budget, quality and/or benefits deliver that does not appear to be manageable or resolvable” (New Zealand Treasury, 2015, p. 26). The treasury recommended that the project would need to be re-scoped or the viability of it reassessed. In response, Brownlee stated that the report was produced by mere “bookkeepers,” and that “they should spend more time boo-keeping rather than trying to second-guess the Government’s strategy” (Stylianou, 2015). Further, Brownlee believes that the report criticizing the recovery plan demonstrates the “arrogant bureaucratic attitude” at the core of the Wellington-based Treasury (Stylianou, 2015). These feelings of top-down government bureaucracy control were also echoed by some in the Christchurch transitional movement people about CERA, largely attributed to their non-inclusive attitude towards their grassroots organizations.

In this research, the “Transitional Movement” refers to those associated with innovative and creative projects attempting to contribute to rejuvenation such as: Gap Filler (<http://www.gapfiller.org.nz/>), the Festival of Transitional Architecture (<http://festa.org.nz/>), and Greening the Rubble (<http://greeningtherubble.org.nz/wp/>). However, many other creative projects around the city have also come into existence. In large part, individuals associated with these efforts view themselves as the testers and

innovators who want to channel their knowledge into the rebuild. The origins of the transitional movement or ‘temporaries’ as the projects ensuing from them were called arose following the September 2010 earthquake their main purpose was to buy time before the permanent structures went in:

We also saw the vacant spaces appearing which were like gaps at that point. It was like building, building, gap, building, building, gap...blocks of emptiness. There was a conversation about architecture and design that was happening in Christchurch ...discussions around what would that city look like, what would the dominant architecture style be. No one wants to go to an ugly city ... We felt like we need to slow down, we need to look at what this will be long term and we need to think about temporaries of them. Because temporaries can buy time for the long-term build. It was about one year before the rugby world cup was coming here. ... There was a concern, certainly among my peer group, that there would be a rush to rebuild and fill these gaps because all these tourists were coming with their money and we had to make sure that the city was functioning so we better hurry up.

(Co-Founder, Transitional Organization, Christchurch Resident)

It is anticipated that the ‘temporaries’ will be a part of Christchurch for some time to come. A notable figure in transitional Christchurch believes that the earthquake will be a part of the city’s identity for “100 years at least” since the rebuild will take decades and there will be vacant spaces created by the earthquakes for years to come. Further, many or some landowners told her that they couldn’t afford to build for the next 10 years.

Conducting research in Christchurch following the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011, Wesener (2015) was the first to research (public) open space associated with temporary post-disaster urbanism. Wesener (2015) believes that urban sustainability and community resilience are strengthened by temporary urban spaces in the post-disaster environment, namely because such spaces are platforms for community participation and action following a disaster. The revitalization in Christchurch’s urban centre has been described as “younger, [and] more edgy,” largely due to community-led initiatives that aim to temporarily activate vacant sites, organizations such as Gap Filler and Greening the Rubble (Swaffield, 2013, p. 8). Many embrace the creative, youthful Christchurch. However, many residents, older citizens especially, feel that “the vacated central city has

been like an amputated limb, and the loss of familiar settings has been sorely felt” (Swaffield, 2013, p. 8).

At the same time that ‘temporaries’ arose in the city’s vacant spaces, Christchurch City Council established a “Share an Idea” campaign, an exercise to engage New Zealanders, ex-pats, and future residents to brainstorm ideas for an inspired future city (<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/the-rebuild/strategic-plans/share-an-idea/>). Over 100,000 ideas contributed and this translated into a plan for the central city, launched in August 2011 (Swaffield, 2013). However, some felt that the campaign did not foster innovation and creativity, as many of the ideas generated by the campaign were not funneled into the city blueprint. A woman involved with post-disaster volunteer organizations and the transitional movement felt that the city blueprint is a bit controlling, and it stamped out a few of their initiatives that were happening in the city.

The transitional movement is a core element in a distinct division that has developed within Christchurch. Bottom-up organizations, characterized by place and community, are sharply juxtaposed with top-down government-led programs, which are focused on recovery and characterized by rationality (Swaffield, 2013). The transitional city has been a unique tourism draw for the area as it is one of the rare instances where a visitor can see a city rebuild following major disaster. Despite being developed to serve locals, the “transitional” city has drawn notable attention:

So the New York Times article where Christchurch was ranked number 2, that’s amazing. And that’s, y’know, the things that they mention there are Gap Filler and Greening the Rubble and, I think the Cardboard cathedral, maybe Re:Start. So it’s interesting to go, hey, if it wasn’t for this activity, who would be coming here? I’ve noticed the tourist numbers this summer have been quite high I feel. I’ve seen lots of tourists around during the week and on the weekends in the city you see a mix of tourists and locals, but if you took away those tourists, we’d be dead.

(Co-Founder, Transitional Christchurch, Christchurch Resident)

The co-founder finds it interesting that newspaper articles pay more attention to temporary projects than to the city blueprint. Transitional Christchurch may appeal to visitors due to perceived authenticity, she muses, “in a world where everything is so

homogenized, authentic expressions of identity really appeal I think to many people.” Despite a lack of monetary support, the transitional movement feels creatively supported by the city council:

It’s difficult for city council’s to experiment because they’re working with public money, and people get very upset about what they perceive to be a waste of public money. So, we can experiment at a very small scale and hopefully we can, people can learn from what we’ve been doing. So, the relationship with council’s good and they support us with some funding, which is great.

(Co-Founder, Transitional Christchurch, Christchurch Resident)

With regards to CERA, she states that their relationship is “nonexistent”.” She believes that CERA views them as organizations that only contribution city beautification without a role to play in the future of Christchurch. She feels they were a bit naïve to think that CERA would work with them. They hoped that their “temporary transitional projects would intersect with the long-term rebuild projects. On their relationship with CERA, the transitional movement participant states that “[it’s] pretty nonexistent...we don’t work with CERA particularly. They’re not easy to work with; they’re very bureaucratic. In theory, they say that they support temporary use on their land that they’re acquiring for the blueprint project.” Moreover, there is a belief in their organization that CERA views them as just “kids playing in the sandpit,” while the government and developers are doing the “real stuff.” She continues, “they like what we’re doing, but they see what we’re doing as a kind of umm...feel-good beautification. Making stuff look better, making people feel better. They don’t, don’t think they see it as really having a role to play.” On the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan (CCRP) she states:

The whole thing is quite problematic, it’s a very grand vision to the city and there are some interesting elements to it, but ultimately it is a lot of big projects and I’m more interested in what is going to connect things together.

(Co-Founder, Transitional Christchurch, Christchurch Resident)

Although not related to the transitional movement, another tourism business owner felt that local government created unnecessary barriers as well:

I'm not saying I don't agree with democracy, but in this case the bureaucracy and red tape and general garbage that's going on this phenomenon, um, because I sort of come from an entrepreneurial line of thinking, I think that it would have been better to have allowed the entrepreneurs to do what they had to do rather than tying their hands every time they turned 'round. And I think we would have had more progress quicker.

(Tourism Business Owner, Christchurch Resident)

In the CCRP document under 'A Transitional City', CERA (2012) states that the transitional initiatives “will be necessary to support the recovery short term” (p. 97). An illustration in the document shows a before and after image of the city on the recovery spectrum. While temporary art installations and gap filler projects exist in the before image, they are entirely non-existent in the 'after' depiction of the city (Figure 1).

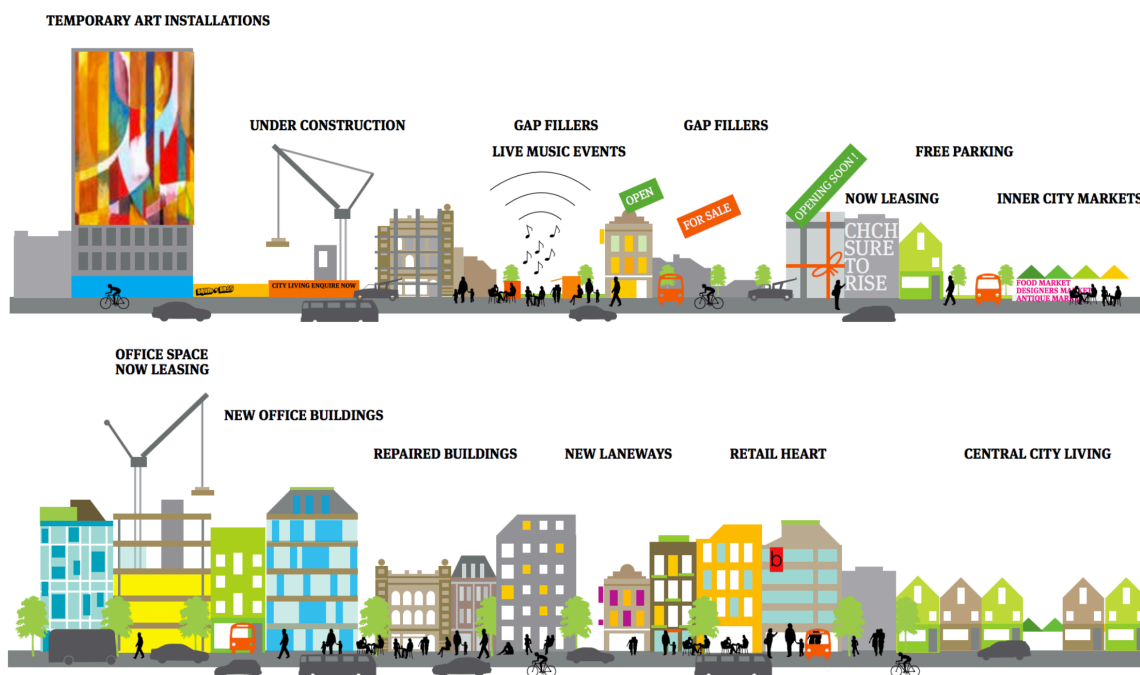


Figure 1. Graphics depicting early stages (above) and latter stages (below) of central city recovery in Christchurch. (CERA, 2012, p. 98)

Some in the tourism industry believe that the 'transitional' city is nothing more than temporary. With respect to pop-up shops such as restaurants and the Re:Start mall, a tour operations manager believes that some of them have lasted beyond their welcome,

stating, “well, they may be something because [the tourists] have nothing else to look at at the moment.” Elaborating on his point-of-view, he continues, ‘We really want to see the next step, well I do anyway. What I find when you see tourists dragging their bags through rubble to try and find a bus stop. Jesus, are we a poor country? We shouldn't be. And it gives the appearance we are. But that's lifted up than where it was 6 months ago, it's a lot better now.’

A leader of a post-disaster volunteer organization believes that the city blueprint is detrimental to the future of Christchurch. Since New Zealand is a small country, he believes that many decisions made by the government are regrettable given that the government is inexperienced at rebuilding an entirely new city centre, while being motivated to try to keep land values high. He notes that this tension still exists between the government and various organizations in Christchurch, stating, “you probably just need to be less political about it...I haven't seen any other disaster in the world that's been as fiercely political, and a disaster recovery that matters so much as a national priority of our government.” Further, he regrets his decision to make his organization apolitical in nature. In retrospect, he feels they could have had a more significant impact if they had a political agenda.

Despite the negative backlash from many residents, the government-led rebuild in Christchurch's central city will be an issue for some time to come. CERA came into power in April 2011 through legislation that also contained a Sunset clause of five years (McCammon, 2016). In April 2016, CERA ceased and was replaced by Regenerate Christchurch (<http://www.regeneratechristchurch.nz/>), which is jointly owned and funded by the council and Crown, and will exist until June 2021. It focuses on development of New Brighton, residential red zones, and Christchurch's CBD. Former Christchurch mayor Gerry Moore believes that CERA should not have been accountable to Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee, but should instead have answered to an independent board (Hume, 2016). Gerry Brownlee's title changed in April 2016 from Earthquake Recovery Minister to the Minister supporting Greater Christchurch Regeneration (Cook,

2016). Further, although CERA disbanded, many former employees found work within the Regenerate Christchurch initiative.

Examples of political repercussions following ‘natural’ disasters or crises are numerous and convoluted (see Wisner et al., 2004). Pelling and Dill (2009) divide impacts into two distinct categories: one, an increased shift from local to the global scale through privatizing disaster reconstruction efforts; and two, transformative change to political regimes in that they become more egalitarian. This research did not delve into which camp the Christchurch rebuild would fit into. It became very obvious, however, that some locals including those directly concerned with tourism believe that the Christchurch rebuild has been mismanaged. It also would appear that political forces are seeking to stamp out the innovative and creative forces that community initiatives inspired after the earthquakes, in part due to lack of support and high rigidity within the government-led rebuild.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

Commercialized disaster tourism and self-guided tours of devastated areas offer experiences that both residents and tourists are often curious to participate in. According to many residents, Christchurch’s central city was in need of a drastic rejuvenation. The earthquakes provided a blank canvas offering many possibilities for regrowth, and transitional organizations stepped in with creative, innovative ideas to invite locals and tourists back into the CBD.

Multiple perspective interviews on disaster tourism reveals the value of organized disaster tours. Furthermore, face-to-face interviews from multiple stakeholders allowed for pertinent contextual elements to come to the forefront. Pop-up and transitional projects are argued to put a largely positive spin on a devastating event by celebrating the vacant spaces created by disaster and filling them with creative initiatives. These projects have allowed the central city to become more youthful and edgy, and most importantly, they are led by the grassroots community and are therefore heavily supported by residents. However, in the case of Christchurch, the bureaucratic rebuild organization

CERA appears to have judged these transitional projects as temporary at best, being largely unsupportive of such initiatives, creating a top-down bottom-up tension between the community-led transitional organizations and the government-led rebuild organizations. The link between urban change and creative regeneration in the wake of disaster is often an understudied element of the post-disaster city. This research strives to highlight the importance in developing the knowledge base of barriers to positive urban change in the post-disaster environment.

As illustrated by the interviews from this study, disaster tourism is a complicated phenomenon, arguably far more complicated than ‘dark’ tourism literature makes it out to be. When examining disaster tourism from a non-business perspective, the focus deviates from the ways in which tourist numbers could be increased to consider other intricacies of tourist experiences and perceptions. Reducing the subject matter to a supply-oriented perspective, or to the examination of a sole attraction, misses the point of how disaster tourism is so utterly complex. In future scholarship the pursuit of studies that consider a more holistic approach to both the phenomenon and the context of disaster tourism is crucial.

## Chapter Five

### Critical Discourse Analysis of Tourism Marketing and Local Realities Following Major Seismic Disasters: Christchurch, New Zealand<sup>2</sup>

#### 5.1 Abstract

Through an examination of an interrelated set of texts and interviews, this paper explores how tourism advertising campaigns represented Christchurch, New Zealand and its inhabitants following the earthquakes of September 2010 and February 2011. Discourse analysis is applied to see how the regional tourism marketing agency, Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism (CCT), approached destination branding post-disaster. The dominant discourses arising from the tourism industry contradict the notion of a local “reality,” accessed through interviews with residents, visitors, and tourism industry professionals, and the psychosocial recovery of Cantabrians represented through examination of a local mental health campaign. This paper argues that post-disaster representations of Christchurch as depicted in tourism advertisements do not shed sufficient light on the complexity of the recovery process following a major disaster.

**Keywords:** Disaster tourism, discourse analysis, tourism advertising, mental health

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<sup>2</sup> This Chapter is organized and written in academic journal manuscript style in preparation for submission for peer refereed publication. As a consequence, there is some duplication of materials already presented in Chapters 1 through 4.

## 5.2 Introduction

This paper reports a critical discourse analysis of destination branding and its underlying strategies after a major disaster. It advances Young's (1999:375) observation that the representation of a destination post-disaster by the tourism industry after a disaster is likely to conflict with the physical 'realities' that exist locally. It investigates a perceptible disconnect between the themes of resilience and vibrancy commonly showcased in advertising campaigns following a disaster, against the more nuanced local views of post-disaster tourism reflecting loss and change. In the process, the research aims to fuse a business approach to post-disaster tourism with disaster recovery literature that is concerned with the psychosocial impacts of disaster on the local population.

Christchurch, New Zealand and the surrounding Canterbury region were well known as a popular tourism destination before a 7.1 magnitude earthquake in September of 2010 damaged many buildings, but without fatalities as a direct consequence. A series of aftershocks, most notably a 6.3 magnitude earthquake that occurred on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011, created significant further damage, this time killing 185 people. Ongoing aftershocks continued to jolt the city for more than two years following the initial event. Different neighborhoods of Christchurch were disproportionately impacted by the seismic events, with those in the northern and eastern parts of the city being most affected. After the February 22, 2011 earthquake much of the Central Business District (CBD) was placed behind a security cordon that required a security patrol for 857 days (Backhouse, 2013b). In the meantime, certain suburbs of Christchurch, largely located in the western parts of the city, remained relatively unaffected.

Impacted areas are slowly recovering. In 2014/15 when this research was undertaken, the CBD had started rebuilding, but was simultaneously still going through a 'deconstruction' process, a term preferred to 'demolition' in the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority vernacular. Instead of a CBD marked by the residual scars of destruction, it is now a city centre characterized by numerous vacant lots. This historically popular tourism destination, characterized today by rubble and empty spaces,

that will largely remain that way due to a slow rebuilding process, poses a challenge to tourism marketers.

Using discourse analysis, this study explores representations of Christchurch from tourism advertisements from the post-disaster period after 2010. Since advertising discourse aims to persuade rather than inform (Wang, 2000), specific attention is paid to how the multiple identities of Christchurch were constructed through advertising, and why particular representations were deployed to certain market segments. The dominant tourism marketing discourse is juxtaposed against the local ‘reality’ of recovery, as messaged through the discourse of a mental health campaign launched in Christchurch following the February 2011 disaster.

While many tourism studies look at tourism marketing solely from a business perspective with a focus on attracting visitors and revenue, this paper aims to provide a more holistic view of the post-disaster destination. It does so by looking at broader social, cultural, and political themes that might also be worthy of paying attention to when developing key advertising messages to promote a region recovering from disaster to tourists in order to remain authentic.

The paper begins with a literature review of tourism marketing and the linkages between discourse analysis and tourism advertising in the post-disaster context. Following the methods section, the paper then examines three distinct aspects of post-disaster tourism in Christchurch: regional tourism organizations and tourism marketing, visitor perceptions of the central city, and a mental health campaign in Christchurch. A discussion section concludes the paper.

### **5.3 Literature Review**

Tourism advertising, considered as the outreach element of tourism marketing, and the broader realm of tourism marketing, or preparing the product for the marketplace,

play key roles following disasters. In post-disaster tourism destination environment, advertising is used to counter negative perceptions and enhance positive aspects of places, peoples and products (see Chacko and Marcell, 2008; Gotham, 2007; Scott, Laws, and Prideaux, 2008). For instance, Chacko and Marcell (2008) examine strategies undertaken by tourism marketers to reposition New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina largely to counteract the negative images shown by the national media. Fortunately, Pearlman and Melnik (2008) found that negative destination images decay over time and visitor perceptions improve. Furthermore, distance influences perception with those living further away having more positive views of places than those living nearby (Pearlman and Melnik, 2008).

Mair, Ritchie, and Walters (2014) review literature exploring marketing strategies that emerge following a crisis or disaster, highlighting the importance of such promotional strategies. They observe that the main goals of what might be called post-disaster marketing includes re-establishing confidence in a destination and rectifying misperceptions about the disaster. Physical damage to a destination's infrastructure and facilities are often remedied quickly with long-term challenges including repairing a poor reputation and enhancing the destination image (Mair et al., 2014). Commonly used tourism marketing messages following a disaster include aspects of: attitudes around 'business as usual', community readiness, messages of solidarity, celebrity endorsement, confidence restoration, using an unsafe message as an asset, curiosity enhancement, short-term discounts, and visitor testimonials (Mair et al., 2014, p. 89). "We are open for business" is identified as one of the more prevalent strategies, but also a strategy which Walters and Mair (2012) believe to be one of the least credible messaging types.

Significant research in tourism has focused on marketing, branding, and the creation of destination representations. However, such promotion is grounded in power relations, dominance, and subordination (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Used in marketing and branding strategies, tourism representations are constrained by cultural, political and historical discourses (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). Thus, tourism scholars who examine the social construction of space through destination marketing are

encouraged to consider wider social and political factors. Since economics is dominant in tourism business studies (Tribe, 2004), it can be assumed that many tourism professionals value the rational and analytical approaches to marketing. However, valuing 'rational' knowledge, such as putting a strong focus on how to attract visitors to a destination, can stifle other discourses, including the ways in which tourism advertisements are created and the 'reality' they portray.

Image creation in advertising involves a process of developing a discourse, which plays an influential role in a tourist's choice of destination and travel motives (Wang, 2000). However, tourists are not passive recipients of advertising discourse since they can challenge with their own discourse, e.g., word-of-mouth. According to Wang (2000), travel decisions occur because people are consciously or unconsciously persuaded by discourses that they have been exposed to. The discursive environment of advertising can exert a strong influence on a tourist in terms of shaping ideas about what experiences they should expect, where they should go, and what they should see at a potential destination (Wang, 2000).

Further, images and the representations of places, peoples, and products are often used to target key markets. Like image creation, 'market segmentation' is a process that emphasizes difference. In addition to economic viability, Pritchard and Morgan (1998) argue that segmentation is an inherently ideological process. The marketers' perceptions and priorities determine which segments are valuable, and which are ignored.

Pritchard and Morgan (1998) stress that through marketing images, marketers create identities that represent particular ways of seeing reality, and that reinforce and reflect certain societal relationships. The marketer presents the unfamiliar, and in so doing, certain interpretations are promoted while others are discarded (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Thus, the potential tourist is steered towards a representation of a place and its people that is a constructed 'reality'. Power relations structure and contextualize the representation of particular places and people at certain times (Lidchi, 1997). Not only do different discourses influence different forms of tourism, a specific type of

tourism may also involve several discourses simultaneously (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). For example, ‘exoticism’, or drawing attention to foreign elements of another culture to draw tourists, may be more influential in Oriental tourism than other discourses (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Thus, it is crucial to identify the specific discourse that is central to a specific type of tourism during a certain time.

Post-disaster tourism in Christchurch was the subject of a case study by Orchiston and Higham (2014) who interviewed six key New Zealand stakeholders involved with tourism at the regional and national levels (Christchurch to New Zealand) in order to examine tourism disaster response, recovery marketing, and knowledge management related to Christchurch. Their article provides an extensive review of information on disaster response and short-term recovery by key players in the tourism industry in New Zealand and Christchurch. Readers are referred to this paper for background information. Further, Orchiston and Higham (2014) cover the benefits and necessity of (de)marketing in the context of disaster; in other words, emphasizing the importance of marketing the entire Canterbury region rather than putting focus on Christchurch, a severely damaged city. Orchiston and Higham (2014) are mainly concerned with providing a ‘how-to manual’ for organizations reacting to forthcoming disasters. They provide only surface level explanations of themes drawn from CCT’s tourism advertisements, largely derived from interview data with key informants in the industry. The study reported here not only adds to their work, but also brings another perspective.

Temporary urbanism, referred to as ‘transitional projects’ in this research, can be created due to significant vacant spaces in cities. Temporary use of vacant urban sites can be spurred by a number of factors, which include de-industrialization, shrinking populations, economic disaster, or a major natural disaster (Wesener, 2015).

## **5.4 Methods**

Discourse analysis is a social approach to textual analysis and reflects a technique that is frequently employed for the examination of constructions or representations of

tourism destinations (see Ateljevic and Doorne, 2002; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). Influenced by the work of Michel Foucault, ‘discourse’ refers to the ways in which language organizes, shapes, and influences knowledge and practice (Tonkiss, 2004). Central to discourse is the idea that groups or peoples within a society “have authority to represent whilst others are represented and certain ways of talking about a subject are accepted whilst others are rejected” (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998, p. 35). In the post-disaster context, tourism marketers could portray a local population in certain ways and not others, for instance by emphasizing desirable characteristics such as congeniality and sense of humour, and toning down aspects such as local tension and mental health issues.

Much scholarship that analyses tourism advertising through a sociological lens examines print work, notably travel brochures (see Ateljevic and Doorne, 2002; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001; Young, 1999). The reality is, however, that nowadays many regional tourism organizations have limited funding for print work, so that online advertising has become a substitute phenomenon that allows tourism marketers to reach a broader audience at a reduced cost. For this reason, this study focuses primarily on on-line outreach materials, and in particular, YouTube.

Discourses are revealed in a variety of texts (intertextuality), which are made meaningful through interconnections with other texts, as well as in relation to how they are produced, disseminated, and consumed by individuals and society (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). The aim of discourse analysis is to explore how texts are *made* meaningful through processes; further, discourse analysis sheds light on how processes aid in the configuration of a social reality by *making* meaning (Phillips and Hardy, 2002).

Since the advertising media that were examined in this analysis were visual in nature (i.e. YouTube advertisements), Rose’s (2012) seven steps for discourse analysis using visual materials were employed in this study. These steps consist of the following: 1) looking at sources with fresh eyes, 2) immersing yourself in your sources, 3) identifying key themes in your sources, 4) examining their effects of truth, 5) paying attention to their complexity and contradictions, 6) looking for the invisible as well as the

visible, and 7) paying attention to detail (p. 220). The fourth step, examining *effects of truth*, refers to how a distinct discourse works to persuade (Rose, 2012, p. 215). This research goes an additional step beyond Rose as background information pertaining to the production and logic of these advertisements was collected through the analysis of annual reports and interviews with tourism marketers.

While some discourse analysis research simply analyzes one tourism advertisement in depth and in isolation (see Yan and Santos, 2009, for example), the research undertaken here assumes that the social context must also be explored in order to understand the phenomenon at hand, in this case, post-disaster tourism and its marketing. Thus, in order to unveil a compelling narrative, specific interrelated texts were chosen to expose an array of discourses pertaining to post-disaster tourism in Christchurch.

The data for this discourse analysis were drawn from 21 YouTube videos on the Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism (CCT) YouTube channel from 2010-2015, annual reports by CCT for the period from 2009-2014 (the period from a few years before the disaster to a number of years after the disaster, and the year data for this research was collected), and six different mental health initiatives run under the label of the “All Right?” campaign. This includes video data gathered from their YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWNYOVNrp3R2FVDQcXsZDFg>) and three research summaries generated for, or associated with, the All Right? Wellbeing Campaign (<http://allright.org.nz/is-canterbury-all-right/>).

The discourse analysis of tourism advertisements or associated documents is supplemented with ten in-depth interviews with Christchurch citizens, in particular, those working in tourism marketing, for a specific tourist attraction, or employed by a mental health organization. Contradictory discourses to tourism advertising are ensured through face-to-face interviews with 17 groups of tourists and locals (some groups consisted of two participants). All interviews were conducted at a location within the Central Business District. The majority occurred at Cathedral Square, immediately adjacent to the damaged, but still powerful former emblem of the city - the Christchurch Cathedral.

## 5.5 Tourism Organizations and Tourism Marketing

Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism (CCT) is the Regional Tourism Organization for both Christchurch and the surrounding Canterbury region. Christchurch City Council primarily funds CCT, according to a marketing professional with the organization. Further, the marketing professional declared that they primarily use online marketing to reach potential visitors, largely due to limited funding. Further, the organization does a small amount of print work, which mostly targets billboards, bus backs, and selected magazine spreads.

Following the initial September 2010 earthquake, the CCT YouTube channel featured visitor testimonials and endorsements encouraging visitors to continue to come and see the area. Notable New Zealanders were featured in these YouTube campaigns such as: the then Mayor, Bob Parker (now Sir), and the then Prime Minister, John Key. These low budget video clips aimed to restore confidence and enhance perceptions that the city was still ‘open for business’ and that it was ‘business as usual.’ This tourism messaging aimed to counter negative perceptions that were being created by media coverage of the earthquake.

In addition to being low-cost and quick to disseminate, the low-key nature of the tourist and notable citizen testimonials could be perceived as being more authentic to potential visitors than a polished, edited advertisement. Both Sir Parker and Prime Minister John Key testified that the city was indeed safe to visit and relatively unaffected by the earthquake, with the exception of a small part of the city. In this short testimonial video on the CCT YouTube channel, Parker stated: “We're built to code to earthquakes in this country and nobody was injured in the earthquake in our city, which is remarkable.” (CCT YouTube). Echoing the mayor, Prime Minister John Key stressed: “Building standards are so high in New Zealand that there was no loss of life despite the fact that we had an earthquake that was the same measurement on the Richter scale as the one in Haiti” (CCT YouTube). At this time, the messaging was that seemingly stringent

earthquake building codes and sound engineering saved the city, and that there were no reasons why it should not be ‘business as usual’.

The subsequent earthquake of February 2011 challenged this viewpoint and associated messaging since tragically, 185 people were killed largely through the collapse of two buildings in the Central Business District (CBD). Surprisingly, both visitor testimonials and endorsements by notable public figures made after the initial earthquake remained posted on the YouTube channel following the more devastating February earthquake. An outsider with little awareness that Christchurch had experienced multiple earthquakes could easily have assumed that ‘business as usual’ reflected the state of affairs after the much more devastating second earthquake.

The February earthquake caused significant loss of capacity to accommodate and manage tourism in Christchurch, including substantial damage to Christchurch’s overnight lodging capacity and its tourist attractions, considerable loss of conference spaces, closure of a considerable part of downtown behind a security barrier for an extensive time (857 days), and substantial damage to Christchurch’s two cruise ship ports, Lyttleton and Akaroa located in townships near the city. Given the vast devastation within and near Christchurch and the associated inability to accommodate previous tourist numbers, the CCT made a strategic shift, focusing marketing strategies on areas outside of the main city, towards the wider region of Canterbury, and also to New Zealand’s South Island more generally. A marketing professional for CCT said that the city of Christchurch started to be viewed as a ‘slippery gateway’ to the South Island, meaning that tourists were not encouraged to stay there. The strategy of downplaying Christchurch, while focusing more on surrounding undamaged areas has been referred to as ‘(de)marketing’ by Orchiston and Higham (2014).

Nevertheless, the inner hub of the city, cordoned off and patrolled by the New Zealand Defense Force, became an attraction in its own right. A few months after the devastating quake, in November 2011, the Christchurch Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) gave access to one tour company to show visitors the extent of damage inside

the cordoned area. This tour was originally called the 'Red Zone' tour, and later rebranded as the 'Rebuild Tour'. It functioned as a joint operation between the Canterbury Museum and Red Bus, and facilitated both residents and visitors being able to pay to view the devastation in the CBD along with guided commentary by a museum representative. According to a tour guide working in Christchurch, while the Red Zone tour emphasized a theme of 'devastation' largely captured by the deconstruction process, the latter Rebuild tour reflected perceptions of empty spaces and lack of progress.

Other tours started to capitalize on the Christchurch earthquakes. This included for instance 'Christchurch Tours', which emerged as an earthquake tour advertised as "3.0 hours of the most amazing earthquake sights you will ever see." This tour has been in operation since September 2010, immediately following the first earthquake (Mathewson, 2013). In addition to guided tours, Christchurch's CBD now boasts a commemorative exhibition called Quake City, which is operated by the Canterbury Museum in a centrally located area known as the 'Re:Start container mall.' This is a 'pop-up' commercial project consisting of shops housed in shipping containers. This instant-mall opened in February 2013, and includes earthquake artifacts, scientific explanations behind liquefaction, and videos of citizens recollecting seismic events, for example. However, these disaster-themed attractions located in the city are not mentioned in any of CCT's YouTube advertisements.

Following the extended period of (de)marketing that occurred for the whole of Canterbury, a new advertising campaign began with the 'Christchurch Reimagined' platform launched on September 26, 2012. CCT put out a media release to Australian public resource and marketing agencies asking them how they would market a broken city on a "very limited budget." A tourism representative explains that the agency that was awarded the contract did '24 hours in Christchurch' where a man took 'selfies' with things that were starting to happen in the city in the background. The campaign was launched to target the Australian market since visitor numbers had fallen dramatically following the 2011 earthquake.

CCT also sought the services of an external company to survey Australians about Christchurch. They learned that Australians felt pity for the city and felt sorry for the local population. In order to counteract these perceptions, the tourism marketers explain their logic going into the ‘Christchurch Reimagined’ campaign. The message is: “hey look, we're actually a pretty resilient bunch, we're saying come back.” In order to achieve this, the campaign largely plays on typical? Australia/New Zealand banter. Such banter is featured predominantly in the *Bob Thinks Big* campaign, a three-part video series where former Mayor Parker travels to Australia and asks various Australian residents for one of their large national icons to keep in Christchurch in hopes of luring visitors to Canterbury (Canterbury Tourism NZ, 2012). Although CCT (2013) indicates that perceptions were successfully changed as a result of this campaign, the Australian tourist market to New Zealand remains low, down by 40 percent since 2010 (2014 data), and “has yet to show signs of a convincing recovery” (p. 7).

Market segmentation is a process used by tourism organizations to divide a tourism base into categories based on factors such as geography or demography. For international arrivals into Christchurch in 2014, Australia brought in 209,077 visitors, while the next largest market, the United Kingdom, brought in 32,320 visitors (CCT Annual Report, 2014). Australia was identified as the main target of CCT in its 2013 annual report, with China as the second coveted market. China was a relatively new market for CCT, identified as a developing tourism market in 2010 in CCT’s annual report. To illustrate how much the Chinese market has grown, international arrivals into the Christchurch airport grew from 7,904 in 2010 to 17,488 in 2014 (CCT Annual Report 2010; 2014). Initially, marketing to China was through trade shows and through familiarization tours, which took groups for three days around Canterbury (tours included visiting locations such as Mount Cook, the highest peak in New Zealand, Lake Tekapo, and Terrace Downs, an upscale golf course). In 2013, the Chinese market became a significant segment for CCT as the annual report listed a specific tourism strategy as ‘Getting ready for China’. Under the heading of ‘rationale’, the document indicates, “Chinese travellers are becoming more sophisticated and are seeking better quality holidays” (CCT annual report, 2013, p. 7). In 2013, only 20% of Chinese arrivals to New

Zealand visited the South Island. In order to expand this market, CCT sought to get a direct air connection from China to Christchurch. In December 2015, China Southern Airlines began service between Guangzhou and Christchurch (Li, 2015). Besides transportation, another media tactic to attract the Chinese market in 2013 was a photo shoot with a notable Chinese celebrity, Yao Chen, on the shores of Lake Tekapo. Another strategy employed by the CCT was to provide information sessions to tourism professionals in Christchurch about how to get “China ready” (Li, 2015). Officials recognized that these two markets, Australia and China, needed different campaign messages since the message of a new ‘creativity city’ may be appealing to Australians, but less so to the Chinese. Chinese tourists are believed to be attracted more to conceptualizations/projections of the ‘traditional city,’ while the ‘transitional city’ is not considered to be a compelling draw for them.

Some cultures understand what we're going through here, and they understand those little quirky things. A little bit more of the western culture is, you know, they'll want to spend the time to talk to people and understand what happened to them and get to know the personal feelings behind it, and do that experiential kind of earthquake thing. And a little bit more that [is linked to] urban regeneration and the funky and the cool.

(Tourism marketer)

Certain news segments and exposé pieces written about life in Christchurch after February 2011 unpacked issues such as insurance woes, construction delays, and other negative aspects of the city following the disasters. A tourism marketer explains some of the challenges associated with marketing Christchurch:

I mean we battle every day the glass half full or half empty situation. But I guess, you know, from my perspective I deal with a lot of media. And media can be notoriously really negative about things...we don't shy away from what the city is. You can't. You drive through this city and you can see exactly what's wrong with it. So we've never tried to pretend that we're not broken.

(Tourism marketer)

The CCT YouTube channel features a segment from a television program on an Australian TV network. In this video, an Australian visitor asked the question, “is it right to visit there, but also, are they ready?” Answering that question, he found that the

innovation in the city and community spirit to be so positive that the city appeared ready to receive tourists. On the post-earthquake cultural landscape, the Australian newscaster enthusiastically promotes the city:

Everywhere we go in Christchurch, it's hard not to be impressed with not just the resourcefulness, also the spirit that seems to really unite this place. It seems like everyone's made a conscious effort to dust themselves off and make a fresh start.  
(Local newscaster)

When receiving help from CCT, the media often encounters only the most upbeat and arguably more recovered subset of the Christchurch population. Because when travel writers and journalists come to Christchurch intending to write a travel piece on the city, CCT looks to opportunities to offer aid in planning the writer's itinerary. Notably, journalism covering the post- earthquake city includes a piece by the New York Times on the 'creative rebirth' in Christchurch (Bergman, 2014). Further, the New York Times named Christchurch #2 on its list of 52 places to visit in 2014. The popular guidebook Lonely Planet named Christchurch number six to visit on a list of the 'Top 10 Cities for 2013.' In large part, their recommendation was due to the creativity and inventiveness the city had exhibited in the wake of the earthquakes, which, in large part, is attributed to the transitional movement in Christchurch. Many CCT advertisements include a screen image with the tag line excerpt from the Lonely Planet guidebook, "Christchurch, the ever-evolving city buzzing with creativity." However, despite these images of creativity and innovation that compel writers for the New York Times and Lonely Planet to write positively about Christchurch's accolades, the *Bob Thinks Big* element of the "Christchurch Reimagined" campaign largely fails to showcase this new, creative city since two of the three videos take place in Australia. Although advertisements speak of the creative and innovative projects around the city, they are not being depicted realistically within the context of a "deconstructed" city. Instead, themes of vibrancy and resiliency are showcased within tourism advertisements, which leads potential visitors to believe that the city is recovering quickly from the disaster. In reality, the Christchurch inner city is rebuilding in parts, but large tracts of the city are simply vacant spaces that will not be built upon for years to come.

In a report for local government, a specialist-consulting firm, the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER, 2011), gave strategic advice for tourism recovery following the February 2011 Canterbury earthquake. NZIER predicted the speed of recovery as fast to medium, or 1 to 1.5 years. Factored into this prediction was an idea that “visitors tend to have a ‘shorter memory’ for natural disasters compared to terrorism and disease events, and visitor numbers tend to bounce back pretty quickly” (NZIER, 2011, p. 4). Furthermore, their advice for future marketing campaigns was to highlight the theme of being ‘open for business’ (for the rest of New Zealand) and urging them to deflect their negative publicity into a positive spin (NZIER, 2011). Again, realistically the on the ground truth is that Christchurch will be visibly impacted by the disaster for significantly longer than was initially predicted.

Although memories of the disaster may fade for outsiders, tourists entering the CBD will be confused by the vacant spaces and clearly visible disaster impacts. Conducting focus groups with locals, Coats and Ferguson (2013) found that many Christchurch residents supported disaster-related attractions because they wanted the earthquake event to remain in the consciousness of outsiders to secure ongoing support in the recovery process. However, post-disaster advertising by CCT does not mention the seismic devastation explicitly, instead, it highlights innovative developments and the resiliency of the local population.

## **5.6 Local and Visitor Perceptions of the Central City**

Young (1999) suggested that images and messages selected to create the sense of an attractive destination for potential visitors doesn’t always depict an objective reality. This section seeks to evaluate that statement. It explores the alignment between how Christchurch was advertised after the disasters, what tourists thought about the city, and the local ‘reality’. Selected excerpts from interviews with locals and tourists are chosen to reveal, capture or convey a narrative that, at times, contradicts the dominant themes that were the focus of tourism advertising of Christchurch by CCT, supporting the notion that

a promotional marketing campaign does not necessarily accurately represent a “particular place or product, but rather a projected interpretation or mediated image of a place” (Young, 1999, p. 375).

Perceptions about tourism in a post-disaster environment reflect a complex phenomenon, affected by a myriad of factors. In the case of Christchurch, the physical damage caused by the disaster disproportionately impacted the city in different parts, and locals had different emotional responses and recovery times following the earthquakes and subsequent aftershocks. Many of the peripheral suburbs of Christchurch experienced little or no damage, and have either partly or completely been repaired following the earthquake, or are nearing completion in terms of damage recovery efforts. On the other hand, a number of the Eastern suburbs of the city and the CBD will be undergoing continued ‘deconstruction’ and subsequent reconstruction for years to come. Direct and personal experience with the earthquakes as well as the amount of damage and state of repair of the neighborhoods locals live and work in partially explain differing emotional responses to the earthquake, but also dramatic differences in local perceptions of Christchurch tourism post-disaster.

A former resident interviewed for this study who came back to Christchurch for the first time three years after the earthquakes said that he saw little to no damage near the airport where his parents lived. However, in reference to the CBD, he stated that “right here, it’s devastating.” A local couple that has lived in Christchurch for over 40 years acknowledged the post-disaster projects and artwork that aim to liven up the inner city. But, they believe there is still significant work to be done: “it’s a terrible mess, but they’re doing the best they can to sharpen it up a bit, but it’s pretty messy still.”

Some views of tourism are also heavily steeped in personal experiences tied to disaster. One participant working for a transitional movement organization in Christchurch, a woman who lost her home in the February 2011 earthquake, spoke about her perception of post-disaster tourism:

Part of me is like, it's great, tourism, you know, people come here and see something different. And the other part of me is like, I'm still grieving and I have friends who are still suffering. My mom really struggled with her house. People are just driving around my mom's old house that they built and just not grasping the magnitude [of the impact].

(Transitional movement representative)

Further, as a personal coping strategy, many locals have avoided the inner city in the wake of the disaster. A tourism business owner who operates in the CBD commented on locals failing to frequent the inner city:

We aren't getting enough of the locals into the central city. And I think that's a shame. I think that's a crying shame. That's part of my motivation, I suppose, is hopefully I can be one additional bit of zing that goes, wow, that was worth going into I'll go back in again. That's what I'm hoping.

(Tourism business owner)

Other Christchurch citizens echoed the notion that locals were avoiding the CBD. One woman mused, “Everyone lost people in here that they knew, so I don’t think you’ll find a lot of locals down here. But yeah, I think it has become a bit of a tourist spot, which is good for Christchurch I guess economy wise.” With regards to visitors, some locals believed that the CBD would not be an appealing destination. A local woman stated, “Most of the tourists I know say they won’t go to Christchurch, it’s too sad.”

Visitor perceptions of Christchurch were more nuanced than the themes of resiliency and lighthearted humor echoed in CCT’s tourism advertising campaigns. Shortly after arriving in Christchurch, two young women from Ireland indicated that they thought the amount of empty spaces in the CBD was “quite colossal” although it seemed that “a colossal amount of work [has] been done as well.” Despite this somewhat contradictory statement, they said that many of the buildings seemed “like they’ve been abandoned. Nothing’s been done yet.” Another woman who visits Christchurch annually spoke of the progress the city has made, “Up until this year, I come up every year, I just thought it’s really still looking like a bombed out city, but this year there’s not quite so much devastation. The buildings that are coming down are more cleared away while there are buildings going up. I’m impressed with the artwork around the city, which brightens

things up.” Her sister, a Christchurch local, had a more challenging time viewing the CBD, “It’s improving, but it’s very slow.”

Tourism advertisements of Christchurch and media articles written about the city highlight the innovative developments, creativity, vibrancy, and resilience of the population. However, tourists and locals entering the central city are often shocked by the long-lasting impacts of the earthquakes. Although the physical reminders of the aftermath of the disasters is readily apparent, deep psychosocial impacts were also triggered by the earthquakes that continue to affect Christchurch denizens. Three years after the disaster, the local reality does not appear to align comfortably with what marketing and the media report. The following section investigates a disconnect between the themes of resiliency and vibrancy showcased in CCT’s advertising campaigns against the more nuanced views of locals regarding the psychosocial impacts of disaster. It does so by focusing on a post-disaster mental health campaign put in place to help locals cope.

## **5.7 Mental Health Campaign in Christchurch**

Following the February earthquake the then Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister, Sir Peter Gluckman, released a briefing paper on local mental health recovery following the February earthquake, which outlined the psychosocial effects that the disaster likely would have on residents of the city (Gluckman, 2011). He outlined several distinct phases in the recovery process: first, an initial heroic phase; second, a honeymoon phase where people feel the situation will improve; third, a “long-term recovery and rehabilitation phase”, where people feel disillusioned and may be angry and frustrated at the length of the recovery process; and fourth, where people reach a new equilibrium (Gluckman, 2011, p. 2). His paper identified that individual recovery would be variable, with some locals proving to be relatively resilient, while others would struggle with numbness, despair, anger, and depression.

The briefing paper by Gluckman was a catalyst for an initiative that was put in place to think about and improve the mental health and wellbeing of the local population

recovering from the earthquakes. This ‘All Right?’ initiative was officially launched in February of 2013 ([www.allright.org.nz](http://www.allright.org.nz)) having been established jointly by the Canterbury District Health Board and the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand and receiving primary funding from the New Zealand Ministry of Health in partnership with other organizations. Part of the All Right? Wellbeing Campaign’s mandate is to conduct research into how locals in Christchurch and Canterbury are doing. This research then translates into action undertaken by All Right? to raise awareness and to create tools to improve mental wellbeing.

All Right?’s diverse projects and initiatives can be accessed by anyone on their website at <http://www.allright.org.nz/our-projects/>. To make sure All Right? would understand its constituencies and meet the right needs, a local market research firm was hired in 2012 to conduct interviews with key informants and community leaders. From those interviews, themes regarding post-disaster issues were derived, and then tested with representative focus groups. Additional themes emerged from those exercises that were then translated into a telephone questionnaire administered to 800 people in Christchurch and nearby communities. This produced “robust data” that shaped the All Right? campaign.

Some of All Right?’s thinking is based on five recommended actions for individuals to promote their own mental wellbeing: give, connect, be active, take notice, and learn. Although there are others, the All Right? campaign chose these in particular since they were not directly linked to social or economic status. These five ways to support wellbeing are communicated in various ways, including posters, YouTube videos, billboards, and events, with all messages carefully tested with the local community through interviews and focus groups to ensure that they resonate.

Some of the first messages that came up in consultation were, “it’s all right if you feel frustrated at times,” “it’s all right to feel lucky,” “it’s all right to feel overwhelmed.” Referring to these examples, one mental health representative stated:

That was about the feelings that people told us they felt and so we put those up as a way of validating and kind of reassuring that it is normal after a disaster to feel a whole myriad of [feelings], because in this disaster recovery cycle, you're all over the place.

(Mental health representative)

The same participant further noted that with an influx of funding, the mental health campaign was able to approach the local population in a slow and methodical manner. Although they initially experienced pushback from Christchurch locals, the All Right? Wellbeing Campaign was very much a local endeavor, and not something imposed by an outside agency from far away:

Before, someone said, ah it could be just some wanker in a windowless office in Wellington, you know, we don't want them telling us...so we think that if the campaign has been successful, it's because it's based on local research, it's run by local people, but it's also drawing on the international stuff, so it's international robustness with a local face... The All Right? campaign did not want to be intrusive whatsoever: we wanted our voice to be quiet. We didn't want to be strident ever.

(Mental health representative)

The psychosocial impacts of disaster are vast and varied, and it was important to the campaign to not be overly forceful in its messaging. Adopting a quiet, non-authoritative role aided in making messaging supportive rather than forceful to the still sensitive local population. She went on to make the point that while Cantabrians are emotionally intelligent, they do not appear to be very articulate about it. She spoke about how the campaign aimed to support the development of Christchurch to be a more emotionally literate culture:

We market it as All Right? as a question that starts a conversation about wellbeing, and it is all right to say no, I'm not all right. And there is help available for that. But just the act of sharing how we are is about, and just the act of asking yourself, am I all right?

(Mental health representative)

Mental health is a prevalent issue in any developed society, and particularly, among many Cantabrians in the wake of disaster. In line with the recovery predictions outlined

in the Gluckman report, one tourism business owner spoke about his personal recovery following the earthquakes:

A lot of people in Christchurch for the first year lived on adrenaline. They coped with things because you had to. Second year, I think you live on hope. Third year, you start to get disheartened, and wonder how long is this going to take? It's so slow, why isn't more being done, why are the insurance companies so slow at paying out? Why are the roads so hard to get around on? And so, what you accept or coped with in the first year, is harder to cope with say, three years after the event. And it seems to be very slow relative to what has happened elsewhere. But probably our experience, the physical location of Christchurch, being on a swamp, has made it so much harder to do any repairs.

(Tourism business owner)

The mental health representative for All Right? explained that when All Right? did an extensive review of disaster literature they learned that gaps in social inequity often widened in the wake of disaster. In the Christchurch context, they found this to apply as well. For example, they noted a clear differentiation in attitude and wellbeing between those whose insurance claims resulting from earthquake damage had been settled, and those who had not, which is evident in All Right?'s research summaries from 2013-2015. All Right? research staff identified that those whose claims had not been settled were more tired, angrier, and tended to have less hope for the future.

Another important factor that emerged in research undertaken by All Right? was the importance of local community resiliency and investment in cultural and social capital. All Right? found differences in rates and levels of recovery between neighbourhoods because of variations in degree of community resilience. Where funding for community organizations was higher, for example in the community of Lyttelton, resilience was also correspondingly stronger. In contrast, residents of areas with limited spending in community organizations, for example the suburb of Shirley described as an area of “grinding poverty”, struggled to recover following the February disaster. A mental health representative concluded that, “the message for us is to invest in cultural capital and social capital now, because that is an innate protector against disaster.”

Research undertaken by the All Right? initiative made it very clear that there were significant and ongoing issues with mental health and wellbeing associated with the earthquakes that, while more pronounced in some areas than others, could be considered to pervade the entire community. While tourism marketing campaigns focused on how resilient the local community was, through the underlying message of ‘business as usual’, the local reality was one of struggling to recover. It is natural and understandable that a local population will face need for significant and longer term psychosocial recovery after a major disaster. To make claims of ‘resiliency’, a predominant theme in Christchurch’s post-disaster tourism advertising, is counter to that reality, and runs the risk of adding stress to important efforts to promote the recovery of mental wellbeing. When asked about the theme of population resilience featured in tourism promotion advertisements a mental health representative answered, “Jesus, people are going to think, resilient, it's just like very, very tired.” Elaborating on that response, she also commented on her personal interactions with tourists returning to Christchurch, “In the first couple of years, I always tried to say, so pleased you’re here. I felt really grateful that people came back...I wanted them to know that we're grateful. But I don't know. People are going to feel ripped off if they're actually coming to see resilient people wandering around.”

## **5.8 Discussion and Summary**

This study examined the intersections between post-disaster tourism marketing discourse with visitor perceptions of tourist sites, and the relevant contextual backdrop of a mental health campaign targeting locals in Christchurch, New Zealand. After the initial September 2010 earthquake, CCT focused on promoting the city through visitor testimonials and endorsements from prominent political leaders. The dominant message after the first earthquake was that ‘all was safe.’ After the more devastating second earthquake had occurred, this earlier message was still circulating around the Internet.

After this second earthquake, CCT targeted their promotional efforts primarily at Australia, as a major tourist market historically. CCT conducted research on perceptions

through an Australian agency and found that Australians felt pity towards Christchurch locals. To counteract these sentiments, campaigns were designed to appeal to Australians in a more humorous way to seek their help, while avoiding depictions of the reality of what tourists would encounter by visiting Christchurch. The ‘Christchurch Reimagined’ campaigns showcased a vibrant, innovative city that was well on its way to recovery. While these marketing campaigns were ‘clever’ and possibly ‘witty’ in their own way, they were also disassociated from the realities tourists encountered when visiting Christchurch, and certainly, from the realities faced by many Christchurch locals.

CCT also adopted a strategy of aiding journalists and travel writers in promoting Christchurch as a bright and vibrant post-earthquake destination. Although the logic underlying this is perfectly understandable from a business and marketing perspective, it reflected a partial truth at best, and ran the risk of disappointing new tourists arriving in the city. The fact that the New York Times named Christchurch number two on its list of 52 places to visit in 2014, and that the popular guidebook, Lonely Planet named Christchurch as number six on a list of the ‘Top 10 Cities for 2013’ was picked up and used widely in marketing and promotion. In large part, these tourism accolades were due to projects associated with the transitional movement, which aimed to bring local people together, improve wellbeing, and return vibrancy to the central city. The transitional movement’s objectives were thus in-line or congruent with the All Right? mental health campaign goals in Christchurch - encouraging locals to engage with one another and build social ties to help with their personal recovery. By promoting the transitional movement to a greater extent through tourism channels, support would be garnered for local initiatives targeting the mental wellbeing of Christchurch’s local population.

Testimonials from visitors to the Central Business District revealed varying perceptions of the central city from tourists and locals, illustrating that the disasters were still very much at the forefront of conversation amongst both groups. Further, a well-researched mental health campaign shed light on the significant psychosocial impacts that the disasters have had on many Christchurch locals, thereby delivering a message that countered the images conveyed in tourism marketing campaigns.

In this paper, the combination of discourse analysis and interviews with locals, tourists and experts raised the question about the alignment between tourism marketing and associated messaging in the media, and by travel writers. There are many good economic and social reasons to justify promoting tourism to sites after a major disaster has occurred, not only to promote economic activity and growth, but also to aid in building a sense of return to normality. However, our research findings illustrate that without sufficient engagement with, and understanding of ‘local realities’ post-disaster tourism advertising runs the risk of miscommunication and misrepresentation of destination sites. Second, it can result in local populations feeling alienated because of this misrepresentation, and the downplaying of the seriousness of the personal consequences of a major disaster. Third, in the end, tourists can also encounter a very different experience from the one they anticipated via marketing strategies. These disappointed tourists may do more damage sharing their negative experiences and feelings by word-of-mouth.

To date, much tourism research related to discourse analysis has focused on brochures as sources of data for analysis (see Ateljevic and Doorne, 2002; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). Due to the changing nature of tourism advertising, especially by agencies with a limited budget, this research focused primarily on online video advertisements and media campaigns rather than paper brochures.

In summary, in order to truly aid a disaster-struck destination, researchers and tourism marketers would benefit by seeking the aid of locally based organizations and individual stakeholders to design advertising campaigns that better reflect the local reality. Discourse analysis is an effective way to examine advertisements as it encourages intertextuality—the examination of the relationships and connections between various texts. In post-disaster advertising, this intertextuality element is argued to be crucial as a foundation for understanding the broad nature of disaster tourism since it allows for exploration of relevant social contexts such as the psychosocial impacts of disaster.

Further comparative research is warranted using these methods in other post-disaster case studies.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Conclusion**

#### **6.1. Summary of the Project**

The broad research goal of this thesis was to explore tourism perspectives following a disaster that has caused significant destruction in an urban area. In order to achieve this goal, two objectives were explored. The first objective aimed to explore the disaster tourism phenomenon through empirical research on the perceptions of tourism by visitors, locals, and industry professionals to post-disaster areas. The second objective examined tourism representations of Christchurch through a critical discourse analysis of destination branding strategies during the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes that impacted the city.

Chapter Four addressed the first research objective exploring the disaster tourism phenomenon through empirical research on the perceptions of tourism to post-disaster areas by visitors, locals, and industry professionals. Through face-to-face interviews, three dominant findings arose. First, dark tourism represents a narrow approach to disaster tourism research. Since much of the research on dark tourism emphasizes the analysis of the site or attraction rather than the tourism experience, it is too narrowly focused to address the vast complexity evident in real-world disaster tourism case studies. Second, multiple-perspective interviews on disaster tourism reveal the value of organized disaster tours. Further, face-to-face interviews, especially with those working in the tourism industry, allow for meaningful contextual elements to come to the forefront. Third, insights gained from multiple perspectives showcased the rich tension and complexity between grassroots movements that highlight creativity, innovation, and local participation in the rebuild process which are sometimes in opposition with top-down, overly bureaucratic government approaches to rebuilding.

Chapter Five addressed the second objective, which was to examine representations of Christchurch tourism through the critical discourse analysis of destination branding

strategies. The dominant tourism marketing discourse was then compared with the local ‘reality’ of recovery, as messaged through the discourse of a mental health campaign launched in Christchurch following the February 2011 disaster. Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism, a regional tourism marketing agency, largely used humour and wit to promote the city to Australians, the largest market segment for the region. Furthermore, the city was depicted as a bright and vibrant post-disaster destination. Interviews with visitors to the CBD and messaging from a mental health campaign revealed that the local reality of the city was far more complex and nuanced than what tourism advertisements depicted.

## **6.2. Barriers and Limitations**

A significant limitation in this research was the choice of dark tourism literature as a primary foundation. Disaster tourism is studied in a limited capacity from a non-business perspective, as many post-disaster tourism studies focus on ways to attract visitors and to re-establish revenues to pre-disaster levels. This research, however, aimed to provide a more holistic view of the post-disaster tourism experience, as well as explore perspectives from tourism professionals and tourism marketers. Dark tourism literature draws elements from the fields of sociology, psychology, history, political science, anthropology, and geography, so it seemed like an appropriate fit for exploratory research due to its seemingly interdisciplinary nature. However, after conducting face-to-face interviews with Christchurch locals a myriad of relevant contextual elements arose. In large part, these elements were not anticipated. For example, a dominant theme in Chapter Four was the current tension between ‘transitional’ organizations and the government rebuild organization, CERA. Dark tourism literature often examines attractions or sites where the main disaster or crisis occurred longer ago than recent history, such as the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland. Since the Christchurch rebuild is still ongoing, current political tension themes remain very prominent in interviews with Christchurch residents. In other words, I felt my literature review of dark and disaster tourism had not adequately prepared me to explore these additional aspects of political tension. Further, when interviewing participants with questions relating to

dark tourism, I found that those inquiries were often met with resistance due to dark tourism's strong focus on the human attraction to death, disaster, and destruction. I felt that participants believed it distasteful to discuss such topics. Furthermore, I felt that it was almost immoral to speak about visitor attraction to death, disaster, and destruction when talking to locals with concerns relating to their wellbeing or emotional state following disaster. This is especially true being an outsider who has never experienced a significant disaster before.

Another limitation of this research relates to Chapter Four, which explored the perceptions of disaster tourism by locals, tourists, and tourism industry professionals. A dominant finding was linked to tensions between the 'transitional' movement and the government rebuild. Although CERA was contacted multiple times for an interview, they declined. My inability to interview members of CERA may have contributed to a bias in my results, however, not being able to interview them due to their non-interest in participating was indicative of the frustrations local organizations had experienced about the uncooperative nature of CERA. Another barrier to the resolution of the first objective was the limited number of interviews I was able to secure with those who participated in organized disaster tours, as many were only conducting self-guided tours of the Central City.

### **6.3 Extensions of the Research and Concluding Thoughts**

The downtown area of Christchurch was very heavily affected by the earthquakes: disaster – destruction, 'deconstruction', construction, and vacant spaces were apparent throughout the CBD. Participating in self-guided disaster tourism was nearly unavoidable when walking through the CBD. Living adjacent to the central city, I walked through the area almost daily. Although many residents speak of the slow speed of the rebuild, it was my first time witnessing a rebuild following disaster. As an outsider, I felt what I was observing was exciting. It was a rare experience getting the opportunity to witness what I thought was rapid change in an urban area. In this visually stimulating space, I expected residents to have a special attachment to the central city. However, I found the population

polarized. While some cared deeply about the future of heritage buildings (e.g. the Christchurch Cathedral), the Blueprint Project, and the ‘pop up’ projects, many remained either indifferent or very firmly attached to their memory of the former central city. Furthermore, I found that because of their memories, many locals did not have any desire to visit the CBD. Given the sprawling nature of the city, it is entirely possible to live in Christchurch for years following the disasters and not visit the CBD. I found that many residents went into the Central City only to show visiting friends or relatives what remained or what was being rebuilt. In sum, an interesting extension of this project could be an examination of how an urban disaster can change a resident with a strong sense of place into a reluctant tourist visiting his or her own city. Timing would also be key, as I lived in the city and conducted fieldwork approximately three years following the February 2011 disaster. For many, the initial shock of the earthquakes had worn off, yet feelings of alienation towards their own city remained. Although barriers to ethics may arise, it would be valuable to conduct in-depth interviews with residents visiting a cityscape characterized by destruction years after the disaster. In doing so, tourism marketers and tour operators could learn about the aspects of the city that residents find especially interesting or places that trigger deeper emotional responses both good and bad.

This thesis contributes to disaster tourism research that draws from dark tourism literature, an underexplored field of study, with the exceptions of the 2004 Indonesian earthquake and tsunami (Rittichainuwat, 2008) and Hurricane Katrina (Pezzullo, 2009; Pezzullo, 2010; Robbie, 2008). The most notable elements of this project are the importance of understanding the influence of contextual elements when researching post-disaster areas. Peeling the layers back, much exists beyond the post-disaster advertising and the disaster tourism experience. Political factors, psychosocial impacts of disaster, and very complex local dynamics need to be considered when undertaking research within this relatively new field of study. Exploratory research, such as the research reported here, is incredibly challenging to conduct, especially when a number of unforeseen contextual elements, e.g., political tensions, psychosocial impacts, local frustration towards rebuild, were evident. In large part, such elements were unforeseen

due to the infrequency of post-disaster studies that aim to use multiple-perspective approaches. Many locals encountered during fieldwork were eager to see change occur as a result of this research. Due to this, I feel that holistic studies such as the study presented here, despite being exploratory and challenging in nature, are immensely valuable in understanding the complexities of tourism to a post-disaster destination.

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## Appendix A. Interview Scripts

### Questions for Tourists

#### *Motivation*

1. What are the main reasons for your trip to Christchurch?
2. Did tourism advertisements influence your decision to travel here?  
IF YES
  - a. Could you speak a bit about what advertisements in particular drew you to this area?
  - b. Why do you think they interested you?
3. Prior to your visit to Christchurch, were you aware of the earthquakes that affected the region?  
IF YES
  - a. Could you share what your thoughts were upon learning of the disaster(s)?
  - b. Do you feel that your awareness of the disaster(s) influenced your decision to travel here? How so?
4. How did you become aware of this attraction? Was it a main reason for your trip to Christchurch?

#### *Perceptions*

5. Could you tell me about the attraction you visited today?
6. Could you tell me about what stood out for you? Why?
7. Did you feel that the attraction used appropriate sensitivity? Why?
8. Do you feel that it is important to commemorate the disasters? How so?
9. Do you feel that it is important for tourists to learn about the earthquakes? Why?

#### *Experiences*

10. What experiences will you take home from this attraction?
11. What emotions have you felt during your visit? Did the attraction make you feel uneasy in any way?
12. How has your visit to Christchurch changed the way you think about disasters?

13. Did staff share personal stories of the earthquakes?

IF YES

- a. What were the stories they shared?
- b. How did they affect you?

*Connections to Other Sites*

14. Have you seen any disaster-affected homes in Christchurch?

IF YES

- a. How did you travel there?
- b. What are your thoughts on them?

15. Outside Christchurch, have you been to attractions, museums, or memorials that commemorate death or disasters? (e.g. Auschwitz, 9/11 memorial, Pompeii)

IF YES

- a. Where did you go?
- b. How does Christchurch compare?

*Personal Questions*

16. Where are you from?

17. How long have you been here?

18. Do you have personal connections to this area?

19. Have you lived here previously?

## Questions for Residents

### *Experiences*

1. What experiences will you take home from this attraction?
2. What emotions have you felt during your visit? Did the attraction make you feel uneasy in any way?
3. Did staff share personal stories of the earthquakes?  
IF YES
  - a. What were the stories they shared?
  - b. How did they affect you?
4. How you think your experience at this attraction differs from a tourist's?

### *Perceptions*

5. Could you tell me about the attraction you visited today?
6. Could you tell me about what stood out for you?
7. Would you change anything about the attraction?
8. Do you feel that it is important to commemorate the disasters? How so?
9. Do you feel that it is important for tourists to learn about the earthquakes? Why?

### *Motivation*

10. What are the main reasons for your visit to this attraction?
11. Have you visited previously?
12. Why do you think locals are drawn to this attraction?
13. Why do you think visitors from elsewhere are drawn to this attraction?

### *Connections to Other Sites*

14. Have you heard of visitors touring devastated residential areas in Christchurch?  
IF YES
  - a. How do you feel about this?

15. Outside Christchurch, have you been to attractions, museums, or memorials that commemorate death or disasters? (e.g. Auschwitz, 9/11 memorial, Pompeii)

IF YES

- a. Where did you go?
- b. How does Christchurch compare?

*Personal Questions*

16. How long have you lived in Christchurch?

17. What do you do here?

## Questions for Tourism Industry Professionals (Gatekeepers)

### *Role of Participant*

1. What company do you work for?
2. What is your role?
3. Can you tell me about what kind of activities your work entails?
4. Have there been any major changes since you started working here?
5. Have you been in this position for a long time?
6. What did you do beforehand?

### *Disaster Tourism*

7. How would you describe the type of tourism in Christchurch prior to the earthquakes? How has it changed?
8. Why do you think locals are drawn to disaster-related attractions here?
9. Why do you think tourists are drawn to disaster-related attractions here?
10. Do you feel that it is important to commemorate the disasters? How so?
11. Do you feel that disaster-related attractions are appropriately sensitive? Why?

### *Thoughts on Visitors*

12. In what ways does visitor interest in the earthquakes affect Christchurch's tourism industry?
13. Do you feel that it is important for tourists to learn about the disasters in Christchurch? Why?
14. Do you believe it is more interesting for visitors to learn about future rebuild efforts or past disaster events? Why?
15. Do you believe that visitor interest in the earthquakes will fade over time? Why?
16. Have you heard of any tourists coming to Christchurch specifically to see the destruction?  
IF YES
  - a. Could you speak about what you have heard?

17. Do you believe that tourists have meaningful experiences at disaster-related attractions? How so?

*Connections to Other Sites*

18. Have you heard of visitors touring devastated residential areas in Christchurch?

IF YES

a. How do you feel about this?

19. Outside Christchurch, have you been to attractions, museums, or memorials that commemorate death or disasters? (e.g. Auschwitz, 9/11 memorial, Pompeii)

IF YES

a. Where did you go?

b. How does Christchurch compare?

*Personal Questions*

20. How long have you lived in Christchurch?

21. Is there anything else you wish to discuss?

## Questions for Tourism Industry Professionals (Front-Line Staff)

### *Role of Participant*

1. What company do you work for?
2. What is your role?
3. Can you tell me about what kind of activities your work entails?
4. Have there been any major changes since you started working here?
5. Have you been in this position for a long time?
6. What did you do beforehand?

### *Disaster Tourism*

7. How would you describe the type of tourism in Christchurch prior to the earthquakes? How has it changed?
8. Why do you think locals are drawn to this attraction?
9. Why do you think tourists are drawn to this attraction?
10. Do you feel that it is important to commemorate the disasters? How so?
11. How has working at this attraction changed the way you think about disaster tourism?
12. Do you feel that it is important for tourists to learn about the disasters in Christchurch? How so?

### *Communication and Messaging*

13. Can you speak about what main messages you try to convey to visitors?
14. Have your messages changed over time?
15. Do you feel that messages are appropriately sensitive? Why?
16. Do you share personal stories of the earthquakes with visitors?  
IF YES
  - a. Could you speak about what stories you share?
  - b. Why did you choose these?
17. Are you expected to communicate in a certain way with visitors?

IF YES

- a. How so?
  - b. How would you change messaging if you could?
18. Do you communicate differently with locals who visit the attraction?
- IF YES
- a. In what ways is communication different?

*Thoughts on Visitors*

19. How does the experience differ between locals and tourists?
20. Have visitors reacted emotionally to the attraction?
- IF YES
- a. Why do you think this is so?
  - b. What tends to trigger an emotional response?
21. What is the best experience you have had with a visitor?
22. What is the worst experience you have had with a visitor?
23. Do you believe it is more interesting for visitors to learn about future rebuild efforts or past disaster events? Why?
24. Do you believe that visitor interest in the earthquakes will fade over time? Why?
25. Have you heard of any tourists coming to Christchurch specifically to see the destruction?
- IF YES
- a. Could you speak about what you have heard?

*Connections to Other Sites*

26. Have you heard of visitors touring devastated residential areas in Christchurch?
- IF YES
- a. How do you feel about this?
27. Outside Christchurch, have you been to attractions, museums, or memorials that commemorate death or disasters? (e.g. Auschwitz, 9/11 memorial, Pompeii)
- IF YES
- a. Where did you go?
  - b. How does Christchurch compare?

*Personal Questions*

28. How long have you lived in Christchurch?
29. Is there anything else you wish you discuss?

## Questions for Tourism Marketers (Key Informants)

### *Sample questions*

- What main messages are conveyed? What knowledge or research was drawn upon to determine these messages?
- Who is responsible for tourism marketing? Why were they chosen? What are their qualifications?
- How do advertisements reach potential visitors (e.g. brochures, television, magazines, social media)? Why were these mediums chosen?
- What markets are targeted? Why were they chosen? How does messaging differ between target markets?
- Do you feel marketing efforts are effective in drawing tourists? How so?
- What would you change about tourism marketing if you could?

## Appendix B. Participant Consent Forms



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### Participant Consent Form (Group 1)

**Title of the Study:** Tourism in the wake of New Zealand's seismic disaster in Christchurch

**Principal Investigator:** Rachelle Cadano  
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**Supervisor:** Dr. Denise Cloutier  
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**Research Purpose and Objectives:** The purpose of this study is to explore multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand. From interviews, observations, and marketing analysis, I wish to learn: 1) what perceptions do people hold around disaster tourism in Christchurch? The perspective I am looking to explore include: visitors, the local community, and the travel industry. A second question I am interested in exploring is 2) how has this disaster-affected destination marketed itself to maintain and encourage tourism over time, and to different market segments?

**Importance of the Research:** This study seeks to advance literature on disaster tourism and inform tourism management by offering a better understanding of the perceptions and behaviours of tourists and the local community who participate in disaster tourism.

**Participation:** You have been selected to participate since I wish to gain an understanding of multiple viewpoints, which include visitors to Christchurch, the local community, tourism industry professionals, and tourism marketers. You are under no obligation to participate in this study since it is entirely voluntary. If you choose to

participate, you may refuse questions, cease the interview, and/or withdraw from the study altogether at any point during the research.

**Procedures:** Should you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a 20-30 minute audio-recorded interview with myself. Face-to-face interviews will occur at a location convenient for you.

**Risks:** There are minimal risks to study participants.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The results of this study may help us learn more about tourism following a major disaster.

**Voluntary Participation:** If you agree to be interviewed, you may decline any questions you do not wish to answer if the conversation becomes upsetting at any point during the interview. You may also end the interview at any point or choose to withdraw from the project. If you decide to end the interview or withdraw from the project, you can decide if I may keep and use any information you have provided. If you do not want your interview material used, I will destroy the audio recordings, interview notes, and other data that are associated with your interview.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:** The information you share will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purposes of this research. Research data, including interview recordings and transcriptions, will be accessed only by myself. Interview responses may be used verbatim in presentations, reports, and/or academic publications. However, your name and any other information that could identify you will not be used in any report, publication, or presentation thereby protecting your confidentiality. Although I cannot guarantee your anonymity due to the nature of tour group activities, to protect your identify to the greatest extent possible I will use pseudonyms in any disseminated material so your identity is unknown.

**Dissemination of Results:** It is anticipated that the results of the study will be shared through published articles, presentations at scholarly meetings, and in my final thesis.

**Disposal of Data:** Estimated to be August 2015, all interview data will be destroyed. Paper copies will be shredded and electronic data will be securely deleted.

**Contacts:** If at any time you have questions regarding the research or your participation, feel free to contact myself at the email address provided at the beginning of this consent form. My supervisor, Dr. Denise Cloutier, may also be contacted via phone or email.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (1-250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

*Name of Participant*

*Signature*

*Date*

I agree \_\_\_\_\_ do not agree \_\_\_\_\_ to be audio-recorded throughout the interview (Check one).

*A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*



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## **Participant Consent Form (Group 2)**

**Title of the Study:** Tourism in the wake of New Zealand's seismic disaster in Christchurch

**Principal Investigator:** Rachelle Cadano  
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**Research Purpose and Objectives:** The purpose of this study is to explore multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand. From interviews, observations, and marketing analysis, I wish to learn: 1) what perceptions do people hold around disaster tourism in Christchurch? The perspective I am looking to explore include: visitors, the local community, and the travel industry. A second question I am interested in exploring is 2) how has this disaster-affected destination marketed itself to maintain and encourage tourism over time, and to different market segments?

**Importance of the Research:** This study seeks to advance literature on disaster tourism and inform tourism management by offering a better understanding of the perceptions and behaviours of tourists and the local community who participate in disaster tourism.

**Participation:** You have been selected to participate since I wish to gain an understanding of multiple viewpoints, which include visitors to Christchurch, the local community, tourism industry professionals, and tourism marketers. You are under no obligation to participate in this study since it is entirely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may refuse questions, cease the interview, and/or withdraw from the study altogether at any point during the research.

**Procedures:** Should you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a 20-30 minute audio-recorded interview with myself. Face-to-face interviews will occur at a location convenient for you.

**Risks:** It is possible that you may feel distress speaking about the Christchurch earthquakes and the aftermath of the disasters.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The results of this study may help us learn more about tourism following a major disaster.

**Voluntary Participation:** If you agree to be interviewed, you may decline any questions you do not wish to answer if the conversation becomes upsetting at any point during the interview. You may also end the interview at any point or choose to withdraw from the project. If you decide to end the interview or withdraw from the project, you can decide if I may keep and use any information you have provided. If you do not want your interview material used, I will destroy the audio recordings, interview notes, and other data that are associated with your interview.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:** The information you share will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purposes of this research. Research data, including interview recordings and transcriptions, will be accessed only by myself. Interview responses may be used verbatim in presentations, reports, and/or academic publications. However, your name and any other information that could identify you and will not be used in any report, publication, or presentation thereby protecting your confidentiality. Although I cannot guarantee your anonymity due to the nature of tour group activities, to protect your identify to the greatest extent possible I will use pseudonyms in any disseminated material so your identity is unknown.

**Dissemination of Results:** It is anticipated that the results of the study will be shared through published articles, presentations at scholarly meetings, and in my final thesis.

**Disposal of Data:** Estimated to be August 2015, all interview data will be destroyed. Paper copies will be shredded and electronic data will be securely deleted.

**Contacts:** If at any time you have questions regarding the research or your participation, feel free to contact myself at the email address provided at the beginning of this consent form. My supervisor, Dr. Denise Cloutier, may also be contacted via phone or email.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (1-250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

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*Name of Participant*

---

*Signature*

---

*Date*

I agree \_\_\_\_\_ do not agree \_\_\_\_\_ to be audio-recorded throughout the interview (Check one).

*A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*



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### **Participant Consent Form (Group 3)**

**Title of the Study:** Tourism in the wake of New Zealand's seismic disaster in Christchurch

**Principal Investigator:** Rachelle Cadano  
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**Research Purpose and Objectives:** The purpose of this study is to explore multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand. From interviews, observations, and marketing analysis, I wish to learn: 1) what perceptions do people hold around disaster tourism in Christchurch? The perspective I am looking to explore include: visitors, the local community, and the travel industry. A second question I am interested in exploring is 2) how has this disaster-affected destination marketed itself to maintain and encourage tourism over time, and to different market segments?

**Importance of the Research:** This study seeks to advance literature on disaster tourism and inform tourism management by offering a better understanding of the perceptions and behaviours of tourists and the local community who participate in disaster tourism.

**Participation:** You have been selected to participate since I wish to gain an understanding of multiple viewpoints, which include visitors to Christchurch, the local community, tourism industry professionals, and tourism marketers. You are under no obligation to participate in this study since it is entirely voluntary. If you choose to

participate, you may refuse questions, cease the interview, and/or withdraw from the study altogether at any point during the research.

**Procedures:** Should you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a 45-60 minute audio-recorded interview with myself. Face-to-face interviews will occur at a location convenient for you.

**Risks:** There are minimal risks to study participants.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The results of this study may help us learn more about tourism following a major disaster.

**Voluntary Participation:** If you agree to be interviewed, you may decline any questions you do not wish to answer if the conversation becomes upsetting at any point during the interview. You may also end the interview at any point or choose to withdraw from the project. If you decide to end the interview or withdraw from the project, you can decide if I may keep and use any information you have provided. If you do not want your interview material used, I will destroy the audio recordings, interview notes, and other data that are associated with your interview.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:** The information you share will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purposes of this research. Research data, including interview recordings and transcriptions, will be accessed only by myself. Interview responses may be used verbatim in presentations, reports, and/or academic publications. However, your name and any other information that could identify you and, if applicable, your organization will not be used in any report, publication, or presentation thereby protecting your confidentiality. Although I cannot guarantee your anonymity, to protect your identity to the greatest extent possible I will use pseudonyms in any disseminated material so your identity is unknown. No statements will be attributed directly to you without your written approval.

**Dissemination of Results:** It is anticipated that the results of the study will be shared through published articles, presentations at scholarly meetings, and in my final thesis.

**Disposal of Data:** Estimated to be August 2015, all interview data will be destroyed. Paper copies will be shredded and electronic data will be securely deleted.

**Contacts:** If at any time you have questions regarding the research or your participation, feel free to contact myself at the email address provided at the beginning of this consent form. My supervisor, Dr. Denise Cloutier, may also be contacted via phone or email.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (1-250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

---

*Name of Participant*

---

*Signature*

---

*Date*

I agree \_\_\_\_\_ do not agree \_\_\_\_\_ to be audio-recorded throughout the interview (Check one).

***A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.***



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## **Participant Consent Form (Group 4)**

**Title of the Study:** Tourism in the wake of New Zealand's seismic disaster in Christchurch

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**Research Purpose and Objectives:** The purpose of this study is to explore multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand. From interviews, observations, and marketing analysis, I wish to learn: 1) what perceptions do people hold around disaster tourism in Christchurch? The perspective I am looking to explore include: visitors, the local community, and the travel industry. A second question I am interested in exploring is 2) how has this disaster-affected destination marketed itself to maintain and encourage tourism over time, and to different market segments?

**Importance of the Research:** This study seeks to advance literature on disaster tourism and inform tourism management by offering a better understanding of the perceptions and behaviours of tourists and the local community who participate in disaster tourism.

**Participation:** You have been selected to participate since I wish to gain an understanding of multiple viewpoints, which include visitors to Christchurch, the local community, tourism industry professionals, and tourism marketers. You are under no obligation to participate in this study since it is entirely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may refuse questions, cease the interview, and/or withdraw from the study altogether at any point during the research.

**Procedures:** Should you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a 45-60 minute audio-recorded interview with myself. Face-to-face interviews will occur at a location convenient for you.

**Risks:** There are minimal risks to study participants.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The results of this study may help us learn more about tourism following a major disaster.

**Voluntary Participation:** If you agree to be interviewed, you may decline any questions you do not wish to answer if the conversation becomes upsetting at any point during the interview. You may also end the interview at any point or choose to withdraw from the project. If you decide to end the interview or withdraw from the project, you can decide if I may keep and use any information you have provided. If you do not want your interview material used, I will destroy the audio recordings, interview notes, and other data that are associated with your interview.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:** The information you share will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purposes of this research. Research data, including interview recordings and transcriptions, will be accessed only by myself. Interview responses may be used verbatim in presentations, reports, and/or academic publications. However, your name and any other information that could identify you and, if applicable, your organization will not be used in any report, publication, or presentation thereby protecting your confidentiality. Although I cannot guarantee your anonymity, to protect your identify to the greatest extent possible I will use pseudonyms in any disseminated material so your identity is unknown. No statements will be attributed directly to you without your written approval.

**Dissemination of Results:** It is anticipated that the results of the study will be shared through published articles, presentations at scholarly meetings, and in my final thesis.

**Disposal of Data:** Estimated to be August 2015, all interview data will be destroyed. Paper copies will be shredded and electronic data will be securely deleted.

**Contacts:** If at any time you have questions regarding the research or your participation, feel free to contact myself at the email address provided at the beginning of this consent form. My supervisor, Dr. Denise Cloutier, may also be contacted via phone or email.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (1-250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

---

*Name of Participant*

---

*Signature*

---

*Date*

I agree \_\_\_\_\_ do not agree \_\_\_\_\_ to be audio-recorded throughout the interview (Check one).

*A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*



**Department of Geography**  
PO Box 3060 STN CSC  
Victoria British Columbia V8W 3R4 Canada  
Tel 1-250-721-7327, Fax 1-250-721-6216

**University  
of Victoria**

## **Participant Consent Form (Group 5)**

**Title of the Study:** Tourism in the wake of New Zealand's seismic disaster in Christchurch

**Principal Investigator:** Rachelle Cadano  
Department of Geography  
University of Victoria  
Victoria, British Columbia  
rachelle.cadano@gmail.com

**Supervisor:** Dr. Denise Cloutier  
Department of Geography  
University of Victoria  
Victoria, British Columbia  
dcfisher@uvic.ca  
1-250-853-3286

**Research Purpose and Objectives:** The purpose of this study is to explore multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand. From interviews, observations, and marketing analysis, I wish to learn: 1) what perceptions do people hold around disaster tourism in Christchurch? The perspective I am looking to explore include: visitors, the local community, and the travel industry. A second question I am interested in exploring is 2) how has this disaster-affected destination marketed itself to maintain and encourage tourism over time, and to different market segments?

**Importance of the Research:** This study seeks to advance literature on disaster tourism and inform tourism management by offering a better understanding of the perceptions and behaviours of tourists and the local community who participate in disaster tourism.

**Participation:** You have been selected to participate since I wish to gain an understanding of multiple viewpoints, which include visitors to Christchurch, the local community, tourism industry professionals, and tourism marketers. You are under no obligation to participate in this study since it is entirely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may refuse questions, cease the interview, and/or withdraw from the study altogether at any point during the research.

**Procedures:** Should you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a 45-60 minute audio-recorded interview with myself. Face-to-face interviews will occur at a location convenient for you.

**Risks:** There are minimal risks to study participants.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The results of this study may help us learn more about tourism following a major disaster.

**Voluntary Participation:** If you agree to be interviewed, you may decline any questions you do not wish to answer if the conversation becomes upsetting at any point during the interview. You may also end the interview at any point or choose to withdraw from the project. If you decide to end the interview or withdraw from the project, you can decide if I may keep and use any information you have provided. If you do not want your interview material used, I will destroy the audio recordings, interview notes, and other data that are associated with your interview.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:** The information you share will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purposes of this research. Research data, including interview recordings and transcriptions, will be accessed only by myself. Interview responses may be used verbatim in presentations, reports, and/or academic publications. However, your name and any other information that could identify you and, if applicable, your organization will not be used in any report, publication, or presentation thereby protecting your confidentiality. Although I cannot guarantee your anonymity, to protect your identify to the greatest extent possible I will use pseudonyms in any disseminated material so your identity is unknown. No statements will be attributed directly to you without your written approval.

**Dissemination of Results:** It is anticipated that the results of the study will be shared through published articles, presentations at scholarly meetings, and in my final thesis.

**Disposal of Data:** Estimated to be August 2015, all interview data will be destroyed. Paper copies will be shredded and electronic data will be securely deleted.

**Contacts:** If at any time you have questions regarding the research or your participation, feel free to contact myself at the email address provided at the beginning of this consent form. My supervisor, Dr. Denise Cloutier, may also be contacted via phone or email.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (1-250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

---

*Name of Participant*

---

*Signature*

---

*Date*

I agree \_\_\_\_\_ do not agree \_\_\_\_\_ to be audio-recorded throughout the interview (Check one).

*A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*

## **Appendix C. Recruitment Scripts**

### **In person recruitment script (Group 1)**

Hello, my name is Rachelle Cadano. I am a human geography graduate student from the University of Victoria in Canada. I am conducting research on multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand.

Participation in this research includes a face-to-face interview with myself that will take approximately 20-30 minutes. The interview will occur wherever it is most convenient for you. However, I suggest Cashel Mall, an easy-to-access spot in the central city.

I will leave this consent form with you so you can read it over at your convenience. If you have any questions or would like to participate in this research, I can be reached by phone or email, which is written on the consent form.

### **In person recruitment script (Group 2)**

Hello, my name is Rachelle Cadano. I am a human geography graduate student from the University of Victoria in Canada. I am conducting research on multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand.

Participation in this research includes a face-to-face interview with myself that will take approximately 20-30 minutes. The interview will occur wherever it is most convenient for you. However, I suggest Cashel Mall, an easy-to-access spot in the central city.

I will leave this consent form with you so you can read it over at your convenience. If you have any questions or would like to participate in this research, I can be reached by phone or email, which is written on the consent form.

### **Email recruitment script (Group 3)**

Dear [INSERT NAME],

My name is Rachelle Cadano. I am a human geography graduate student from the University of Victoria in Canada. I am conducting research on multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand.

My proposed thesis focuses on earthquake-related tourism in Christchurch following the seismic events of 2010 and 2011. In a nutshell, the overarching goal of my research is to explore tourism perspectives following a major disaster that causes significant damage in an urban area. Through face-to-face interviews, I intend to gather information on the perceptions of tourism by visitors, locals, and industry professionals to post-disaster areas.

Participation in this research includes a face-to-face interview with myself that will take approximately 45-60 minutes. The interview will occur at a location most convenient for you.

I attached a copy of the consent form that you can look over at your convenience. If you have any questions or are interested in an interview, please contact me at 022 156 6441 or at [rachelle.cadano@gmail.com](mailto:rachelle.cadano@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

Rachelle Cadano  
MA Student  
Dept. of Geography  
University of Victoria

#### **In person recruitment script (Group 4)**

Hello, my name is Rachelle Cadano. I am a human geography graduate student from the University of Victoria in Canada. I am conducting research on multiple perspectives concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand.

Participation in this research includes a face-to-face interview with myself that will take approximately 45-60 minutes. The interview will occur wherever it is most convenient for you.

I will leave this consent form with you so you can read it over at your convenience. If you have any questions or would like to participate in this research, I can be reached by phone or email, which is written on the consent form.

#### **Email recruitment script (Group 5)**

Dear [INSERT NAME],

My name is Rachelle Cadano. I am a human geography graduate student from the University of Victoria in Canada. I am conducting research on multiple perspectives

concerning visitations to the earthquake devastated areas of Christchurch in New Zealand.

My proposed thesis focuses on earthquake-related tourism in Christchurch following the seismic events of 2010 and 2011. In a nutshell, the overarching goal of my research is to explore tourism perspectives following a major disaster that causes significant damage in an urban area. In addition to face-to-face interviews with visitors, locals, and industry professionals, this research also seeks to explore how Christchurch has marketed itself to maintain and encourage tourism over time, and to different market segments.

Participation in this research includes a face-to-face interview with myself that will take approximately 45-60 minutes. The interview will occur at a location most convenient for you.

I attached a copy of the consent form that you can look over at your convenience. If you have any questions or are interested in an interview, please contact me at 022 156 6441 or at [rachelle.cadano@gmail.com](mailto:rachelle.cadano@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

Rachelle Cadano  
MA Student  
Dept. of Geography  
University of Victoria

## Appendix D. Organization of Research

