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A CITY FOR ALL SEASONS

A CASE STUDY OF URBAN PLACE PROMOTION

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management

at

Lincoln University

by

Andrea Schöllmann

__________________________

Lincoln University

1997
ABSTRACT

Abstract of a thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of M.P.R & T.M.

A CITY FOR ALL SEASONS

A CASE STUDY OF URBAN PLACE PROMOTION

by Andrea Schöllmann

Promoting cities as tourism destinations is seen as a way to enable growth. This promotion involves the projection of selective imagery to specific target groups and often includes the physical reshaping of places to fit a promotable image. Attempts to understand these processes have often focused on one of two approaches: a global perspective stressing the consumptive nature of the tourist gaze and the resultant commodification of place at the local level; and a local perspective emphasising difference and uniqueness. My thesis outlines an investigation into the promotion of the city of Christchurch, New Zealand. I found that local place promotional messages are a product of both global economic forces, which stimulate the growth of tourism, and a local search for identity. The local 'sense of place', as constructed in place promotional imagery, is constantly reviewed and reflects changing social relationships in place and through time. Christchurch, therefore, is not simply promoted in the image of tourism with, as it is often claimed, the inevitable commodification of place and destruction of meaning. Local claims to uniqueness are an expression of the current social relationships in place, which construct selective histories of the past based on ideas of the present that are linked to a search for identity at both local and national levels.

Keywords: Place promotion, tourism, image, Christchurch, place, sense of place, rhetoric.
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Finally, my thanks go to my long-suffering parents, who had given up on the idea that I might actually finish my ‘study career’ one day. I can now go and get a ‘real job’.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Figure One. The gentle meandering of the Avon River, the imposing Gothic architecture, the quiet charm of its parks and gardens, all attest to Christchurch's claim as being 'the most English city outside England' (Postcard from Scenix Marketing, Auckland).

"If you send me one more of those postcards with pseudo-Gothic architecture, I will seriously rethink ever visiting you in New Zealand". As a recent German immigrant to New Zealand and slightly affronted at having my newly acquired pride of place in Christchurch, the South Island’s largest city, undermined, I asked of my friend, who had sent me those words, what she meant. She replied: "If I want that kind of history, I can get much more of that much closer to home. I wouldn’t want to visit for your architecture or your cities".
Examining my postcard-sending habits, I discovered that I had become an active place promoter with a particular message. The brochures, photos, books, videos and other material I sent back home invariably depicted Christchurch as a very tame ‘English Garden City’. This was perfect material to send to my family, who were anxious for reassurance that my new life was civilised. My friend’s comment, however, got me interested in the promotion of the city of Christchurch. Why would a city located in the South Island of New Zealand, a country in the remote South Pacific Ocean, want to describe itself as ‘the most English city outside of England’? What was there to gain? Was such a description aimed at attracting tourists to Christchurch and would anyone actually want to go to New Zealand to gaze at Englishness?

Christchurch is now very different from the place in which I first arrived in 1990. In the seven years since, parts of its inner city have been reshaped quite extensively and its place promotional identity has subtly changed, from one that rested on ‘Englishness’ to one that is now actively trying to get away from that image. The imagery used to ‘sell’ the city of Christchurch to tourists, trade and - more recently - its own residents, has certainly evolved since I first arrived. Christchurch’s current place promoters talk about the city as one that, while hanging onto its English roots, offers much more ‘exciting and cosmopolitan attractions’ to its residents, potential investors and tourists. This is neither new nor unique. Similar to other cities all over the world, Christchurch tries to “don the carnival mask” and acquires “the new iconography of convention centers, cultural centers, stadiums, festival malls and ‘theme’ retail districts” (Short et al. 1993, 216).

This is in part to do with changed approaches to the generation of urban wealth which have become a widespread phenomenon. Following a period of major restructuring in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many Western industrial economies initiated radical changes in economic decision-making. This entailed a trimming back of the welfare state and a move to much more market-directed activity, lessening the involvement of the state (Britton, Le Heron, and Pawson 1992; Thorns forthcoming). Cities in decline sought new avenues of development and, as part of this, many focused on consumption-oriented activities and became involved in place promotion. Today, as more and more
cities promote themselves, it is often argued that place promotion has come to a point where

writers of promotional literature find themselves extolling the supposedly 'unique' qualities of supposedly 'unique' places using an actually quite universal vocabulary of 'better, bigger, more beautiful, more bountiful' (Philo and Kearns 1993, 20-21).

This, it is further argued, often leads to a loss of meaning as places become like each other in a quest for distinctiveness (Philo and Kearns 1993, 20-21). It is my argument in this thesis that this is a partial view only. While the process and broad values of place promotion and associated assumptions about what tourists and visitors want out of a visit can still be the same in different places, place promotion is not simply a practice through which cities become like each other. Thorns (forthcoming, 4) went some way towards explaining this when he argued that competition between cities necessitates an emphasis on local difference, as "the specificity of place, of its people, its buildings, its history, its environment ... become increasingly important to governments, capitalist firms and the general public".

More importantly, though, place promotion is only partly characterised by the need for a promotable image. It is also an expression of the local sense of place, as negotiated between promoters, residents and politicians. In this way, places do not simply become reshaped in the image of tourism (Hughes 1992) or as sites of consumption with a resultant loss of local meaning. Instead, place promotion is a multidimensional process negotiated through what might be called a dialogue of the languages of history, globalisation and everyday life in the city. The local sense of place is as much part of developing a promotable image, as it is a result of developing this image. The 'place' of Christchurch, I argue, is multidimensional, part local, part global, part commodity and part search for identity.

Closely connected to this, and part of my argument, is a belief that place promotional literature based on British and North American social theory is of only partial applicability to the New Zealand context. In Western, industrialised countries, such as Britain and North America, urban restructuring has been focused on consumer culture and the post-industrial nature of the city as a site of consumption (Holcomb 1993; Ward
and Gold 1994). Only some of this focus is applicable in the urban context of New Zealand. While New Zealand cities have equally been caught up in global changes and have gone through a process of economic restructuring, this has taken a different local shape. Part of the reason for this is that New Zealand cities never saw the massive levels of de-industrialisation that occurred in Britain and North America. Hence New Zealand cities have not changed as much or have changed in different ways.

The city of Christchurch, while changed through restructuring, has not simply become a site of production converted into a site of consumption. This is not to deny the economic importance of tourism or other forms of consumption for the city and the resultant creation of tourism and leisure landscapes in certain parts of the city. This has, however, in my view, not changed the city completely into a site of consumption. Part of the 'place' of Christchurch has changed very little. It is still - as it always was - the 'English Garden City'. Place promoters certainly attempt to infuse this image with new aspects by following the latest fashion and creating what is often called the 'Mayor's Trophy Collection' (Thorns forthcoming) - convention centres, malls, casinos and other consumption-focused locales. Yet this is only part of the picture and in this thesis, I shall show how distinct patterns of urbanisation and a particular relationship to the land have made New Zealand cities into what they are today. This, combined with global changes and the influence of tourism, has led to distinct patterns of place promotion that partially resemble overseas experiences but have unique aspects. Place promotion in Christchurch, New Zealand, is a product of global forces and of the local sense of place which constructs selective histories of the past based on ideas of the present that are linked to a search for identity.

Before I detail my research questions, methodology and methods, it is necessary here to review briefly a number of theoretical concepts. While I will return to some of these in more depth and in different ways in later chapters, the concepts of place promotion and image making are introduced at this stage to familiarise the reader with my starting point. My research process was initially informed by a familiarity with the place promotional literature as described in this chapter.

---

1 This does not mean that New Zealand cities have not become sites of consumption, but this consumption may take a different shape, less emphatically post-industrial.
Selling Place - The Marketing of Places

Place marketing (Page 1995) or the selling of places (Philo and Kearns 1993) are two relatively recent phenomena that are part of the 'New Right' discourse, where “places are not so much presented as foci of attachment and concern, but as bundles of social and economic opportunity competing against one another in the open ... market” (Philo and Kearns 1993, 18). These concepts are based on the idea that places can be sold to potential customers and they amalgamate the traditions of marketing in non-profit organisations, social marketing and image marketing (Ashworth and Voogd 1990a, cited in Page 1995, 206; Kotler, Haider and Rein 1993; Shields 1991).

Page (1995) argued that cities are place products that can be marketed and promoted, aimed at particular ‘consumers’. Both public and private agencies are involved in this process; local authorities and local entrepreneurs often work collaboratively to sell the ‘place product’ of the city in order to make it attractive to economic enterprise, tourists, and locals (Philo and Kearns 1993). In the case of tourism, places “simultaneously are... a facility and an attraction. The place is both the product and the container of an assemblage of products” (Ashworth and Voogd 1990, 7). Places, in addition, are often sold in different ways to different groups: “precisely the same physical space, and in practice much the same facilities and attributes of that space, are sold simultaneously to different groups of customers for different purposes” (Ashworth and Voogd 1990, 9). Cities can, therefore, be sold as historic cities, tourist cities, residential cities, shopping cities or investment cities and, depending on the particular characteristics of the target market, the ‘sales pitch’ is different. There is one subtle though very important distinction, when this process is compared to other target marketing: “In place marketing, it is the same place, and not subdivisions of it, that is the product” (Ashworth and Voogd 1990, 9, my emphasis). This marketing of places, or the promotion of places, as others have called it, endows these places with new meanings (Shields 1991).

Place Promotion

In recent years, an increasing number of writers have become concerned with the role of place promotion in the establishment of place meanings (Ashworth and Goodall 1990,
Changes in the nature of urban economies have resulted in a widespread decline of traditional industries. In many Western industrial countries, structural shifts away from established manufacturing industries and associated de-industrialisation have led to changes in the economic functioning of cities and the growth of the service sector (Pawson and Swaffield forthcoming). Some of these changes in economic orientation have posed real economic and social threats to the residents of towns and cities (Ashworth and Voogd 1990).

City promoters have approached this challenge in different ways. Some have launched extensive advertising campaigns to draw new industries to regions. Large manufacturers and leading-technology industries are courted, particularly in times of economic recession and increasing unemployment (Ward and Gold 1994). Attempts to 'sell' the industrial town and efforts to combat decline in industry through industrial place promotion are widespread, particularly in Britain and North America, where a decline in manufacturing and economic structural change led to high unemployment and urban decline (Barke and Harrop 1994; Holcomb 1994).

De-industrialisation in the old industrial regions, particularly in the industrial cities of mature capitalist economies, resulted in many city enhancement projects, as increasing reliance on the service sector has led to a reconstruction of the image of the industrial city into what is often called a post-industrial leisure locale. This reconstruction occurs for three reasons: First, there is a need to change the city image for what Short et al. (1993) called external consumption - civic boosterism is an example of this. Second, in post-industrial cities, the physical environment, once associated with production, becomes recreational space (Short et al. 1993) and thus acquires new meaning. Third, and closely connected to the last point, the physical transformation of the city is not just a reflection of shifting industry, but also of shifting power relationships, as the meaning of the city becomes contested (Short et al. 1993, 207-209).
This is reflected in place marketing of the post-industrial city, where the ‘product’ - the city - is adapted in terms of how it can best be sold to the market (Holcomb 1993). City promoters have, for example, often concentrated on the growth of the service sector, either as part of a search for a post-industrial future (Ward and Gold 1994), or because of a lack of an industrial basis for growth. Cities have tried to establish economies of their own, rather than depending on producing exports, a trend that Jacobs (1984) calls ‘import-replacing’. Within these economies, the service sector has become more and more important (Holcomb 1994) and it is as part of this restructuring that many cities, towns and regions have looked towards tourism as a major source of income (Gold and Ward 1994).

Towns, cities, regions and nation states have engaged in place promotion. Directed at tourism, this often takes the shape of heritage promotion. Celebrating the past, through preservation or reconstruction of urban history, has played a central role in place promotion of many post-industrial cities (Ashworth 1992; Gold and Ward 1994). The ‘heritage industry’ has received considerable attention and marketing the past has become central to the process of urban transformation (Harvey 1985).

Promoting cities as tourism destinations often involves what Holcomb (1994, 115) called a ‘cosmetic make-over’: “the city is remade to fit a promotable image while the promotional image reflects a highly selective reality”. Competition between places has led to many such ‘make-overs’ and the “considerable effort put into the creation and projection of urban images reflecting vibrant, growing places ... [has led to] striking similarities in the images projected” (Holcomb 1994, 115). In fact, Philo and Kearns (1993, 20-21) pointed out the “absurdity that writers of promotional literature find themselves extolling the supposedly ‘unique’ qualities of supposedly ‘unique’ places using an actually quite universal vocabulary of ‘better, bigger, more beautiful, more bountiful’”. Place promotional literature, in summary, posits that the practice of place promotion, in most cases, leads to a loss of local distinctiveness as places become like each other, promoting the same or a similar post-industrial consumption-oriented place product, and, in the case of cities, urban imagery that is very similar for different places.
Image Making

With your kind forbearance, gentlemen, I must excuse myself now to appear in the window. You see, it says in Baedeker that at this hour I always do (Kaiser Wilhelm, cited in Boorstin 1961, 104).

The concept of image has had a somewhat changeable history in the social sciences. It was first introduced in 1956 by K.E. Boulding and became known to a broader audience through Boorstin’s (1961) book *The Image* (Meyer 1993). A further pioneer in the area was Lynch (1960) who analysed images of different cities in the United States, asking respondents to draw maps of their cities. He introduced the concepts of paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks, referring to the elements through which a city’s image is organised mentally (Lynch 1960). Lynch (1960) argued that these elements served as a basis for organising environments and his view, similar to Boulding’s (1956), focused on individuals as passive receivers of environmental stimuli.

Boorstin (1961, 185) went one step further to describe image as a “pseudo-ideal”, where expectations about places are raised through images and “everywhere, picturesque natives fashion papier-maché images of themselves” (Boorstin 1961, 107). Image, in this context, becomes as important as, or better than, the original, and place promotional material such as guidebooks raise expectations about places: “People go to see what they already know is there” (Boorstin 1961, 116). Reality is compared to the image and place is therefore evaluated in terms of its reputation rather than its character (Boorstin 1961, 189).

Shields’ (1991) term ‘social spatialisation’ is an appropriate if inelegant way to describe the impact of image-making on the object, the place. According to Shields (1991, 31), social spatialisation describes the “ongoing social construction of the spatial at the level of the social imaginary (collective mythologies, presuppositions) as well as interventions in the landscape”. The spatial is socially constructed and imagery is instrumental in this process:

Spatialisation manifests itself in conversation topics in that images of places and regions are often cited and commented upon .... an intellectual shorthand whereby spatial metaphors and place images can convey a complex set of associations without the speaker having to think deeply and to specify exactly which associations or images he or she intends (Shields 1991, 46).
In this way, places are subject to “pre-constructed cultural discourses” (Shields 1991, 31) that can become influential and directive in terms of the daily lives in places. Images of places can come to signify their essential character and so places become endowed with meaning as certain types of places, appropriate for certain types of activities.

**Destination Image**

Self-promotion as a tourist destination is one of the main ways that a nation shows itself to outsiders. In the area of tourism, research related to images has focused on destination images (countries, regions, cities and towns), images of available transport (e.g., air travel, travel by bus or rail) and images of tour operators and travel agents (Meyer 1993). Most research on destination imagery has concentrated on received images, that is, how humans receive or build images, how places are perceived and evaluated, mostly in the context of pre-trip decision-making and post-trip evaluation congruency (see Ahmed 1991; Selby and Morgan 1996). Most researchers, therefore, have looked at image from the point of view of its consumption, rather than its production.

Echtner and Ritchie (1991) provided a review of definitions of destination image and concluded that many definitions are vague and simplistic. Much research in the area so far has been concerned with attributes of destinations, using structured quantitative methodologies (such as standardised scales and sophisticated statistical techniques) to enable respondents to describe a place within a set of pre-specified attributes. Echtner and Ritchie (1991) recommended an increased use of unstructured methodologies for the purposes of measuring the holistic image, rather than concentrating on attributes and features.

In the context of place promotion, it is the making of images that is of particular interest. Hughes (1992, 32) looked at place marketing and images but went beyond the individual process of image development to look at tourism as a whole and how “tourism has been framed by particular ways of seeing that are the product of social construction”. Concentrating on place representations, Hughes (1992) argued that
image plays a role going beyond ways to market a destination. Place marketing is seen as a social phenomenon in which places are “created in the image of tourism” (Hughes 1992, 32).

Using a Scottish case study, Hughes (1992, 33) showed how “getting on the tourist map” is instrumental to the creation of a “geography of imagination” that reworks the past by selectively creating and constructing landscapes and history. Leaning on Urry (1990), Hughes (1992, 34) argued that tourism, in its postmodern form, “toys with history in ways similar to that of postmodern forms of architecture”, where myths and images are constructed and perpetuated “to make the experience extraordinary”.

Examining brochures of the Scottish Tourism Board, Hughes (1992, 35) showed how depictions of Scotland as a tourism destination are dominated by themes of castles and landscapes, focusing on a “population steeped in folk knowledge, ever ready to perform on cue” and emphasising the picturesque, mainly with the help of cropped photographs and careful selection of imagery.

Through this, a particular tourist representation of Scotland, designed to sell the destination, is offered, and “the construction of consumption, in this case tourism, is simultaneously the construction of an imaginary geography of Scotland” (Hughes 1992, 34). More importantly, places are constructed in the image of tourism, both on a social and a physical level. This, Hughes (1992, 39) argued, is a direct result of contemporary marketing philosophy applied to place, where “places can be sold and tourists can be treated as place consumers”. Contemporary marketing philosophy carries with it a dedication to profitability and place boosterism. Hughes (1992, 40) therefore concluded that places become packaged and shaped by a culture of consumption where, he claimed, “history is erased, as the ‘stories’ lose their meaning through reconstruction”.

An examination of Shields (1991), Massey (1995) and Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b) again shows how such a view is only partial. Places do not simply become reshaped in the image of tourism with a resultant loss of local identity and meaning. As Shields (1991, 60) put it, “partly through ongoing interaction, a site acquires its own history; partly through its relation with other sites, it acquires connotations and symbolic meanings”. In fact, tourism forces the development of meanings and this
development involves introspection, a look at what is valued, but it also requires looking outward to see what others value. Moreover, place promotion is a cultural practice that endows places with meanings and these meanings, I argue, are linked to a place’s history, the past activities that took place in it, its global connections and its everyday use. With this in mind, I inspected the case of Christchurch city promotion.

**Research Questions**

My inspection of Christchurch place promotion was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the promotional messages commonly conveyed about the city?
2. Who produces these promotional messages and why?
3. What is the role public bodies and private groups play in the promotion of Christchurch city?
4. How are place meanings and images constructed?
5. To what extent is the central city “created in the image of tourism” (Hughes 1992, 32)?
6. What are Christchurch’s ‘senses of place’?

I initially intended to restrict myself to the inner city of Christchurch, but soon realised that the image of the inner city was closely connected to, and part of, the image of the city as a whole. This relationship is impossible to break. The image of the inner city is of course created in part as a contrast to other parts of the city. So while in some cases the image of the inner city is the same to that of the whole city, it also has an image that sets it apart from the rest of the city.

**Methodology**

**Structuration**

The theories and findings of the social sciences cannot be kept wholly separate from the universe of meaning and action which they are about (Giddens 1984, xxxiii).
Giddens (1984, xvi) argued that social theory, European social theory in particular, is characterised by three important trends: First, the orthodox conception of human actors as passive beings influenced by forces beyond their control or understanding is increasingly being rejected in favour of an approach that emphasises the “active, reflexive character of human conduct”\(^2\). Second, language is accorded a much more important status. It is recognised that language not only plays an important role in being part of day-to-day activities, but that, more importantly, it is “in some sense partly constitutive of those activities”. Last, a de-emphasis of empiricist philosophies for the natural sciences has led to the recognition that some aspects of social theory, language and the interpretation of meaning in particular, need to be taken account of in the natural sciences (Giddens 1984, xvi).

Giddens (1984, xxi) developed the theory of structuration, an approach that tries to understand “how it comes about that social activities become ‘stretched’ across wide spans of time-space”. Arguing against postmodern approaches to the organisation of social life (though not explicitly so), Giddens (1984, xxi-xxii) equally rejected orthodox structural approaches to social theory:

> The structural properties of social systems exist only in so far as forms of social conduct are reproduced chronically across time and space .... I acknowledge the call for a decentring of the subject and regard this as basic to structuration theory. But I do not accept that this implies the evaporation of subjectivity into an empty universe of signs. Rather, social practices, biting into space and time, are considered to be at the root of the constitution of both subject and social object.

Human beings not only understand their activities, they also constantly monitor and reflect upon their own and others’ actions. Reflexitivity operates both on a discursive level and in what Giddens (1984, xxii) called “practical consciousness”, or “the things which actors know tacitly about how to ‘go on’ in the contexts of social life without being able to give them direct discursive expression”. Moreover, Giddens (1984, xxiii) argued, this practical consciousness is grounded in “the recursive nature of social life”, that is, the routine of daily social life leads to a feeling of “ontological trust or security” which perpetuates “the structured properties of social activity” through constantly recreating them “out of the very resources which constitute them”. In this way,

\(^2\) Giddens (1984) excluded structuralism and post-structuralism from this trend.
"routinization" (Giddens 1984, xxiii) and the associated knowledgeability of human agents (the above-mentioned practical consciousness) are what constitutes social activity. It is a challenge, though, to find out about this practical consciousness, as often, "what agents know about what they do ... [has been] restricted to what they can say about it" (Giddens 1984, xxx), leading to the neglect of the ‘other’ knowledge that is not verbalised.

Giddens (1984, xxviii) went on to suggest that “the sorts of understanding or knowledge that human beings have of their own ‘history’ is partly constitutive of what that history is and of the influences that act to change it”. Any search for universals, therefore, trivialises the context of this thesis. Agents could, at any stage in the process, act differently. Intentional action is always shaped by the aims of particular outcomes and these are always mediated by power or “transformative capacity” (Giddens 1984, 15).

The theory of structuration has at its heart the notion that social structures are both constituted by human agency and are constitutive of it. This is what is meant by Giddens’ (1984) term “duality of structure”. Structuration starts with individuals and portrays them and society in a continuous dialectic from then on (Johnston 1991, 264). Structures, which Giddens (1984) described as systems of rules and resources, are formative of social action, but are also formed - or changed - by social action:

The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of societal totality, but social practices ordered across space and time. Human social activities, like some self-reproducing items in nature, are recursive. That is to say, they are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves as actors (Giddens 1984, 2).

Fundamentally, then, just as “one of the regular consequences of my speaking or writing English in a correct way is to contribute to the reproduction of the English language as a whole” (Giddens 1984, 8), place promoters’ contribution to the images that are depicted about a place partly constitutes that place. Moreover, this is done consciously, in other words, contributing to the correct perpetuation of the English language is done for a conscious reason, and this can be elaborated upon: “To be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to
elaborate discursively upon those reasons (including lying about them)” (Giddens 1984, 3).

Giddens (1984, 284-285) drew three conclusions that are important for the organisation of social research. First, researchers need to partake in the social life under study, because understanding the meanings associated with this social life can only be accomplished by getting to know what participants already know: Second, in this study of social life, it is important to be sensitive to the “complex skills which actors have in co-ordinating the contexts of their day-to-day behaviour” and last, this day-to-day behaviour must be seen in a time-space context, that is, in the context of its development in space and through time.

Methods

My research has been guided by social geographical and sociological literature, in conjunction with intensive interviewing. This method allowed an examination of the meanings that arise from social interaction through interpretive processes of individuals and groups (Blumer 1969; Perkins 1988a). Places, in this context, become ‘things’ that humans act towards based on the meanings that they have for them (Blumer 1969; Giddens 1984; Mead 1934). The symbolic interactionist approach, in particular, has been useful to guide methods in my research. Humans derive meanings from social interaction and these meanings are modified through further interactive processes (Blumer 1969). In conjunction with my theoretical understanding of Giddens and Shields, symbolic interactionism provides the research methods appropriate for the context of this thesis. Understanding comes not from a search for objective laws or a detached investigation of behavioural measures, but from participation in the social context of place promoters and from interpreting this place promotion.

Through a thorough exposure to qualitative methodology (Lofland and Lofland 1984) and place perspectives (Blumer 1969; Eyles 1985; Perkins 1988a, 1988b, 1989), I came to choose a method grounded in symbolic interactionism. The mainstay of my fieldwork was conducted within a naturalistic research tradition (Blumer 1969; Perkins 1988a; Lofland and Lofland 1984). This particular method has been developed by
symbolic interactionists and has much in common with ethnomethodology and qualitative social geography (Eyles 1988; Perkins 1988a).

I employed a multiple research strategy, because this is helpful in understanding the complexity of the social world (Eyles 1988). This strategy consisted of a three-tiered approach involving the interpretation of place advertisements, intensive interviewing of the makers of this advertising and a historical analysis of texts to reveal the context of place promotion in Christchurch and New Zealand. This combination has afforded insights that could not have been gained using any other method (Burgess and Wood 1988), as interpreting place imagery became a dialectic between the advertisements and their makers.

I started my research by familiarising myself with my area of study through exploring the issues associated with place promotion in the inner city of Christchurch at the time of my entering the field. I used a variety of data sources, beginning with an exploration of available promotional material and gaining familiarity with local issues. Employing theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss 1965), I then chose a sample of five informants involved with city promotion and engaged in preliminary intensive interviewing, in order to familiarise myself with the structure and content of Christchurch city place promotion.

Having thus familiarised myself with the message and some of the messengers, I carried out an extensive media-based search of promotional material to do with the city, using “... all data-collection techniques ... ethical and relevant to the question posed” (Perkins 1988a, 306) in order to examine the place through its representations. This material ranged from newspaper articles and postcards to tourist brochures, ‘coffee table’ pictorials, videos, television advertising and billboard posters in the city. I then inspected the messages these media appeared to be giving about the city. My analysis focused on keywords and phrases in the text and I created categories of themes. Photographs in brochures and books were treated in a similar way, although I understand that visual imagery does not communicate in the same way as does text (Harper 1994; Hodder 1994; Stewart 1995). The process I employed resembles content

My analysis of historical place promotion for the country as a whole was based on secondary data only.
analysis, but I did not concentrate on quantification or semiotic analysis (see also Dann 1996). I was more concerned with the overall themes that were emerging (see Denzin 1989). The message I took from photographs and the keywords I assigned to them were further elaborated when I spoke to the makers of this advertising.

Following this, I found it necessary to develop an in-depth knowledge of the contexts of the promotional messages under study and, in particular, the meanings that were ascribed to those by their creators. As Ashworth and Voogd (1990:49) explained:

Not all communication is necessarily promotion. Almost all actual or potential users of particular places have an enormous existing store of information, feelings and expectations about them, without necessarily having had direct experience of them. This store of information is continually supplemented by a myriad of sources, very few of which are intended to influence specific consumer behaviour.

In order to understand this ‘myriad of sources’ and the influences they have on place promotion and image creation, it was necessary to become “part of the drama (or comedy) of making or perpetuating ... a place in the image of our interest group[s]” (Gibson 1978, 153). Interpretive research must make sense of the social world by treating people as knowledgeable agents and it must attempt to “make sense of their making sense of the events and opportunities confronting them in everyday life” (Ley 1988, 121). I then engaged in the mainstay of my study, further intensive interviewing with the makers of inner city promotional material, in order to gain their interpretation of promotional messages. This is based on one of the central tenets of the symbolic interactionist perspective: research must look at meanings and view the world as the participants do: “relevant observations consist of descriptive accounts by actors of how they refer to objects” (Baugh 1990, 41). Place promoters and their varied purposes and intentions act as filters in the selection and focus of imagery and therefore have a significant impact on the message. Moreover, “meanings associated with the built environment are not innate, but rather are authored by certain social groups and interests” (Jacobs 1994, 229).

I completed a further 22 intensive interviews with key promoters and local body representatives, who were all directly involved in promoting the inner city. Seven of
my participants were local authority employees (Christchurch City Council (CCC), Canterbury Tourism Council (CTC)), two worked in the accommodation sector (major hotels), and a further eight were involved in inner city retail promotion (Inner City Promotions Team / inner city retailers / businesses). Three interviewees were involved in the management of inner city attractions (e.g., the Arts Centre, the Tram) and two worked in the advertising industry (Photographers / Text Writers).

Interviews were carried out face-to-face and all took place in participants’ workplaces. This required semi-structured interview schedules, as interruptions of what I came to call ‘desk-edge’ interviews were common and often took the interviewee away from the interview for quite some time. Having familiarised myself with this pace during my first five test interviews, I then restructured my interviewing technique, as the leisurely-paced, free-flowing, unstructured interview style I had been using initially proved less than satisfactory because of the nature of the interview settings. It was hard not to lose the ‘thread’ of the interview and a semi-structured way of questioning proved to be necessary (see Appendix One).

I completed the study by analysing my data using NUDIST (Non-numerical data indexing system for the social sciences) and inspecting it or, as Blumer (1969, 44) would say, picking it up and turning it over, looking at it closely from different angles until I discovered the ‘shape’ of my data.

Having outlined my methodology and methods, this is an appropriate place to qualify the parameters of my investigation. In this thesis, I investigate the narratives of place promoters. I do not look at the narratives of locals, nor do I look at the narratives of people who visit the area. While both of these groups have a potential part to play in the construction of the ‘place’ of Christchurch, I concentrate on place promoters only.

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4 Details of association with organisations have been changed to protect the anonymity of respondents.
5 ‘Desk-edge’ came to stand for continually interrupted interviews, mostly by phonecalls, other employees or customers. In one interview, I was sitting in a hotel foyer shouting at the top of my voice to my interviewee who shouted back, with a piano being played right behind the table where I was interviewing (at least it felt that way during the deafening transcription experience).
Thesis Outline

In Chapter Two, I introduce the city of Christchurch and set the context for the remainder of the thesis by exploring Christchurch's history, geography, economics and politics. Following this, I review the case study of Christchurch place promotion and thereby set the informative context for the three substantive chapters that follow. In Chapter Three, I am concerned with the garden city image of Christchurch. I explore the way in which the garden city image, which has been part of place promotion since colonial times, is a link to the 'Englishness' of Christchurch and therefore to historical ties while at the same time it is used by current place promoters as a tool with which a new - as yet uncertain - identity of the city is negotiated. In Chapter Four, I continue this thread by showing how city heritage in Christchurch is connected to the land. I mean by this that urban identity is difficult to negotiate in a national place promotional context that has historically relied on nature imagery and that continues to appropriate natural rather than built environments. It is for this reason, I argue, that Christchurch place promoters deem it necessary to promote more than the city and its attractions - it is also vitally important for them to point out the connections between Christchurch and the 'Adventure Playground Canterbury', where spectacular activities in scenic settings are available to the visitor. In Chapter Five, I introduce one more meaning of the city - that of place claimed by different interests. The process of place promotion involves a dialogue between place promoters, residents and politicians, all of whom have different social and historical issues that they bring to the forefront of the negotiation. This negotiation takes the form of rhetoric and claims-making (Ibarra and Kitsuse 1993) and constraining meanings of the centre of the city are the outcome. As a result, I show that place promotion in Christchurch has little to do with a loss of local meaning or a homogenising of meanings. On the contrary, place promotion is both the outcome of local meanings as well as a tool by which local meaning becomes established\(^6\) in a dialogue between the languages of history, globalisation and everyday life in the city. Finally, in Chapter Six I draw together the argument and conclude that place promotion, in the Christchurch case, is a practice that endows the place of Christchurch with

\(^6\)Note that local residents' values and meanings of the city are not included in this study as this goes beyond the scope of my research.
meanings linked to its history, its place in the global context and its everyday use and development.
CHAPTER TWO
THE CHRISTCHURCH CASE STUDY

Introduction

A little bit of England transplanted to the Southern Seas - such was the dream of those who dared the hazards of colonisation to build the foundations of the city we inherit (Andrews n.d., cited in Tourist Publicity and Advertising Agency 1948)\(^7\).

![New Zealand Map](Image)

Figure Two. New Zealand (Sinclair 1985)

Christchurch became a city by Royal Charter on July 31, 1856 (Bruce 1932, CCC 1996/97). Located on the East Coast of the South Island of New Zealand (Figure Two)

\(^7\) When no page numbers are indicated for quotations, this indicates brochure material with no pagination.
and with a current population of 313,969 (Statistics New Zealand, cited in CCC 1996/97, 40), Christchurch is New Zealand’s third largest city and the South Island’s largest. It is situated in the province of Canterbury, on the Canterbury Plains, with the Pacific Ocean as its Eastern border and the Southern Alps to the West. Many of the city’s characteristics are a result of its location on a flat plain, bordered on three sides by the Port Hills, a coastal boundary, and a major river (CCC 1995a).

Christchurch covers an area of 45,249 hectares (CCC 1996/7, 37), nearly 16,000 of which are currently in urban use, with the remainder of rural nature. Just over 70 per cent of the urban area is allocated for housing, while industrial and commercial areas account for a further thirteen per cent (CCC 1996c, 36). Often called the most English of New Zealand cities and carrying the title ‘The Garden City’, Christchurch also contains over 3,000 hectares of parkland, making it a city of parks and gardens with a substantial amount of land used for recreation and open space. Laid out in rectangular fashion by its founders, the city’s regular street pattern is broken up by the flow of the river Avon. Christchurch is close to three beaches, Sumner, New Brighton and Taylor’s Mistake and is surrounded by geologically distinct environments, including the volcanic Port Hills to the South, part of Banks Peninsula, and the Canterbury Plains to the West. The city receives an average annual rainfall of 658 mm and an average of 2,040 sunshine hours per annum (CCC 1996/7, 37).

The inner urban area, as designated by the Christchurch City Council in its 1995 City Plan (CCC 1995a), provides homes for some 60,000 people and contains a range of tourist accommodation and community buildings. It surrounds the central business area and contains occasional high rise buildings, two and three story apartments, institutional buildings and converted heritage and industrial buildings for residential use, as well as some single storey detached dwellings so characteristic of suburban Christchurch. The central city is a popular place for residents to visit. In addition to being a major place of employment, the centre also offers opportunities for shopping, socialising and business (CCC 1996c).

The central city area, with which much of this thesis is concerned, is bordered to the West by the large expanse of Hagley Park, set aside as a public reserve by the city’s founders (Barnett, Gilpin and Metcalf 1963). The river Avon winds its way through a
grid of city streets that contains the city's tallest buildings and dense development, as well as the river precincts, formal gardens and a number of heritage buildings (CCC 1995a, 4/4). The city centre has two large squares, Cathedral Square (Figure Three), named after the Anglican Cathedral that dominates it, and Victoria Square (Figure Four), to the North, adjacent to the river. Cathedral Square is laid out in the form of a cross and was originally designed to be a privately owned space for the Cathedral. It has, however, become the focal point of central city activity and is currently under development. Christ-Church Cathedral, at its centre, was opened in 1881. Worcester Boulevard, recently redeveloped to accommodate the Christchurch Tourist Tram, connects Cathedral Square to the Christchurch Arts Centre, the Museum, the Botanic Gardens and Victoria Square. Victoria Square, originally known as Market Square, was once the commercial centre of Christchurch.

In this chapter, I provide the context for the remainder of the thesis by exploring Christchurch's history, geography, economics and politics. Local and global connections are inspected and the place of Christchurch and its issues and problems are introduced in order to familiarise the reader with the context and locality of city promotion. Last, and most important, this chapter reviews the case study of Christchurch place promotion and sets the informative context for the three substantive chapters that follow.

**Christchurch History**

If whole communities could be transplanted to a gigantic exhibition of the British Empire, Christchurch would provide an admirable example of peaceful British colonization according to plan (Mulgan 1935, 104).

John Mulgan's (1935) words exemplify the mindset of early colonial Christchurch. European settlement was seen to be an orderly exercise in anglicising a foreign land, peaceful only in so far as the indigenous residents of Te Waipounamu, the South Island of New Zealand, were few in numbers, offering little resistance: "as colonization proceeded, the Maori population - never more than 2000 - was quickly outnumbered" (Sorrenson 1992, 148).
Figure Three. Cathedral Square, Christchurch (Postcard from Colourview Publications, Oamaru).

Figure Four. Victoria Square, Christchurch (Postcard from Colourview Publications, Oamaru).
Maori people are believed to have arrived in the South Island of New Zealand about 1000 years ago. The Ngai Tahu tribe, originally of North Island East Coast origins (Davidson 1992, 20), lays claim to the majority of Te Waipounamu. The present area of Christchurch was an important Mahinga Kai, a place for traditional food sources (Parsonson 1992, 170). The Maori name for Christchurch is Otautahi, and Ngai Tahu chief Tautahi, from whom this name was derived, built a settlement on the banks of what was later called the Avon river. By the eighteenth century, there were several Ngai Tahu settlements throughout Canterbury, but the Maori population was decimated in the 1830s through the musket raids led by the Ngati Toa fighting chief, Te Rauparaha (CCC 1996/7, 75).

The first European landed in Canterbury in 1815, 45 years after Captain James Cook sighted ‘Banks Island’ (later discovered to be Banks Peninsula). During the 1830s, European presence here extended to whaling ships operating out of Lyttelton Harbour. In May 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in Akaroa, establishing formal links between the colony’s indigenous inhabitants and the British Crown, and soon after, settlers arrived in the Canterbury region. The vast area of the plains held attraction to colonisers and throughout the 1840s and 1850s, many land purchases took place. The Crown, principal agent of sale, failed to keep a number of promises with regard to land sales and the present area of Christchurch was secured from Ngai Tahu at a huge profit to the Crown: “In the South Island, Grey [the then governor] made some huge purchases, including ... the 20 million acre Ngai Tahu or Canterbury-Otago block in 1848 .... Grey had purchased most of the South Island for less than £15,000 .... [later charging] Canterbury settlers £3 per acre” (Sorrenson 1992, 148). This led to the basis for much of the present day Ngai Tahu claim to recompense for land lost in the South Island (CCC 1996/7, 75).

The Canterbury Association, a subsidiary of the New Zealand Company, under the leadership of Edward Gibbon Wakefield and his theory of organised colonisation, conceived of Christchurch as a Church of England settlement (Eldred-Grigg 1980; Wakefield 1868). Colonisation was to take place in an organised manner, providing for the inclusion of “the various classes of the community in due proportions” (Reed 1949,
89), so that the proportion of labouring to propertied emigrants was balanced (McAlloon 1997).

It was in the 1850s that the Canterbury settlement began to take shape with the arrival of four ships, the Charlotte Jane, the Randolph, the Sir George Seymour and the Cressy and it is from this time that the official date of the Canterbury settlement is taken (Bruce 1932). Throughout the Canterbury settlement, English names, “designed to perpetuate all that was deemed to be best in English society - including a stratified class system - proliferated” (Sulzberger 1989, 13). The city itself was named after the Oxford college of John Robert Godley, founder of the Canterbury Association (Andersen 1949). Situated on drained swampland and defined by the Western divide of the Southern Alps, the Eastern expanse of the Pacific Ocean, the volcanic base of the Port Hills to the South and the Canterbury Plains to the North, the city was laid out in rectangular blocks with a Cathedral site at its centre (Grey 1994). Its founding fathers sought to establish a community that mirrored English origins:

In mind was an exclusively Anglican colony that would transplant a more perfect and better model of English society (based on the rural England of a charitably remembered past), with its classes and institutions, for the relief of the mother country (Grey 1994, 158).

Christchurch was established as a self-supporting settlement, sponsored by the Canterbury Association, a “non-profit body set up to spread the ideals of church inspired colonialism” (CCC 1995a, 3/56). The first vision of the city was one “...as narrow as its [the Canterbury Association’s] vision of society” (Temple 1980, 2). The city was laid out in a square pattern “mostly neglectful of the strictures of unbounded earth and sky to form streets in keeping with Canterbury space” (Temple 1980, 2). By about 1870, “the image of a clean, orderly, English-style town had been created with well built houses, trees and pleasant gardens” (CCC 1995a, 3/57).

Temple (1980, 1) described the Christchurch settlement experience as an attempt by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, its principal planner, to implement his theories of planned colonisation: “Alleviate the misery of the British industrial poor, but order migration

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8 This claim has recently been disputed: Martin (1997, cited in Crean 1997, 4), a specialist in British colonial history, argued that the Canterbury Association took the name for the city of Christchurch “from the cathedral at Canterbury, in Kent”.
with the proper balance between squire, merchant, artisan and labourer”. This was not an uncommon idea among colonisers. Roe (1974, 68) observed a similar trend for Melbourne, Australia. For Melbourne, establishment reflected ‘post-British’ values. The colonists were building a British city “from scratch; and for themselves”. This city would be a “better British city”. Post-British, in this sense, refers to the fact that Melbourne - and much of Australia and New Zealand - were established by people who “had already left behind one civilisation” and who were not already successful but “people with an anxiety to prove themselves, and to prove themselves in ways that the civilized world would accept” (Roe 1974, 81).

Lessons learned from rapid urbanisation in Britain and associated problems of overcrowding led to careful planning of new towns in New Zealand by the New Zealand Company. Town belts were provided for and setting aside land for recreational purposes became part of the town planning approach (Hargreaves 1981). The part of Wakefield’s plan that had to do with the ordering of society, however, proved a failure because “markets for agricultural produce were too distant and agricultural labourers too scarce, or too aware of opportunities for equality in this new land, to make an old-fashioned squirearchy work” (Temple 1980, 1).

In its early days, Christchurch was a city of shopkeepers and tradespeople, “separate from and often resentful of the uppish landowner and self-appointed gentry” (Temple 1980, 3). The city was the main service centre to this rich farming hinterland that was resented, and much of Christchurch’s economy was based on supplying this hinterland through trade. Around 1900, and for a short time, Christchurch developed into the major industrial centre of New Zealand (Temple 1980), with tanneries and metalworks located in its prime industrial suburbs of Woolston and Sydenham. There was also a strong commercial elite, closely tied to the landowners.

Early descriptions of the city reflect its English orientation and the Cathedral City of the South (Wigram 1916), in those early days, firmly established what was to become an enduring image. Nearly one and a quarter centuries later, in 1975, Christchurch was still described as “the most English of New Zealand cities”, a city that, while being
“unmistakably New Zealand” also “encapsulates that which is English” (Jacobs and Smith 1975, 2).

The “Britain of the South”, as New Zealand was termed by New Zealand Minister of Lands (1906, 1), was recommended to prospective immigrants as appealing especially to settlers from the Mother Country, the UK, because of its “similarity of climate, productions, and geographical position” and its “surprisingly English ... appearance, architecture, and surroundings” (New Zealand Minister of Lands 1906, 253). The aim was to attract “persons of good character and preferably members of the Church of England” (Morrison 1948, 2), but the Wakefield aim of attracting working class immigrants was not an unqualified success:

The effort to transplant to Canterbury everything that was English led to its attracting a great number of young men of excellent family and education and of some means, and this, combined with the pastoral nature of the country, has brought about the strongly marked social distinction more observable in Canterbury than anywhere else in New Zealand (Sydney Morning Herald 1867, cited in Morrison 1948, 5).

The links to Europe can be established well into the 1950s and early 1960s in New Zealand, when the country’s production was still oriented towards Britain (Chapman 1992; Gibbons 1992). Tariff-protected manufacturing in the areas of clothing, footwear and food production as well as transport were the main employment sectors. In addition, towns and cities served as rural service centres and ports. Like Australia, Argentina, Canada and Uruguay, New Zealand developed as a dependent country (Gardner 1992; McIntyre 1992). Initially, this dependence centred on the ‘home country’, Britain, but to this day, New Zealand, like other semi-peripheral nations, exhibits a high dependence on and high sensitivity to changes in world markets (Hawke 1992; Mullins 1981a). This sensitivity to fluctuations in international trading conditions is a factor influencing the Christchurch economy as well.

**Economy and Politics**

Forty years ago, New Zealand enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the world. Based on competitive advantage in agriculture and the willingness of the British
market to purchase all the sheepmeat and dairy products the country could produce, New Zealand’s economy was secure, guaranteed by the British market (Clark and Williams 1995). Since then, New Zealand’s economy has experienced times of steady decline, with the standard of living falling from third in the world in 1950 to 23rd in 1987 (Clark and Williams 1995, 31). This development was exacerbated by the entry of Britain into the European Community in 1973, taking away the continued access to the British market and the oil shocks in the early 1970s, which resulted in higher import prices for crude oil and a decline in export markets, as overseas economies struggled with the new price structures (Clark and Williams 1995).

As a result of a combination of these global developments and local issues, in the 1980s and 1990s, New Zealand experienced substantial economic and social change (Boston and Dalziel 1992; Thoms 1992). In line with developments in many Western economies, New Zealand had gone through a period of economic instability characterised by inflation, declining terms of trade and growing unemployment (McRobie 1992). New Zealand in the late 1980s and early 1990s became a country very different from the one it had been. James (1992, 1), describing this transformation, called New Zealand a decade ago “a distant country .... securely a European society and culture ... [with a] Government [that] can be relied on to protect people from the economic shocks of the outside world”. The 1980s changed all that. Government was reorganised, the economy was opened to competition, subsidies and interventions were discontinued and more market-driven approaches characterised every aspect of New Zealand’s economy (Thoms forthcoming). The state rapidly withdrew from a wide range of activities (James 1992).

New Zealand cities were, of course, also changed by these economic developments. Competition between places, as they try to attract investment, has increased and has - in part - been driven by what Le Heron and Pawson (1996, 282) called “reregulation”, characterised by less state support for particular production or import substitution industries and investment that is increasingly being sought from international sources. The state has extracted itself from regional development and this is left to local government (Le Heron and Pawson 1996, 282-283). A new entrepreneurialism has
developed, centred on public/private partnerships, where local government often acts as an initiator and facilitator for local development.

Christchurch has seen strong economic growth over the last four years and it is estimated that the local economy grew by nineteen per cent in the four years to March 1996 (CCC 1996c, 54). The city’s economy is based on servicing the rural hinterland of Canterbury, export-led manufacturing and substantial involvement in tourism. The primary production sector amounts to two per cent of national activity and is thus not strongly represented in Christchurch city, but “despite the limited level of activity it would be incorrect to conclude the sector is unimportant for the economy of the city” (CCC 1996c, 6).

Primary production is a substantial activity in the wider Canterbury area (agriculture is the mainstay of primary production in Canterbury) and this has significant flow-on effects for economic activity in the city. The secondary sector, including manufacturing, utilities and construction, is strong and represents 28 per cent of Christchurch’s total economic output, employing 30 per cent of the local workforce (CCC 1996c, 61). Last, and increasingly more important, the service sector accounts for almost half of all economic activity in the city, showing substantial growth both in terms of revenue and employment (CCC 1996c, 61) (Figure 5): “The city under these changing circumstances has become increasingly a site of consumption rather than one based around and driven by manufacturing production or public administration” (Thorns forthcoming, 4).

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**Figure Five.** Christchurch Service Sector, 1991-1996 (CCC 1996c, 64).
Local employment has shown the strongest growth in the finance / insurance / real estate and the business services sectors, with significant growth also coming from the community / social / personal sector and the trade / restaurant / hotel sector. Growth in this latter sector has been characterised by part-time employment (up 23 per cent), not compensating for a reduction in the level of full time employment (down 27 per cent) in the manufacturing sector (CCC 1992, 2). A more recent report by the Christchurch City Council (CCC 1996, 58) confirms these trends: Employment growth has not been evenly distributed among primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, but has instead stagnated or declined in most manufacturing industries, while strong growth has continued to come from the service sector. This has led to some increase in full time employment in the city (up seventeen per cent since 1992), but the most significant growth has come from part time employment which increased at more than twice this rate by 37 per cent since 1992 (CCC 1996, 58). The nature and distribution of jobs in this can be problematic and benefits may accrue unevenly (Pawson and Swaffield, forthcoming, 11): “The argument that consumption based investment creates jobs has to be offset by the fact that the bulk of these are casualised: poorly paid, part time and offering little security”.

The reconstruction of the economy resulted in the necessity to add new forms of wealth creation to the traditional economic activity (Thorns forthcoming, 9). Tourism is seen to be one of the new forms of wealth creation and it has become an increasingly important part of the Christchurch economy: “Tourism over the 1980s and 1990s was widely seen as one of the growth areas which could create long term employment to replace that lost in the manufacturing and pastoral sector” (Thorns forthcoming, 9). Over the past decade, Christchurch has restructured some of its economic activity with a focus on tourism and leisure activities. This is connected to the growing importance of tourism to the New Zealand economy as a whole, reflecting a global increase in service industries and a local move away from reliance on a primary produce base.

The Canterbury region receives approximately 1.6 million visits per year which generate over NZ $1 billion in visitor expenditure per annum. Although slumps in visitor growth rates occur from time to time, due to fluctuations in air travel prices (see Watson 1996a, 1) or the changing value of the New Zealand currency, overall growth is expected to be
positive (CTC 1995, 20). Christchurch is a well established international and domestic tourism destination and the city has the second highest number of international visitor arrivals, after Auckland (CCC 1996, 65).

The Christchurch City Council has been very proactive in its encouragement of tourism development. The idea of a multiplier effect of public investment in tourism and other infrastructure appeals to the Council and, compared to other New Zealand city councils, Christchurch, under the leadership of Mayor Vicki Buck, is far more involved in local economic management. Winning the 1993 Bertelsmann Prize for the quality of its local government and being awarded the 1996 Consumer magazine prize for top local authority, the Christchurch City Council has strong local support for its initiatives (Brett 1996). The 1997 residential survey identified 94 per cent of respondents as satisfied with Christchurch as a place to live, 74 per cent with a strong feeling of belonging and 64 per cent thought that the City Council “was doing enough to promote community spirit in Christchurch” (Mathias 1997, 1). This public sector involvement in tourism has partly been shaped by inter-urban competition for investment and tourism dollars.

Other New Zealand cities, of course, have also tried and succeeded in attracting tourism and tourism investment. It has become increasingly important, in this context, for cities to develop a distinct image. There is competition between cities and “in such a climate of fierce competition, image becomes vital; it is one tool in interurban competition” (Mullins 1991, 331). This has been reflected in New Zealand in a number of city imaging campaigns. Auckland calls itself the ‘City of Sails’, Wellington is ‘Absolutely Positively Wellington’ and Dunedin is the city where ‘It’s all right here’. Furthermore, a number of smaller New Zealand places have also developed imaging campaigns and associated iconography to attract tourists (see Bell 1996; Bell and Lyall 1995). Christchurch, in this context, calls itself the ‘Garden City of New Zealand’.

The Case Study

_A city for all seasons_- The title of a Christchurch City Council picture book depicting Christchurch and the Canterbury region is just one of the many slogans currently used by the city’s promoters. The same book also refers to Christchurch as the “Garden City
of New Zealand”, a “musical city”, a “festival city” (CCC 1995d, 4). Superlatives and hyperbole are liberally scattered throughout and the text uses a range of colourful adjectives to paint a picture of a city that is claimed to be vibrant, lively, diverse and tranquil, active and dynamic and much, much more.

Christchurch is also “the city that shines” (CCC 1996d, 1), it is described as historic, cosmopolitan and the place to do business. According to the local Council’s vision for Christchurch, expressed in the current city plan, the city is attractive, creative, consultative, fair, productive, accessible, green, healthy, multicultural, safe, sustainable, efficient and it recognises the importance of heritage (CCC 1995a, 1). To its residents, the central city is a “special place ... an experience” (CCC 1996b, 1) and it is always “...a great time to come on in” (CCC 1996a, 4).

To tourists, the city is claimed to be something else again, as a Canterbury Tourism Council brochure outlines:

Christchurch! It’s the city of contradictions and surprises that beautifully encapsulates the best of what New Zealand has to offer. Here, in our comparatively unspoilt corner of the globe, wilderness adventure and sophisticated urban living are enjoyed in perfect balance by residents and visitors. Let’s explore! (CTC n.d.).

Contradictions are indeed part of the picture that is painted by the many public bodies and private companies involved in the promotion of the city, as are claims to be the best the country has to offer. This is neither new nor unique. Cities worldwide have been involved in place promotion, or the “conscious use of publicity and marketing to communicate selective images of specific geographical localities or areas to a target audience” (Ward and Gold 1994, 2). As part of this, many ‘stories’ about places have been created, and many claims have been made, and these, depending on who they are aimed at, focus very selectively on certain aspects of places. This is apparent in the context of tourism, in particular. Places that are tourism destinations, or those that aspire to become destinations, have long been involved in place promotion, often as part of a search for a post-industrial future, as described in the British and North American urban context (Ward and Gold 1994), or as a major development strategy (Cohen 1995). Many destination promoters attempt to develop and promote favourable imagery of their
places, in order to encourage tourists to visit (Phelps 1986). This place promotion has profound influences on the meanings of places.

Burgess (1990, cited in Gold 1994, 19) described place promotion as a process by which “meanings are encoded and decoded by specialist groups of producers and decoded in many different ways by the groups who constitute the audiences for those products”. This process, particularly in Western Europe, has traditionally been part of public policy, embodying notions of the public good and benefits to the community. More recently, place promotion has become influenced by market principles and has been aimed at profit-making (Ward and Gold 1994). This often involves alliances between public bodies and commercial interests, as in the case of Christchurch, where the local Council has been involved in inner city ‘Enhancement Projects’ (CCC 1994) that have taken strong account of commercial interests and continue to do so, dedicating public monies to city marketing (Watson 1995b, 1995c). Underlying this is the assumption that capital and labour will be attracted to localities that project local advantage (Le Heron and Pawson 1996, 281), thereby gaining a larger share of national investment. Urban and regional place promotion have been particularly important since the mid-80s in the ‘New Right’ climate: “against a political climate that stressed individualism and enterprise, cities and regions were seen as bundles of social and economic opportunities competing against one another” (Gold and Gold 1995, 19).

**Christchurch Place Promoters**

A number of public bodies and private interests are involved in the promotion of the city of Christchurch. Among these are the Christchurch City Council; the Canterbury Tourism Council; the Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC); Businesslink, a joint venture between the the City Council and the CDC; Canterbury Television (CTV); the major Christchurch hotels (e.g., Parkroyal); the Inner City Promotions Team and a number of inner city retailers, as well as organisations and individuals too numerous to detail.

The Christchurch City Council is one of the major promoters of the city of Christchurch and is very much involved in selling the central city to residents, business and tourists.
This has involved efforts both in terms of infrastructural developments and coordination of retail promotions in the area. The Christchurch City Council’s promotional involvement is threefold: first, the Communications and Promotions unit promotes the central city to its residents through events, coordinated retail promotions (such as initiating joint advertisements, or designing a logo that is used by retailers) and entertainment. Second, it also promotes the city to tourists, by creating brochures, a ‘coffee table’ pictorial book and by working together with the local tourism industry. This local tourism industry liaises with the Canterbury Tourism Council, a regional public body which works together with the New Zealand Tourism Board (NZTB) to market Christchurch and Canterbury overseas.

In 1994/1995, the Christchurch City Council, recognising that the central city of Christchurch had experienced a decline in foot traffic since the 1960s and, in particular, since the early 1990s (Walker 1997), began to actively promote the inner city. The Council established a Communications and Promotions Unit that is responsible for city centre marketing, events and festivals, the year 2000 celebrations in Canterbury and more general tasks such as media relations and information, the promotion of the city as a whole and international relations, such as sister city contacts. The specific objectives of the unit, as outlined in the corporate plan, are the following:

1. Promote Christchurch City to support tourism and development;
2. Manage international relations for the City Council;
3. Co-ordinate civic and ceremonial functions;
4. Provide a year round programme of events and festivals for Christchurch residents and the city’s visitors;
5. Plan, integrate and evaluate the city’s events programme to ensure a year round programme of high quality events and festivals;
6. Promote the city centre as a great place to shop, visit and do business;
7. Keep Christchurch citizens informed about Council initiatives;
8. Manage the Council’s relationship with the media; and
9. Contribute to the Council’s corporate culture by providing a regular staff letter (CCC 1997a, 1).
Part of this emphasis are several enhancement projects, including the development of City Mall in 1982, Victoria Square in 1989, the Worcester Boulevard beginning in 1991 and Colombo Street in 1996, as well as the current - and longstanding - redevelopment of Cathedral Square. In addition, the City Council established pedestrian malls, arcades and alleyways through the central city as part of an amenity and retail linkage among the main areas in the centre of the city (CCC 1994, 4-5). These developments are part of what Pawson and Swaffield (forthcoming, 2) called a “rapidly emerging landscape of consumption for city dwellers [and] domestic and international travellers: one of accommodation, wine bars and restaurants, upgraded shops”. This is often referred to as a process of “tourism urbanization” (Mullins 1991, 330), or urbanisation based on consumption, where parts of the city “appear mainly in the form of ‘consumption compounds’, large urban precincts built as spectacles and built for festivals and located usually in the inner city”. Among other things, this is hoped to encourage retail activity.

Retail Marketing

An annual NZ$ 350,000 budget was approved for the Communications and Promotions unit, to be spent on a coordinated effort to market the inner city (Watson 1995a)9. A new marketing strategy and accompanying logo were created and aimed at promoting the city centre as a “giant shopping mall” (Watson 1995b, 1). Retail marketing is one of the primary emphases of the Communications and Promotions unit and a subunit, the City Centre Marketing Team, is responsible for it (CCC 1996b, 1). The City Centre Marketing Team has to “maintain the central city as the main focal point of Christchurch” (CCC 1996a, 4).

The team recognised that a continual erosion of retail turnover since the first suburban shopping malls were established in the early 1960s, coupled with changes in technology that led to a changing workforce, necessitated a marketing strategy that coordinated individual retailers’ efforts and marketed the inner city in terms of events and festivals that - among other things - would attract shoppers. Christchurch’s city centre, like many other New Zealand city centres, has had to face increased competition from

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9 More recently, this budget was under threat of being cut by $150,000 (see Mathias 1997, Walker 1997).
suburban shopping malls, as shopping patterns have changed and suburban shopping boomed (Fletcher 1995).

Individual retailers were encouraged to use consistent imagery and a logo was designed by the unit. This logo (Figure Six), as described by a Communications and Promotions strategy document (CCC 1995b), symbolises the city centre in that it forms the shape of Cathedral Square as the focal point of the city. The arrows pointing inwards represent ‘points of difference’ and show a motivating force towards the centre. The lines between those arrows are the lines of the grid pattern of the city and, combined with the arrows, as one of my respondents put it, show that “all roads lead to the city centre” (Local Authority, Respondent 5). Lastly, the colours signify the City Centre, blue for the Avon, green for the gardens, yellow for sunshine and terracotta red for the buildings (CCC 1995c). There is a definite emphasis on the word ‘centre’, a trend not uncommon in urban imagery (Pocock and Hudson 1978, 124). This logo has subsequently been used in much of the brochure material that is produced about the inner city, as well as appearing on television commercials and in newspaper advertising. It also appears on complimentary parking cards, the shopping guides and Streettalk (CCC 1995b), the Communications and Promotions Unit’s retail newsletter.

![City Centre Logo](image)

Figure Six. City Centre Logo (CCC 1995b)

Promoters recognised early in these efforts to coordinate retail activity that “the malls sell themselves on price, the central city must be sold on quality” (Selway and Andersen 1996, 13). In addition, the central city is seen not just as a place for shopping: “People
visit for many reasons; one of the greatest strengths of the central city is its diversity. Coming to the central city is seen as an outing, an exciting experience, a leisure activity not a chore” (Selway and Andersen 1996, 15). This outing, though, needs to be made attractive to people through a complimentary parking card system and a series of shopping guides (CCC 1996a, 4), as the main issues that make shopping in the inner city less attractive are the “perceived lack of parking in the City Centre and the uncoordinated shopping hours” (CCC 1996a, 4).

The activities in which the city centre marketing team are involved include:

- Implementing consistent and coordinated shopping hours;
- Making available complimentary parking cards;
- Producing a quarterly newsletter for retailers in the city centre area;
- Producing shopping guides/brochures (“Bars, Restaurants and Cafes”, “Gifts and Galleries”, “Fashion and Accessories”);
- Developing and coordinating promotions;
- Opening up communication channels with and between retailers;
- Liaising between the Council and retailers; and
- Facilitating retailing seminars (CCC 1997b, 1).

Much of the city centre marketing team’s effort centres on coordinating retail marketing in the inner city and has recently succeeded in getting more than 400 retailers to sign an agreement to stay open on Saturdays, traditionally a day when most shops have been closed. Part of this activity is the development of central city events.

Events

Another unit within the Communications and Promotions Unit concerns itself with events and festivals in the city. The main festivals, in 1996/97, included the Festival of Romance, the Hoyts Heritage Week, the TV2 Kids Fest, the Christchurch Blossoms Festival, the Kids in Town Festival and, of course, the stalwart Christchurch SummerTimes, a festival of free outdoor entertainment that includes such annual favourites as the Teddy Bears Picnic, the Canterbury Draught Summer Rock, the
Candlelight Opera and Classical Sparks (CCC 1997b, 1). In addition to these main festivals, the events coordinators organise weekly free concerts and the Saturday Sidewalk Series, afternoon concerts in the city, and a Buskers’ Alley promotion has also been part of this programme (CCC 1996b, 1).

Tourism

Christchurch is a major domestic and international tourism destination. It has the second highest number of international visitor arrivals to New Zealand, after Auckland. Since 1992/93, international visitor numbers have increased by 30 per cent and it is estimated that international visitor spending amounted to $931 million in the year ending March 1996 (CCC 1996, 65). In addition to being a destination, the city is also a major gateway for tourists visiting Canterbury and the South Island. The economic impact of international tourism on Christchurch is considerable, and the economic multiplier to the local region is calculated to be 2.4, indicating that for every tourist dollar spent, the local economy benefits by $2.40 (CCC 1996c, 65).

Developing a Canterbury identity is seen as one of the most important components of a successful future for tourism in Christchurch and Canterbury. The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy laments that the “Canterbury Plains” identity is “a rather dull, incomplete description of a region that is ... more than a flattish stretch of landscape; it is varied, challenging, nurturing, stimulating, a hospitable place which breeds enterprising, confident, hospitable people” (CTC 1995, 7). The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy developed this need for an identity into a ten year plan that attempts to guide the region in its strategic tourism direction towards “[s]ustainable tourism which celebrates the very special lifestyle and landscape of Canterbury” (CTC 1995, 21). This lifestyle is described as “life ... lived in the comfort zone”, with a culture that is, rather vaguely, described as “broad, deep and varied”, in a region possessing a “strong education infrastructure” for its sports-enthusiastic citizens who are “avid readers” and also “familiar with Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane” and “increasingly sophisticated and outgoing, less insular and defensive” (CTC 1995, 8). Nevertheless, and assuming all of the above, the region is still seen as being in need of an identity that, in this report (CTC 1995, 16), is made up of four components of the local identity: “the dignified, graceful yet a touch quirky city of Christchurch; the fascinating and quite different
villages; the abundant, robust and active rural areas; the eclectic and wild natural areas”. Identification words associated with the Cantabrian identity include: “antarctic; civic gardens of quality; festivals - a great many; French settlement; mountains to coast; museums - many; parks of quality; punting - Avon River; rural abundance; tram” (CTC 1995, 17). These words are seen to be “strongly, distinctly or uniquely Cantabrian” (CTC 1995, 17).

It is recognised by the Canterbury Tourism Council that the imagery suggested in its report is contradictory. These contradictions are seen to achieve positive tension: “Seemingly there are several constrasting and contradictory character traits of Canterbury and Christchurch that can generate positive and dramatic tension, a boon for promotion” (CTC 1995, 18). The new and the traditional are juxtaposed to create positive contrasts and positive synergy, as Table One demonstrates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Pride, A Bit English</th>
<th>Dignified Educated Gracious</th>
<th>Lifestyle Celebrations Food, Wine</th>
<th>Outdoors Gardens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative and New</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XO</td>
<td>XO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Nature</td>
<td>XO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quirky or Wild Culture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Adventure</td>
<td>XO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean and Green</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Awareness Information</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table One. Christchurch Image Keywords (CTC 1995, 19)
Note: X= Positive Contrast, O= Positive Synergy

This local imagery deliberately connects to the national branding campaign under the flagship of the New Zealand Way brand. This brand and the associated venture which now includes 150 companies as brand partners, were established in 1991/92 by the New Zealand Tourism Board and TRADENZ as part of a drive to promote the country
overseas. The New Zealand way is a long-term branding strategy that aims to create and build an umbrella brand that supports New Zealand’s exporters’ efforts in the overseas marketplace and “denotes New Zealand’s unique character and special values” (Dunbar 1996, 33).

The core values of the New Zealand Way brand centre around “the quintessential New Zealand character - honesty, integrity, openness, excellence, innovation and achievement, environmental responsibility, and contemporary values” (Dunbar 1996, 33). It also uses certain words to describe the country as a whole. These include: “clean and green (one of the most clean and green nations in the world); very natural, very diverse, very spectacular landscape; very active, great adventure; an outdoors lifestyle; very friendly and positively traditional” (CTC 1995, 18).

In addition to local bodies like the Christchurch City Council and the Canterbury Tourism Council, a large number of individuals, companies and interest groups are also involved in inner city promotion. Examples include the major central city hotels, retailer associations and individual retailers. All of these were included in my study of Christchurch city promotion and in the context of this large variety of groups involved in place promotion, I became interested in the mechanisms involved in the creation of one or more inner city ‘senses of place’.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has set the context for the three substantive chapters that follow. First, I placed Christchurch in its historical context, from pre-European contact days to the more recent history of the Canterbury settlement and its founders. Second, I inspected local and global connections and the city’s economy and politics were introduced, with particular emphasis on the shift in the local economy from reliance on the primary and secondary sectors to a more recent growth in the service sector. Tourism, I pointed out, has become increasingly important in this restructured city economy. Following this, I described the case study of Christchurch city promotion. I introduced place promoters and outlined the structure and outcomes of city promotion. The themes that emerged from my research are detailed in the next three chapters.
CHAPTER THREE
THE GARDEN CITY

Introduction

We try to develop a cosmopolitan lifestyle, or we try to portray a cosmopolitan lifestyle, because that's kind of like our new image, our old image used to be Christchurch, England, English garden, ... now we're saying we've kind of come of age (Local Authority, Respondent 7).

A Christchurch place promoter expresses his thoughts about the changing promoted image of the city. The English Garden image that Christchurch has traditionally carried is still part of its place promotional message today, but increasingly, there is a move away from it. Place promoters talk about “working within the Garden City image, but ... overlaying on top of it the attractions, the activities, the life” (Local Authority, Respondent 6). Place promoters also talk about “the garden ... as a platform, over which there is overlaid this diversity of activity and light” (Local Authority, Respondent 6).

The English gardens, then, are an image of the city of Christchurch that is being renegotiated by place promoters and an investigation of this serves to illustrate the local search for identity in the context of increasing globalisation. In this chapter, I explore the way the garden city image, which has been part of place promotion since colonial times, is linked to Englishness and this, in turn, is linked to Christchurch identity. Garden city imagery, in the Christchurch context, is at once a link to the past and a tool for breaking away from it.

I argue that there are limitations to the claimed loss of local identity and the supposed homogenising of places so often associated with place promotion in an increasingly global culture (see Chapter One). Place promotion, in the Christchurch case, negotiates a new sense of identity and is influenced by both global and local forces, as well as historical connections. Christchurch's gardens are connected to the colonial past of the city and the taming of the wilderness, or, in more appropriate local terms, the draining of the swamp. The use of the concept of 'garden' has close links to identity-building. Contemporary place promotion constructs the place as one that has its roots in English gardens, but is much more than that.
The Global and the Local

Urry (1995, 152) argued that globalisation of culture is characterised by new forms of global communication, the rapid increase of international travel, international capital movement, a smaller number of languages of communication and the widespread use of English and more widely shared notions of citizenship and democracy. Bramwell and Rawding (1996) added to this a growing ease of spatial mobility, both for capital and people. The influence of global forces, it is often argued, leads to a homogenising of places everywhere.

Massey (1994, cited in Pawson 1996, 339) disputed this and argued that “the social relations of power associated with globalisation are simultaneously homogenising differences between places and, due to processes of uneven development, enhancing the uniqueness of places”. In the context of this thesis, Massey’s words are important. The Christchurch place promotional experience leads to an expression of local identity, as well as adopting homogenising meanings. Moreover, while globalisation has exposed New Zealand and New Zealanders to new values and meanings, in some ways this has led to an increased search for uniqueness and local identity:

Suddenly the world is global, not just Christchurch, but the charm of Christchurch is something that has to be enhanced in a global environment (Local Authority, Respondent 3).

This, Le Heron and Pawson (1996, 282) argued, is to be expected:

As cities and citizens become exposed directly or indirectly to the global marketplace, through investment and employment, through consumption itself, through the burgeoning visitor industry and through the media, the assertion of local identity is increasingly important (Le Heron and Pawson 1996, 282).

Massey (1995) argued that places are always constructed as a result of their social contexts, that is local uniqueness is always a product of wider forces impacting on place across time. What is thought to be unique is, in Massey’s (1995, 183) words, “already hybrid”. Recent emphasis on globalisation as the major influence shaping place, therefore, is misleading, as “places ... can be understood as articulations of social relationships some of which will be to the beyond (the global), and these global
relationships as much as the internal relationships of an area will influence its character, its ‘identity’” (Massey 1995, 186).

In addition, individuals in these places are always situated in the world (Entrikin 1991). That is, identity and action are interconnected with context, are situated in place. Action that is central to the production and consumption of place happens first at the local site and this contributes to local, intermediate and global levels (Le Heron and Pawson 1996). Place promoters, therefore, are not simply helpless agents overpowered by global forces. On the contrary, places are constructed at the intersection of the global and the local, creating a continuous renegotiation and reconstruction of the local sense of place. The case of Christchurch place promotion shows how the image of the English garden has become outdated to place promoters, as exposure to global changes has led to a local search for identity that moves away from the English gardens.

**The English Gardens**

Many New Zealand places use images of flora and fauna in their promotional message. There is Warkworth, Kowhai Town and Te Awamutu, Rosetown. Palmerston North was once called the city of roses but now finds this label too old-fashioned and has renamed itself the ‘knowledge city’ (Bell and Lyall 1995). A number of places offer a garden experience as part of their promotion and others use garden titles (e.g., Waimate, Carterton, Rotorua and Waikanae, see Heaton 1996, 73). Christchurch has kept its traditional and somewhat generic association with gardens, but goes one step further than simply calling itself a garden city. It claims to be ‘The Garden City of New Zealand’. Christchurch’s promoters extensively use the garden city label. Gardens build the mainstay of pictorial representations of the city and many of the city’s events and festivals use garden imagery and celebrate Christchurch’s landscape, flora and fauna (Figure Seven).
City of Gardens

Throughout New Zealand, Christchurch is famed as the 'city of gardens', and one hectare in eight of the land within the city is public reserve or gardens. In many suburbs, the private gardens surrounding each house are beautifully cared for. Looking at Christchurch now, it is hard to realise that when the first settlers arrived it was a treeless and rather swampy waste, covered with tussock.

HAGLEY PARK

Hagley Park was part of the original town plan drawn up before the first four ships left England. The idea was that the centre of the city would be surrounded by a green belt some 1,000 acres in area, but much of this was sold for redevelopment, and only Hagley Park survived.

In the 1850s work started to turn this area into a park. Flax and toe toe were dragged from the Avon, tussock was cleared and trees planted. Early race meetings and cricket matches were held amongst the tussock, but conditions soon improved.

Some of Hagley Park’s edge was nibbled away. In the 1850s ten acres went to Christ’s College and another six to the Christchurch Hospital Board. By far the biggest area, 30 hectares, was designated Government Domain and it became the Botanic Gardens.

These gardens, confined within a loop of the Avon, give Hagley Park much of its charm. They are beautifully landscaped with mature trees and speciality gardens, while a series of conservatories house tropical and indoor plants.

New Zealand plants, particularly those endangered, are a major concern. There is an extensive New Zealand garden where the plants have been established in ecosystems.

Figure Seven. City of gardens (Haworth 1995, 6).
For many arriving at the city by air, a first glance from an aircraft descending towards the Canterbury Plains confirms this visually. Christchurch certainly is a city of gardens, planned and built around the large inner city reserve of Hagley Park and sprinkled with small reserves and private gardens. As a planned settlement, Christchurch was systematically set out by its founders as a “reaction to urban development from the ‘Industrial Revolution’ and within the context of a lively debate about ‘the value of open space’” (Tipples 1992, 31). The city incorporates many of the garden city movement ideals which were a reaction to nineteenth century industrialisation and which dominated British planning practices (King 1990). Tipples (1992) suggested that the ideas of Christchurch’s principal planner, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, may even have preceded and therefore influenced Ebenezer Howard, the founder of the early twentieth century garden city movement\textsuperscript{10}. While the term garden city is constantly referred to in planning literature, just what it stands for differs from context to context. More often than not, it has little to do with Howard’s (1898, cited in Howard 1985) social reformist thinking and master plan style and simply denotes the - real or projected - presence of a garden context: “the absence of congestion of dwellings, .... ample provision of parks, playgrounds and open spaces, the planting with trees and grass” (Sulman 1921, cited in Ward 1992, 115).

Tipples (1992, 34-35) suggested that Christchurch should have been called ‘the first garden city’, a term coined by Sir John Gorst, the Special Commissioner of the British Government at the 1901 International Exhibition in Christchurch:

> I feel that I have been in England all the time. It is the loveliest town I have ever seen. It is a ‘garden city’. To my mind Christchurch is exactly what we are trying to make our garden cities in England. It has the same local streets, open spaces, and beautiful gardens (Gorst 1901, cited in Tipples 1992, 35).

The garden city idea historically stood for the Englishness of Christchurch and all that was good about a pre-industrial version of ‘Mother England’. Christchurch was planned and laid out in typical English fashion. Homesick settlers planted English trees that reminded them of home (Morrison 1948) and the establishment of gardens “was an important way in which settlers countered the atomisation of settler society, loneliness

\textsuperscript{10}Similar claims have been made about Chicago, which is thought to have carried the ‘garden city’ label prior to Howard’s coining of the term (see Ward 1992).
Figure Eight. The most English of all cities (Haworth 1995, 4).
and the distance of kin” (Tipples 1992, 31). Edward Gibbon Wakefield’s desire for “transporting English Home County social structure ... [matched] a nineteenth century urban nostalgia for a rural way of life already under threat by the industrialisation of England” (Bell 1993, 229). Consequently, the garden city image has always been about “European traditions of garden design” (CCC 1995a, 47). It also represented the taming of the wilderness, the colonial victory over the foreignness of New Zealand’s landscape.

Christchurch, then, became the English Garden City (Figure Eight) because of its “interconnectedness with elsewhere” (Massey 1995, 138):

Yes, its English heritage is really quite important, because those values that came from England at the time may have come from another city in Europe, but at the time they came from England, and they, in planning terms, have been put fairly on the ground, and should be there for many hundreds of years (Local Authority, Respondent 3).

The possession of a new country was important to the New Zealand identity and the “success of the colony through its early rural productivity affirmed its distinction as the ‘best place in the world’” (Bell 1993, 219). Place promotion traditionally emphasised the Englishness of Christchurch and suggested that “the influence of England is everywhere here” (Castle 1971, 22). It was also oriented towards Britain: “There was a time when publishers published a new title and it came out in time for pre-Christmas posting to England” (Advertising, Respondent 1).

The garden city label is a link to the city’s past and now often becomes a vehicle for expressing change in the city. The significance of the garden city image in today’s urban place promotional context is linked to its early meaning and the significance of the natural in New Zealand’s heritage.

Colonial Place Promotion

For states in the New World, nation-building has been intimately related to conquering the wilderness .... The transformation of the wilderness has a special place in their national identity (Short 1991, 19).
Concepts of nature and ideas about wilderness, countryside and city vary for different cultures and societies. Short (1991) examined the concepts of, and myths about, wilderness, countryside and city in three different societies: the UK, the US, and Australia. Using English novels, US Western films and Australian landscape paintings, Short’s (1991, xviii) aim was to “identify and decode the major sets of ideas about the wilderness, country and city in the belief that there is nothing so social as our ideas about the physical environment”. The classical conception of wilderness saw it as something to be subdued in order to create a garden. Wilderness held little attraction, it was a wild, barren landscape or a place of danger. The garden represented a “middle landscape” between the two polar opposites of city and wilderness (Pepper 1986, 85). This garden “became the image of human achievement and ethical endeavour ... taken across the ocean by Protestant sects” (Short 1991, 13). Taming the wilderness became not just a means of survival but also a sacred act: “The dominant Judaeo-Christian theme has been the possibility of salvation through making the garden from the wilderness” (Short 1991, 14-15).

With the transition from the classical period to the modern period, a shift in the conception of wilderness became apparent. No longer was the world viewed as created by God and then abandoned to human sinfulness. Progress in science, in particular the works of Galileo, Bacon, Descartes and Newton, changed the dominant world view (Short 1991). This also led to a strong romantic movement which revolted against material changes in society (Pepper 1986) and wilderness became “a symbol of lost innocence, a source of nostalgia for a golden age and a metaphor for the fall from grace” (Short 1991, 10). This romantic concept of wilderness as a revered, sacred space is contrasted with the traditional classicist wilderness concept as a place to be controlled and organised.

Short (1991, 65-66) argued that these ideas about wilderness were initially carried over into new societies. But while late eighteenth century English notions of landscape aesthetics and associated romantic ideas about wilderness were influential in new societies, these societies often had to initially view wilderness entirely differently. Settlement meant taming the wilderness to create productive land. In the United States, wilderness became a symbol of identity, a conscious attempt at distancing from European notions of nature and society. Moreover, the ‘frontier’ discourse and
associated notions of conquest of wilderness and the taming of the ‘savages’ were powerful symbols of national identity and social cohesion and aspects of American culture today continue to pivot around the frontier ideology: Even “Captain Kirk of the Starship Enterprise used to describe space as the final frontier” (Short 1991, 94).

It was only in the twentieth century that this ideology was replaced in the US by the view that this wilderness was uniquely American and therefore needed to be preserved. Most importantly, though, it also emerged as something that distanced the new world from the old: “While Europe could boast man-made cathedrals, the USA had older natural rock cathedrals, ... the great American landscape became the wilderness scene” (Short 1991, 96). A similar tendency to promote nature over culture can be observed in New Zealand. Of particular interest in terms of Christchurch’s gardens is Pawson and Swaffield’s (forthcoming, 11) suggestion that “on the beach, and in the park or garden, culture and nature come together, the former having apparently tamed the latter to provide consumer habitats that are very popular with tourists and locals alike”. The ‘middle landscape’ of the garden has always been of significance in New Zealand place promotion.

**Early New Zealand Place Promotion**

No one boasts about manmade monuments in New Zealand, however impressive. Nature will always beat mankind hands down in this uneven lottery (Guthrey Pacific n.d., cited in Stewart 1995, 124).

New Zealand has had a different settlement experience from that of the United States or Australia, as settlement goals here were “based on the goal of reproducing British society in the antipodes, not of escaping it, as happened in some parts of North America” (Willmott 1987, 4). Bell (1993, 48) argued that an enduring picture of Arcadia and the ‘rural myth’ that is associated with it, based on ideas of a “pre-capitalist Golden Age”, was one of New Zealand’s foundation myths. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the founder of the Canterbury settlement, was influenced by this and his colonisation schemes reflected a longing for pre-industrial rural Britain, or what was nostalgically remembered of that time.

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11 As I use a wide variety of historical quotes, non-inclusive language has not been amended.
Johnston (1975) examined image and place promotion in New Zealand for the period of 1839-1855. Aimed mostly at immigrants, place promotion was filled with romantic themes and emphasised New Zealand’s scenic beauty and extraordinary nature, while also concentrating on utilitarian themes in order to prove the country’s suitability for settlement and crop production. Similar to the promotional literature for North America in settlement days, or that of Australia, New Zealand’s promoted image reflected conflicting attitudes towards wilderness:

On the one hand, the vegetation of gigantic ‘primal’ forests and dense undergrowth meant ‘wilderness’ with romantic connotations of ideal beauty and solitude. On the other hand, clearing that vegetation would permit realisation of the image of ‘Eden’ or ‘Arcadia’ as ‘farm’, where one could grow, with little effort, traditional British crops and pasture, and the more exotic fruits, grains and vegetables of Southern Europe. In addition, ‘Eden’ or ‘Arcadia’ also meant ‘garden’ of English park trees and flowers (Johnston 1975, cited in Heaton 1996, 35).

Familiar British landscape features were used as a framework to describe the new country and similarity to Britain was used as reassurance initially: “[L]and cleared and re-planted with ornamental introduced species ... provided proof of British orderliness and prosperity” (Lochhead, cited in Heaton 1996, 99). Later on, differences such as New Zealand’s mountainous and rugged landscape were emphasised. Overall, descriptions kept to utilitarian themes and the suitability of the new country for crop production (Johnston 1975). The theme of the garden to be created was evident from the beginning: “[it is] a beautiful garden, and capable of being rendered the most delightful spot on earth” (McKinlay 1939, cited in Johnston 1975, 141).

Julius Vogel (1875), in his guide for immigrants entitled The Official Handbook of New Zealand: A Collection of Papers by Experienced Colonists on the Colony as a Whole, and on the Several Provinces, described the country very much in utilitarian terms and this reflected European landscape values at the time (Heaton 1996). The presence of introduced plants, Kidd (cited in Vogel 1875, 247) thought, would eventually make New Zealand “as attractive ... as the best districts of the old country”. Johnston (1975, 166), having examined four aspects of the physical environment in promotional publications about early New Zealand, concluded that “the emigrant would have learnt that New Zealand was a country almost without parallel in the world. Here were most
of the best features of Britain, in addition to many of the features of other countries admired by writers and scholars”.

Heaton (1996, 58) suggested that romanticism and an emphasis on the ‘picturesque’ were influential in shaping early touristic place promotion in New Zealand. Similar to promotion aimed at immigrants, tourists were informed of the natural beauty and scenery New Zealand had to offer. There was an emphasis on natural environments, as the country had little to offer in terms of built environments (Heaton 1996) and this coincided with the romantic movement, which “found rural areas and wilderness genuinely attractive” (Heaton 1996, 60).

New Zealand’s relationship with Europe was instrumental in transforming the ‘wild untamed’ imagery of colonial times into ‘clean green’ imagery. European settlers transformed wilderness into gardens. Current place promotion relies on scenic beauty and the lushness, greenness and fertility of the country but it also employs imagery of tamed country, productive pastures and nature as a safe haven which contradicts earlier versions of a ‘wild’ New Zealand (Stewart 1995, 33). Pawson and Swaffield (forthcoming, 13) argued that the importance of gardens and gardening is a product of a cultural revaluation of the garden, reflecting “the garden’s potential to deliver the pastoral qualities of well ordered nature and security”.

Contemporary tourism destination marketing partially subverts the ‘wild’ New Zealand to accommodate the ‘clean green’ component, but this subversion, Stewart (1995, 33) suggested, is not complete: “hence the presence of untamed, wild and pagan images”, which is important in terms of attracting tourists:

New Zealand through tourism images is constituted as marginal and Other to an international market. A play on New Zealand’s location and its youth produce a quaint, slow paced, holiday destination. A place where one can experience and interact with nature as it used to be - primal and unspoilt (Stewart 1995, 41).

The ‘clean green’ image has a role in creating difference, it becomes a tool used by the tourism industry (Stewart 1995). The feminising of nature is part of this. Nature is constructed as feminine and this reinforces the
'clean green' image ... in three distinct ways. First, New Zealand's landscape is constructed as unspoilt and virgin. Second, nature is constructed as seductive (nature as siren), appealing and waiting to be conquered. Third, mother nature is presented in various ways (Stewart 1995, 140).

Stewart (1995, 153) suggested that there is a need to shift away from the conservative 'clean green' imagery as this is thought to contradict images of action, entertainment and adventure. The link between women and nature infers passivity and reinforces "New Zealand as a dependent submissive colony" (Stewart 1995, 168). This is interpreted as being antiquated and unsophisticated and entirely unfortunate at a time when New Zealand "is eager to assert its independence as a nation" (Stewart 1995, 168).

Tropes of femininity, liminality and marginality act to create a different destination, one that distinguishes New Zealand from other countries, but this also results in the recreation and re-inscription of colonial discourse.

If this 'clean green' imagery becomes replaced by 'new world' imagery, in the form of a break away from provincialism and an infusion of metropolitan and cosmopolitan imagery, then this, Stewart (1995) argued, would result in "a certain 'sameness' with other tourism markets and thus, a transformation from Other (natural and exotic) to Same (cultural and modern). In other words, the creation of New Zealand as a new urban, cultural centre, in order to attract tourists, "may prove to be ineffective and unsuccessful" (Stewart 1995, 127).

Stewart (1995, 173) concluded by suggesting that "the effective marketing of a combined tourism image could claim the recognition that is being sought: a 'clean green' adventure playground in front of a sophisticated urban culture capturing the best of a range of tourist worlds". This is precisely what Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b) have argued is already happening. 'Clean green' has already been recognised as antiquated and conservative, and alternative imagery has been part of New Zealand's tourism representations for years. In the context of the city of Christchurch, it is Englishness and the English garden image that are seen as antiquated and in need of replacement.

The way the garden city image is currently used indicates a shift in the values that went with the gardens in earlier days - the Englishness of Christchurch. The garden city
image has become a vehicle for expressing change in the city. Today, in place promotional terms, there is a move away from the Englishness of Christchurch, as part of a search for identity. The city’s promoters are now embracing a different image because of changing “interconnectedness with elsewhere” (Massey 1995, 183). In recent times, its current promoters claim, Christchurch has become “something far more interesting than just an antipodean copy of an English market town” (Jacobs and Wilson 1985, 40) and this is evident in recent pictorials and other promotional publications about the city.

**More than English**

Bell (1992, 74) argued that “colonial nations often have to cut themselves off from their maternal origins to create a new and distinctive identity, and tourism can be used to help create the separation”. She observed this in the US, where, in the 1820s and 1830s, the promotion of tourist attractions helped “to lessen a dependence on Europe for all things cultural” and in Australia, where the “cultural cringe’ has also been partially side-stepped by a focus on national attractions, and reduced by the prominence of cultural icons” (Bell 1992, 74). A similar development can be observed in New Zealand.

Originally called the Britain of the South (Hursthouse 1861) and The England of the Pacific (Clayden 1879) in its early promotional literature, New Zealand today asserts a separate identity as an independent trading nation in the South Pacific:

> The British Empire is nowadays as spectacularly absent in ‘modern’ New Zealand as the ‘traditional’ Maori culture it came to civilize - swept away by the secular nation-state of New Zealand (Blythe 1988, 28).

Sinclair (1986, 96) suggested several reasons why New Zealand kept its ties with Britain longer than Australia. First, New Zealand settlement took place more recently and its European inhabitants were mostly immigrants. Second, New Zealand, compared to Australia, had a much lower percentage of Irish immigrants, and the anti-English tendencies observed in Australia did not surface here. Last, “it may be presumed that the convicts and their descendants were no more likely to idealise England than were the Irish” (Sinclair 1986, 96). Consequently, New Zealand has often been depicted as “clinging to the skirts of the mother country” (Sinclair 1986, 96), while Australia sought independence earlier.
More recently, Australia and New Zealand have been undergoing “substantial self-examination in terms of identity and cultural composition” (Hall and McArthur 1996a, 5). A reduction in the significance of British heritage values and ideals through the development of a more independent and multicultural society here has led to the need to express a locally shaped and defined heritage that reflects this (Hall and McArthur 1996a, 1996b), as “New Zealand [is] a country which has never fully satisfied the need for an identity” (Oliver 1992, 545). Television advertising in recent years has been trying very hard to give us a national identity. Perry (1989) argued that this identity is based at least partially on popular sentiment, as this cannot be ignored in the context of maximising audience numbers.

In recent decades, increasing travel by New Zealanders has led to more confidence about New Zealand’s identity: “New Zealand nationalism has become more international, not in the sense of becoming anti-national, but in the sense of taking a broad internationalist view of the role of the nation” (Sinclair 1986, 261). This, Sinclair (1986, 261) concluded, is accompanied by a move away from the British culture and towards the multicultural, even if sometimes only in aspiration. This move away from the English is evident in Christchurch’s place promotion, at least in the way the city’s promoters talk about their promotions:

While we have [an] old English background, it’s also about growing and learning from that, and I think that it’s fair to say that Christchurch is certainly developing itself to move away from the old English garden heritage, the Christchurch of yesteryear (Local Authority, Respondent 1).

In much of the current promotional material about Christchurch, there is a subtle shift away from the Englishness of Christchurch compared to material published in the 1970s or earlier, and this is a deliberate one, as place promoters indicated. Where books about Christchurch in the 1970s depicted it as the most English of New Zealand cities (Jacobs and Smith 1985), later publications pointed out that Christchurch is very different from the cathedral town and university college which gave it its name (Jacobs and Wilson 1985):
Christchurch is also typically a ‘new world’ city in an immigrant nation rapidly coming of age, that no longer feels the need to borrow primarily from a culture which originated on the other side of the world. In our temperate climate, English architecture and lifestyle have adapted and absorbed the influence of the South Pacific and Asian cultures that surround us (CCC n.d.).

Moreover, Christchurch was no longer seen as just a “transplanted slice of England” (Jacobs and Wilson 1985):

The city has shrugged off its colonial ethic and adopted a more cosmopolitan approach. It has a bi-cultural and multi-cultural identity now that has developed alongside its citizens (CCC 1995d, 51).

This is connected to shifts in the relationship with Europe and also the importance of the British Empire: “England isn’t that sort of pinnacle of Europe anymore, we know a broader Europe” (Advertising, Respondent 1).

Part of this Englishness is kept, however. Christchurch manages “to retain a charm and dignity reminiscent of its English beginnings”, it is a “happy marriage of the charm of its past to its progressive present” (Jacobs and Jacobs 1992). A local hotel brochure expresses how aspects of the Englishness are still part of place promotion.

Christchurch is a unique location. A city which blends the best of New Zealand with classic English traditions. A touch of the old world in the South Pacific .... Age old charm and elegance, youthful vivaciousness and flair ... that’s the remarkable combination which makes Christchurch so special (Parkroyal n.d., 1).

The overriding theme in place promoters’ talk about the use of the garden image and the Englishness of Christchurch was that both were regarded as somewhat outdated and therefore only used in the promotion of the city as a base layer, in order to blend history with a more contemporary place identity:

We also talk a lot about the blend of historic, in terms of the whole English thing, and the architecture, and how that comes through into the cafe scene, ... I think we’re lending ourselves to being almost a little European, which is not a bad thing, but I still would like to think that we’ve got this bit of English here (Inner City Retailer 2).
Others were not so positive about retaining the English component, because they saw it as 'nothing unique':

I think there's nothing unique in being an old slice of England, so it's been really important to develop our own culture here. We have become a very cosmopolitan city, we have many nationalities represented here, which is really exciting (Local Authority, Respondent 1).

Some place promoters were very strongly opposed to the Englishness label:

I just find it cringe-material, I hate it, it seems to me that New Zealand is at that point where it is struggling with its own identity but at least aware that it has an identity that is separate and distinct from England or America or anywhere else and that that is something precious. To say that you are sort of more English than England is all that horrible old colonial stuff and to me it evokes everything yucky, nothing necessarily against England, I would just like to regard it as another country (Local Authority, Respondent 4).

It becomes apparent that the garden city image and the connection to Englishness is being negotiated. English heritage is important, overall, it is “a quality that has been precious to protect, because it’s something that gives a city a character” (Local Authority, Respondent 3). But the contemporary is more exciting:

I think for years we've been considered, you know, more English than the English, which I guess is a nice sort of image to have, you know we have the Avon river sort of floating through the place, and all our nice old buildings, but I mean there are a lot of contemporary things going on here, that make it a really exciting city (Attractions Sector, Respondent 4).

The Englishness, similar to the gardens, “is something to hang your hat on, to describe what a place is like” (Advertising, Respondent 1) and while the city’s historical and cultural links to Englishness are still part of the place promotional message, “it may not be dominant now, because the market, they want soft adventure” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 2), something that the “old English thing on its own does not deliver” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 2). In recent days, the ‘old English thing’ has been pushed aside by a focus on newfound sophistication.
The Cappucino and Focaccia Mile

This place is growing up, you know. We live in the streets now. We don’t hide away in suburbia anymore. We don’t patronise tearooms and have our scones and cups of teas. We can now go to what I call the cappucino and focaccia mile, you know, all those cafes in Oxford Terrace. My point is that we have developed a taste for a more cosmopolitan, international lifestyle, and I think it’s partly because New Zealanders have been overseas, but also the country as a whole has opened up since the 80s. And I don’t think we know where we are with that yet, I mean, we are still searching for our own identity. So all those changes here really are changes that test the water in a way (Accommodation Sector, Respondent 1).

Figure Nine. Cosmopolitan City (Brochure from CTC, n.d.)

Christchurch, in its promoters’ words, is becoming a ‘cosmopolitan’ place, with imported culture developing in all parts of the city (Figure Nine). Similar to developments in other New Zealand cities, this has taken the shape of a large number of cafes, bars and restaurants opening up in recent years, particularly in the inner city malls. “In the nine months after April 1994, fifty new restaurants and cafes opened in Christchurch, whilst thirty closed” (Bragg and Stocker 1995, cited in Pawson 1996, 336). Longer shopping hours and the establishment of ever more pavement cafes have created an inner city that is very different from even as recently as five years ago, when there were few cafes and - during weekends - everything was closed. These recent physical changes in the inner city and also changes in the way it has been promoted are referred to time and time again by place promoters in terms of an emphasis on the newfound ‘sophistication’ of the city: “It’s more sophisticated than it used to be, ... still

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12This expression was coined by one of my interviewees (Accommodation Sector, Respondent 1).
provincial, so not as sophisticated as big cities are, but an element of that there” (Advertising, Respondent 1). This development, it is argued, is a result of a rapid move away from the feared ‘boring’ label that has so often been attached to Christchurch city life and towards finding a new urban culture. This is a continuation of the changes in popular culture that have been going on since the early 1980s.

All of this change is seen to be a fairly recent development, having happened in the last five years and a large part of that described sophistication is the cafe scene that was referred to by almost all interviewees (Figure Ten): “They [the cafes] add a flair and a colour to the place that wasn’t there years ago. I think the bars and cafes have been a great introduction” (Local Authority, Respondent 3). Others described these as an expression of a new lifestyle:

![Figure Ten. Life in the central city (CCC 1995d, 38).](image-url)
In terms of cosmopolitan, I guess, the way that we live our lifestyle, we’ve come out of doors, we’ve got some neat new cafes and restaurants that serve international foods, ... just a lot more nationalities living in the city, living out of doors, out on the streets, living in the cafe world (Local Authority, Respondent 1).

This is seen as part of a search for identity: “I think Christchurch is probably becoming more who are we, what are we and what do we need to do to enhance our city?” (Local Authority, Respondent 1). The definition of place has changed, therefore, as “it [the inner city] is definitely becoming more of a gathering place, there are more sit down and chat areas” (Accommodation Sector, Respondent 1). When the use of areas was a matter of debate, such as in the case of the Square, time and again cafes were suggested as the solution to all the problems. Cafes were equalled with alive places, beautiful places: “You’ve got to go to Christchurch, you’ve got to go to the Square, fabulous cafes, fabulous gardens to look at” (Retail Association, Respondent 4). Current developments are seen to attract more young people:

The city now has developed to be much more enjoyable for young people to live. Christchurch has always had the fine arts, for the more elderly, and now that it has the young sort of coffee bars and cafes and rock music in the City Mall and buskers and things, it’s really much more enjoyable for young people and it will keep them there (Advertising, Respondent 1).

The city, it appears, is repositioned as a younger place, and almost like an adolescent following the latest fashion, Christchurch place promoters attempt to solve all with infusions of cafe culture and cosmopolitanism, familiar developments in popular culture.

**Chapter Summary**

The chapter concludes with the suggestion that, while garden city imagery represents an enduring and treasured link to the past in contemporary place promotion, it is seen to be no more than a base image over which other imagery is “layered”, in place promoters’ words. This, in a way, is almost an analogy to societal and cultural developments in Christchurch and New Zealand. Certain aspects of the ‘Englishness’ of Christchurch are ‘kept’ as the base layer on top of which a new identity develops. Today, garden city
imagery is used in the promotion of the city as a reminder of Christchurch’s historical links, but, the city’s current promoters claim, it is only “the floral carpet over which is laid an entire industry” (CCC 1995d, 46).

I think the emphasis is still on the Englishness of the architecture, but not perhaps so much on the English lifestyle, the people, I think Christchurch has mellowed, ... you know as generations go past, they feel less attached to their forefathers that came from England (Advertising, Respondent 1).

But the label ‘garden city’ is more than a simple promotional angle, chosen for the purposes of marketing the city. First, the gardens have historical significance, they exemplify the victory of settlement society over the wilderness of the new country and an attempt at building a ‘better’ British city in the Antipodes - one not hampered by the crowding and pollution so evident in industrial Britain at the time. Second, the use of nature was always part of New Zealand’s place promotion (Bell 1993). This is exemplified by accounts of scenic wonders in early books relating to New Zealand (Stewart 1995). This, through colonisation, became commodified into a “saleable arcadian plot” (Bell 1993, 203). The place promotional use of the garden city image, then, exemplifies how the practice of place promotion is negotiated through a dialogue among place promoters using the languages of history and globalisation in this case.

The circle closes as gardens that once stood for familiarity and security and Englishness in an unfamiliar landscape, are now seen to be a link to that past but little more, as Christchurch’s promoters strive for a more ‘cosmopolitan’ version of place. Gardens are still there, though, because of the way they fit into a national tourism promotion that focuses on the natural - in a sense they provide a link to wilderness / nature as a place to treasure. Just as the idea of wilderness as something to be feared or tamed has become outdated in national place promotion, however, so the gardens have become outdated in the urban context of Christchurch city promotion - they are too tame, they need adventure.
CHAPTER FOUR
CITY HERITAGE AND URBAN IDENTITY

Introduction

New Zealand is not known for its museums, Antarctic Centres or Gondolas or whatever, it's known for its stunning scenery, its sheep and really, it's becoming more known for its sort of activities ... and looking at mountains ... rather than what I call man-made attractions (Attractions Sector, Respondent 1).

Kirby (1996, 233) argued that the naturalness of New Zealand is more and more used to distinguish this country from other countries and that this naturalness takes on the “mantle of heritage”. The “appreciation of the uniqueness of the country’s natural features” is linked to the spread of environmentalism and has become part of national heritage (Kirby 1996, 233; Kirby 1997). While this is a national phenomenon, it is also local, as “there are issues of biculturalism and post-colonialism ... which affect different communities in different ways” (Kirby 1996, 234) and these may lead to different expressions of heritage.

Because of the significance of the rural and the outdoors in New Zealand, both in terms of the country’s history and its current economic direction, heritage often denotes natural heritage. Urban life is rarely part of the country’s self-promotion which predominantly shows New Zealanders as a rural people leading a rural life as urban dwellers imagine it to be (Perry 1994). Promoting heritage in an urban context is therefore made more difficult by the position of the natural, rural, wilderness and countryside in the collective imagination and it is further complicated in Christchurch by the ‘English component’, which, as has been shown, is currently being renegotiated.

In this chapter, I argue that Christchurch heritage promotion has unique characteristics that distinguish it from the heritage promotion familiar from the literature (see Gold and Ward 1994; Hall and McArthur 1996b). Place promotional theory, as described in Chapter One, is often concerned with the nature of the post-industrial city and the building of heritage products from remnants of industrial eras. In the New Zealand context, it is inappropriate to interpret place promotion, and in particular city
promotion, within cultural categories reflecting the British experience. In the New Zealand culture, “urban nostalgia includes a rural component” (Bell 1993, 197; Bell 1996). This is because industrialisation in the well-known European and North-American sense never took place and mercantilism and agriculture have been New Zealand’s main traditional economic directions. In this chapter, therefore, I argue that place promotional concern with globalisation of culture and loss of meaning, while valid to some extent, is a partial view only and that the Christchurch case provides an example of how place promotion is influenced by local historical connections as well as global context. City heritage, in New Zealand, is based on an uncertainty of the value of cities and an associated attempt to promote Christchurch in terms of the activities and experiences that can be had there or the great outdoors to which it is a gateway.

Heritage

Economic returns from tourism are one of the main factors for the justification of heritage designation and maintenance (Hall and McArthur 1996b). Heritage place promotion and the creation of heritage places has been one of the most important trends in tourism since the 1980s. The past is used to sell places to different consumers for different purposes (Ashworth 1992). Ashworth (1992, 96) defined the distinction between history and heritage and argued that places become commodified where “history, i.e. the record of the past, becomes heritage i.e. a contemporary commodity purposefully created to satisfy contemporary consumption”. Selected aspects of the past are packaged and shaped into heritage in order to convert place into a product.

Heritage, Walsh (1992) suggested, has little to do with provision for locals, but is just a medium with which to “wallpaper over the cracks of inner city decay in an attempt to attract revenue”. The promotion of heritage is often primarily tourism-related and this, it is often argued, only touches surfaces, “spaces rather than places” (Walsh 1992, 137), leading to the promotion of spaces which are differentiated only at the surface, “through the consumption of heritage pastiche”. Walsh (1992, 139) further claimed that heritage

But note that Hawke (1992, 420) argued that the importance of agriculture has often been exaggerated, as it employs similar numbers of people as in several Western countries and much less than in some poorer countries.
insults both consumers and the local community through the absence of historical accuracy.

Heritage promotion in a postmodern context, Schofield (1996) argued, is concerned with “hyperreality” (Baudrillard, cited in Schofield 1996, 334). Hyperreal place promotion, in postmodern terms, is concerned with signs and images, because society is seen to consume signs and images rather than products. Heritage, or the place of the past in heritage promotion, is “as much a product of contemporary interest as of past history” (Schofield 1996, 335), because society believes in the superiority of a preferred past. Nostalgia is the basis on which an objectified or idealised past flourishes, often a past that is presented for touristic consumption. It is also often argued that increasing globalisation leads to similar heritage everywhere: “Globalization is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle: it is a matter of inserting a multiplicity of localities into the overall picture of a new global system” (Urry 1995, 154). The debate about heritage promotion therefore emphasises the sameness of ‘heritages’ and the commodification of a constructed past for the purposes of touristic consumption. This is a general trend that can be observed in place promotional literature. It is my argument in this chapter that heritage promotion, in the Christchurch case, is not simply a commodified view of history. Christchurch heritage is negotiated by place promoters at the intersection of local and global contexts. The first, and perhaps most influential, of the local issues is the uniqueness of New Zealand’s urban development.

**Urban Development in New Zealand**

Australia and New Zealand may have been a *tabula rasa*, but the forms of urban settlement which were imposed on them derived from the long evolving traditions of British imperial policy and assumptions about the ways in which a colony should be organized (Hamer 1990, 8).

Both Australian and New Zealand urban areas developed in a distinctive form, as a result of their colonial origins and European settlement. According to Kilmartin and Thorns (1978, 20), from the mid nineteenth century, most of the population in Australia and New Zealand lived in cities and was “engaged in service occupations such as commerce, exporting and importing, freighting and shipping”.

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The economies of both countries were dependent on overseas markets, particularly the British market in New Zealand’s case: “In New Zealand’s initial development, the single most important commercial factor was Britain’s market for wool” (Grey 1994, 152; Gardner 1992). New Zealand as a country was “derived from the expansion of British cities; geographically it may have been in the Pacific, but structurally it was a part of Britain’s rural hinterland” (Perry 1994, 46). Favourable world market conditions and industrialisation through import-substitution supported average levels of income not too far removed from the capitalist centre, or Britain (Ehrensaft and Armstrong 1978, 362). Resources were exploited and sold overseas in exchange for manufactured goods, and cities in Australia and New Zealand were described as “frontiers of European capitalism” (McQueen 1970, cited in Kilmartin and Thoms 1978, 36). This “general picture of capitalism” was made distinct through particular characteristics of the new countries, such as the “importance of home ownership”, the “freedom of the individual”, a pronounced “anti-intellectualism” and an emphasis on functional use rather than aesthetics (Kilmartin and Thoms 1978, 21-22).

King (1990, 49) described the impact of economic dependence in colonial and post-colonial societies on urbanisation. Drawing on Castells (1977, cited in King 1990, 49), he argued that industrialisation is related to urbanisation in Western societies, whereas in many dependent colonial societies, urbanisation took place without industrialisation. Urbanisation was dependent on core societies, or the colonising country, since it provided a market for raw materials. Urban systems in colonies, therefore, were often shaped by “the internal and (especially) the external distribution of power” (Friedmann and Wulff 1976, cited in King 1990, 49). This scheme of things was continued in later times through the domination of post-colonial but still peripheral economies by transnational corporations who “exhibit a growing independence of action from national commitments and control” (Friedmann and Wulff 1976, cited in King 1990, 50). This theory of dependence, according to King (1990), can not only be evidenced in Third World countries but also in Australia, and, presumably, New Zealand. Major centres in the colonies therefore never were industrial centres but commercial centres dependent on and oriented towards the core - or colonising - society.
Industrialisation did take place, to a larger extent and much earlier in Australia than in New Zealand (Kilmartin and Thorns 1978). Mullins (1981b, 36) argued that neither society, though, was ever an industrial society in European terms:

Australia moved from a mercantile capitalism and urbanisation (c1840s to c1940s) to monopoly capitalism and corporate urbanisation (post 1940s), while old industrial nations moved (over the same period) from industrial capitalism and urbanisation to monopoly capitalism and corporate urbanisation.

Australia and New Zealand did not pass through the traditional three stages often associated with capitalist urbanisation in core nations. Instead, Mullins (1981a, 67) argued, Australia and similar semi-peripheral capitalist nations were characterised by “an advanced form of mercantile capitalism”. Ehrensaft and Armstrong (1978, 352) called this ‘dominion capitalism’: “Industrialisation is based primarily upon the first processing stages of primary production or upon import-substitution”.

Perry (1994, 42) similarly emphasised the lack of mass production and large scale manufacturing in New Zealand, which led to a different urbanisation process, one with an “apparently anomalous configuration of large areas and low density” compared with European cities. Industry generally exists on a smaller scale and “urban locations show neither the sediments and traces of a preindustrial past, nor the kind of built environment that is characteristic of a Fordist industrial present or recent past” (Perry 1994, 42).

In addition, the focus of traditional industrial capitalistic communities was often around work, whereas in Australia, for example, it centered around the domestic economy (Mullins 1981a, 68): “[T]here was no need to concentrate workers around industries because few factories existed”. Mullins (1981a, 69) proposed the concept of “urban peasantry” to describe this workforce, which identifies “the forced self-sufficiency placed upon workers under mercantile urbanisation, appearing in the ownership of a single-family house and in the productive use made of the yard”, commonly through “extensive ‘do-it-yourself’ skills which were used productively as non-capitalist labour” (Mullins 1981a, 69). This explains the high rate of home ownership and the focus on

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14 These stages are (1) Mercantile Urbanisation (c1780-c1840), (2) Industrial Urbanisation (c1840-c1945) and (3) Corporate Urbanisation (c post-1940s) (Mullins 1981a, 66-67).
‘do-it-yourselfism’ that still exists today in both Australia and New Zealand. It may also explain the extent of suburbanisation.

Analysing advertisements of New Zealand places, Perry (1994) found that images of the rural are dominant, and this, he argued, is where notions of community in this country come from. New Zealanders have a particular relationship with their countryside:

New Zealanders both mobilise and read images of the rural differently from those societies whose wealth and wellbeing does not rest upon agriculture, and whose built environments display a more complete colonisation of the natural world (Perry 1994, 49).

Looking at rural imagery in New Zealand television advertisements, Carter and Perry (1987, 61) observed that, even though New Zealand is one of the most urbanised countries in the Western world, most “locally made television programmes are suffused with images of country life”. For an audience which is overwhelmingly urban, rural imagery holds a strong attraction, but the countryside depicted in the advertisements that Carter and Perry (1987, 67-68) investigated is that of an arcadian rural idyll: “It is a New Zealand countryside as city dwellers would have it be .... a community of the mind for urban consumption”. The significance of the rural and of countryside is so dominant in New Zealand that Perry (1994, 41) described it as a “structurally distinctive” feature of New Zealand: “In a country whose citizens are highly mobile, nomadic, consumerist, privatised and urban, images of a more stable, less instrumental, imagined rural community continue to flourish” (Perry 1994, 54). This has implications for the heritage of cities.

**Christchurch Heritage**

The tourist visiting New Zealand comes not especially to see cities, which, after all, are, in essentials, much like other modern cities, but to see the country generally, and particularly its scenic beauties, its majestic fiords and mountain splendidors .... (Wedderspoon 1925, 11).

Heritage promotion is a complicated issue in the Christchurch context, because heritage, as shown above, is often connected to the land, the natural, rather than the built. I argued in Chapter Three that the gardens have special significance in the Christchurch
context, because they are connected to New Zealand’s colonial past and its links to Britain. Heritage, particularly the promoted heritage of cities, in a similar way, is connected to this colonial past and the special development of cities in this country, as was described above.

I argue that distinct patterns of settlement and enduring links to Britain led to an emphasis on things rural and natural in New Zealand. This resulted in an absence of the urban in place promotion at the national level and - some would argue - in the national psyche (see Perry 1994). Just as the “most cherished image of an urban / industrial / capitalist society is a rural / agrarian / pre-capitalist world” (Short 1991, 109), the most familiar image of a post-colonial city is its ‘garden-creating’ past and present.\(^{15}\)

But this is also influenced by global changes. It is no longer enough to present a city with beautiful gardens to look at. This is seen to be too passive. What needs to be projected is an image of a place that “is an experience that can be touched and felt ... a city that you can participate in a lot” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 3).

**Beyond the Tourist Gaze**

There has been a move away from, certainly in tourism, showing Christchurch as ... a scenic place to visit, but it is now a place to come and do things, and so whether it be the arts and crafts or adventure activities or whatever, they’re things that people seem to come to New Zealand for (Advertising, Respondent 1).

It was argued in the previous section that heritage, in the New Zealand context, often denotes natural heritage, rather than built heritage. The collective imagination sees New Zealand as a rural country still. Wilderness was conquered in colonial times, in order to claim the land and to make it productive. In a way, the same process is taking place today. Nature is again claimed, this time not so much in physical terms, though that is part of it, but in a representational manner. Place, in the current context, is redefined in terms of its potential to provide for an activity or an experience.

\(^{15}\) This is not true for all New Zealand cities, however, see McAloon (1997) for the case of Nelson.
Furthermore, cities usually renowned for their cultural heritage, in the New Zealand context, become known for their natural features, or the ‘great outdoors’ to which they can provide access. Descriptions of Auckland often focus on natural features such as the seven volcanic cones on which it is built. The capital, Wellington, is talked about in terms of its harbour, hilliness and windiness (in more than political terms). Christchurch is famed for its gardens, Englishness and its proximity to the ‘adventure playground’ Canterbury. Only Dunedin, it could be claimed, comes close to being famous for its culture (‘Scottishness’), though even here the Otago Peninsula and the Albatross feature as icons of city promotion.

Christchurch’s image as a tourism destination is characterised - to a large part - by its ‘gateway’ function. That is, while trying to become a destination in its own right, Christchurch place promotion appropriates the same kinds of adventure tourism representations that were observed by Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b) in other New Zealand places. It is no longer enough, in the Christchurch context, to advertise the ‘garden city’ or any city that appeals to the sense of sight alone. It is imperative to include the body in tourism and it is also important to acknowledge the same when promoting to residents: “shopping is entertainment these days ... that’s where retail is going, people don’t want to just buy a pair of shoes, they actually like to have some fun and enjoy the process” (Local Authority, Respondent 2) and this means emphasis on touristic - and shopping - experience in place and place promoters have realised this. The reliance on nature imagery and touristic experience in outdoor places is also part of city place promotion and has to do with a struggle to develop an urban identity in a country so determinedly rural in its own imagination. City promoters have realised that to emphasise the passive aspects of the city is no longer enough.

From Romantic Gaze to Taming Play

I think the visitor as a consumer now would not come to Christchurch just to view the gardens, because that is perceived as being too passive, it’s a lovely environment in which to do things, so I think we’ve got to be saying more about what we can do here (Retail Association, Respondent 4).

Travel practices and conventions have not always been dominated by the sense of seeing. In early travel, “the word, not the image, the ear and the tongue, not the eye”
(Adler 1989, 8) were dominant. Sightseeing as a practice mainly relying on observation through the eye, or the "ascendancy of the eye over the ear", as Adler (1989, 9) called it, did not become apparent until the 1600s. This sightseeing was a serious practice, executed by scholars, almost exclusively men, and was often instrumental in "launching international scholarly reputations" (Hahn 1971, cited in Adler 1989, 16).

Early travel was concerned with the accumulation of facts through first hand observations. These facts consisted of "a heterogeneous assemblage of physical, biological, ethnological, and political information" (Adler 1989, 16), notably seen as a means to "regulate imagination by reality" (Schwartz 1971, cited in Adler 1989, 20). Aesthetic considerations did not enter this early practice of seeing:

The 'eye' cultivated in this initial period of sightseeing was deliberately disciplined to emotionally detached, objectively accurate vision; its commanding authority could only be jeopardized by evidence of strongly colored emotional response (Adler 1989, 18).

By the end of the eighteenth century, as these early elitist, scholarly travel practices filtered through into the more general population through the Grand Tour, seeing became more concerned with works of art and aesthetic judgements: "The traveler's "eye", hitherto bound by a normative discourse rooted in fealty to science, became increasingly subject to a new discipline of connoisseurship" (Adler 1989, 22). A new practice of "picturesque travel" developed (Gilpin 1792, cited in Adler 1989, 22).

The tourist industry, indeed place promoters in general, generate imagery of places that directs the selection and evaluation of places and therefore constructs what Urry (1990) has called the tourist gaze. Urry (1990, 2) argued that investigating the tourist gaze is helpful in understanding modern society in that understanding "how social groups construct their tourist gaze is a good way of getting at just what is happening in 'normal society'". Similar to the way that the study of deviance can reveal much about 'normal society', tourism and tourist practices can reveal much about 'everyday' social practices. The structuring of the tourist gaze and the way tourists gaze at certain features of town- and landscapes is indicative of what is valued in today's society and how people go about consuming. Similarly, the ways in which place promoters construct a place for touristic, residential or investment consumption is indicative of the local sense of place.
a dialogue between local historical and everyday life issues in the context of global changes.

Looking at touristic place promotion in outdoor settings in New Zealand, Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b) showed how adventure tourism representations in New Zealand have contributed to the formation of new place images which collectively form new place myths.\textsuperscript{16} Representations of places in tourism advertising material "have an importance in the cultural practice of tourism ... far beyond their sometimes perceived role of persuading tourists to visit a particular place" (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 5). These place meanings change the way in which places are managed and so become a medium through which places and experiences are made for particular interests (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming b, 2).

These local place meanings are connected to place myths for the whole of the country. There are "obvious contrasts between New Zealand and the 'environmentally compromised' rest of the developed world", as The New Zealand Way advertises (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 10), and these contrasts at a national level carry through into local place myths. Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b) identified three main themes of touristic representation or "three topoi of freshness" (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 25): first, a fresh look at spectacular environments; second, fresh, youthfull thrills; and third, the freshness of eager experimentation. Newness, in this context, is connected to experimentation, and freshness to the country as a whole 'finding its feet' in the world (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 12):

That's what's unique about the New Zealand personality .... It's not trying to become like those other places: it's just making sure it doesn't miss out on anything that would make paradise a little more like heaven (The New Zealand Way 1993, cited in Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 13).

Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b) argued that changing tourist practices require a renewed look at Urry's (1990) concept of the tourist gaze, a description too passive for modern tourist practice. Instead, they argued tourist performance "more adequately captures the experience of adventure tourism" (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 43).

\textsuperscript{16}The authors emphasise that these place myths are not completely new, though, "but have gradually evolved from past tourist activity" (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 4).
The souvenir as an “extension of the primary semiosis of the sight” and as a “a durable and portable signifier” (Harkin 1995, 657) once was the main momento of the gaze that was carried over into everyday life. Today, for many tourists, active participation and the memorabilia to prove it have replaced this. Supporting Veijola and Jokinen’s (1994) argument, Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b) contended that the absence of the body is problematic: “[P]eople are no longer willing to just passively view our scenery as an air conditioned bus window gazer; they want to get out and experience the environment first hand” (Burt 1987, cited in Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 14).

“We are [therefore] provided with the idea that what was previously thought to be spectacular scenery can, in fact, be made more spectacular by participation” (Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a, 27).

The transformation of the meaning of place in an urban setting similarly emphasises the activities and experiences to be participated in. Moreover, because of the importance of the natural, the city of Christchurch advertises itself as an adventure gateway that provides access to nature, because, I argue, of an uncertainty of the value of things urban, or, as one of Christchurch’s place promoters put it:

We have to be more than a city, or at least we have to offer something more. Who would want to stay in Christchurch for longer than a night if it weren’t for the places around it - the day trips, the Kaikouras, Hanners, Methvens. That’s not to say that Christchurch has nothing to offer, it’s just that I don’t think we value our cities in the same way that Europe values its cities - New Zealand is more about nature than built environments (Advertising, Respondent 2).

City for Activities and Experience

We’re taking our gardens, but we’re taking it a step further, and say this is what we can do in our gardens, and present all the fun things that can happen in that (Advertising, Respondent 1).

Christchurch promoters have recognised that it is no longer enough to present a place that visitors can gaze at:

I think the emphasis is possibly shifting a little bit, because people do want to have that hands on experience, instead of seeing everything eight foot up in the air in an air-conditioned coach, they want to have the hands-on touch, feel
experience, to go into a farm and to pat a sheep (Attractions Sector, Respondent 2).

“People tend to be less passive in their travel, they want to do things and experience the culture in a deeper way rather than just look” (Advertising, Respondent 1). Promotion needs to reflect this: “It’s just adapting to what the market says they want” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 2). And so what is shown of the city are the activities and experiences that can be had there:

There has been a move away from, certainly in tourism, showing Christchurch as, or New Zealand itself, as a scenic place to visit, but it now is a place to come and do things, and so whether it be the arts and crafts or adventure activities or whatever, they’re things that people seem to come to New Zealand for, so we show it in the books, too (Advertising, Respondent 1).

This is reflected in the messages about the city. The thing to do in the urban context is ‘soft adventure’, tram rides, horse-drawn carriage rides, punting on the Avon, all incorporating the English theme (Figure Eleven). The gardens become a place where things happen. This shapes the actual places and makes them into adventure playgrounds, even if it is “soft adventure, the softer activities rather than the hard adventure ones” (Inner City Retailer 2): “That’s what they want, they want soft adventure” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 2). Promoters are “emphasising the variety of activities, and perhaps not exactly downplaying some of the more static attractions, we’re mentioning them, but we’re emphasising the more active activities” (Local Authority, Respondent 6).

Figure Eleven. Christchurch, New Zealand (Brochure from Parkroyal Hotel).
Shopping is part of this: “Shopping is entertainment these days, ... that’s where retail is going, people don’t want to just buy a pair of shoes, they actually like to have some fun and enjoy the process” (Local Authority, Respondent 2). So the city, in terms of shopping and tourism, needs to be “an experience that they can touch and feel, ... it’s certainly been a winning angle, ... get everyone to touch and smell and experience something” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 3). This, however, appears to be only part of Christchurch’s promotion. The city is also positioned as the “adventure gateway of the South Island” (Accommodation Sector, Respondent 2) and again and again, proximity to the adventure playground Canterbury is advertised.

**Adventure Gateway**

We’ve got this whole playground out there (Attractions Sector, Respondent 3).

According to Canterbury Tourism Council brochures, Christchurch is a “cosmopolitan city”, surrounded by “fascinating villages”, “wild nature” and “rural abundance” (CTC n.d.). It is placed within this “amazing adventure playground right on its doorsteps” (Accommodation Sector, Respondent 2). A 60-second television commercial has recently begun to extol the virtues of the Canterbury province, whose people, according to the advertisement, ‘don’t know how lucky they are’ (‘We don’t know’ 1996). Produced by the Canterbury Brewery and advertising Canterbury Draught beer, the commercial proposes that Cantabrians are very lucky. The place is quieter than Auckland, the beer is supposedly better than in Germany and the commercial generally reinforces the idea that the lifestyle in the city of Christchurch and the province of Canterbury, as compared to Auckland, is better.

Christchurch’s rural surrounds are important to almost all of the city’s promoters. Features that are emphasised include the range of activities that can be participated in and the proximity of it all. It is important to be more than another city: “We are more than another city, ... within 35 minutes, you could visit 36 golf courses, within an hour and a half, you could ski on 7 or 8 different skifields” (Local Authority, Respondent 1). This proximity of the adventure playground Canterbury is important (Figure Twelve). The city on its own, it appears, is not enough, particularly in terms of attracting tourists, as the ‘we are more than another city’ indicates. It is also important in that making
Canterbury part of Christchurch includes the outdoor activity and adventure message in a scenic setting that is so important in advertising the country as a whole (see Cloke and Perkins forthcoming a and b).

Figure Twelve. Canterbury Adventure (Haworth 1995, 16-17).
The rural and the urban are seen to be interdependent and the rural setting and the activities that can be participated in there are included in the message about Christchurch: “We’re quite generous in our description of Christchurch, there’s whales and all sorts” (Local Authority, Respondent 2). Kaikoura, where whale watching takes place, is more than two hours drive away. To be able to say “we’ve got this whole playground out there” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 3) and to be able to market “these fantastic mountains that we’ve got on our doorstep” (Attractions Sector, Respondent 3) is important in the context of selling activities and experiences but is also reminiscent of the early immigration place promotion, where certain aspects of the country became dominant. Certain places came to stand for the country as a whole.

The outdoors, and the adventure playground of Canterbury, come to be part of the city image, because the city alone is not enough:

Compared to cities overseas, we don’t have that much to offer. I mean let’s face it, our cities, by world standard, are probably a blip on the horizon, and I would doubt that tourists come here to see cities. Okay, Auckland may be the exception, but still I don’t think cities are the attraction. So therefore, and, well, especially with regard to Christchurch, a bit more provincial than Auckland, there needs to be something else. And that something else, when I look at the promotion of things, is obvious. We have this whole fascinating playground out there, nature, adventure, wilderness and natural beauty. I mean, you must know, what did you think about New Zealand when you heard about it, did you think cities? Or did you think national parks? (Advertising, Respondent 2).

This inclusion of Canterbury in the city image went as far as the appropriation of the name, in some cases:

I think Canterbury is a non-thing, I don’t think Canterbury is a brand name that is recognised, so I wouldn’t promote something as Canterbury, I would promote it as Christchurch, and I would just see Akaroa as part of Christchurch or Hanmer as part of Christchurch (Local Authority, Respondent 4).

Christchurch’s place promotion heavily relies on the ‘Playground Canterbury’ motif in order to make the urban context more interesting. A playground sits just outside the city, within easy reach, and this is important for those place promoters who aim their messages at tourism. Unique urban development in New Zealand, as discussed earlier, has implications for place promotion which has always been about the ‘natural’. This is central to the New Zealand experience:
Interestingly, the urban context is also naturalised throughout tourism brochures. Mention of cityscapes in New Zealand as sophisticated, lively places is often dominated by reference to natural landscape features (Stewart 1995, 136).

**Chapter Summary**

Nature is very much part of New Zealand heritage and culture and cities, both in collective imagination and, as a result, in place promotion, feature as second best, as cities become imbued with natural meanings, because this is seen to be the ‘New Zealand Way’:

The shadowing of culture by nature emphasises the importance of the concept of nature to New Zealand as a tourist destination. Cities usually renowned for their cultural characteristics - arts, dining, shopping, and entertainment - have been (re)presented in terms of their natural features (Stewart 1995, 137).

Urban identity is more difficult to negotiate in the context of national place promotion that has historically relied on natural imagery and that continues to appropriate natural rather than built environments.

British and North American place promotional and general social theory, while applicable in the New Zealand place promotional context to some extent, also has limitations. There are few post-industrial components to New Zealand cities, which have had their economic bases in agriculture and mercantilism. City heritage, then, becomes natural heritage, because of an uncertainty about urban identity. Place promoters recognise, however, that this is not enough, and the city therefore becomes promoted in terms of the activities and experiences that can be had there or the nature that it can give access to.

A reliance on natural imagery and the way the city can provide touristic activities and experiences in outdoor places is part of city promotion. It is apparent, in all of the above, that there is an uncertainty about heritage in an urban context. New Zealand anti-urbanism and the dominance of the natural and the rural as well as a particular urban history are the reasons for this. Place promotion, then, once again has been shown to be reliant on the historical context of the place in question - in the form of an uncertainty about urban identity - as well as wider contacts and the global context which
necessitates an emphasis on Christchurch as a locale for activities and experiences, particularly in the tourism context, as passive gazing at the gardens is no longer enough.
CHAPTER FIVE
CLAIMING A SENSE OF PLACE

Introduction

It’s not all about shopping. People come to the city to experience a bit of culture. Shopping is just incidental. It’s about the bars and cafes and the buskers and the entertainment (Advertising, Respondent 2).

The place is an interchange. Christchurch people come here to go about their business - they might buy the kids a school uniform, go to the dentist, shop at Ballantynes. If you cut traffic flows, you end up with a dead centre. People don’t want to walk far in a shopping mall (Accommodation Sector, Respondent 2).

Depending on which of the two place promoters whose views are expressed above one listens to, the centre of the city is both an attraction and an interchange. Other promoters talk about it as a shopping mall, a living room, a civic space. Claims are made about the function and use, as well as the sense of place of the central city. An investigation of the promotion of central Christchurch would be partial only if it did not discover any misgivings by some groups involved in this promotion with regard to the messages of other groups. As Massey (1995, 183) argued, places are always “hybrid”, that is, they are open to interpretation, and this interpretation varies, is negotiated, partial, and temporary (Massey 1995).

Gregson’s (1995, 137) investigation of shopping malls serves to illustrate this point. She argued that recent research on shopping malls as “communicative texts” is a partial reading only, one interpretation of that place. Reading malls, she argued, is done through the “masculine gaze”, omitting the “fundamental and the mundane”, such as “the activity of shopping and the skills of the shopper” (Gregson 1995, 136). Meethan (1996, 195) also called for an increased emphasis on the inhabitants of places: “Although tourist places are those given over to leisure, removed from the world of work for the visitors, they are also the places of work, the locus of productive activity for its inhabitants”.

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Inner city marketing is not only directed at tourism. Residents and investors are other target groups of central city place promoters. This chapter considers the messages aimed at these other target groups of inner city marketing and the way the local sense of place is negotiated between place promoters, through claims-making and rhetoric (Ibarra and Kitsuse 1993).

When focus is concentrated on the meaning of the inner city as promoted to these groups, a somewhat different picture emerges, and parts of this merge into touristic place promotion. Moreover, touristic place promotion is only a partial reading of the meaning of the inner city. Christchurch's central city is a major place of employment with about 24,000 people (Twenty per cent of Christchurch's workforce) working there. Workers are major supporters of the central city, particularly in relation to retailing (CCC 1993, 7). In addition, Christchurch suburban residents also regularly frequent the central city, and central city marketing, by the Communications and Promotions Unit of the Christchurch City Council, is aimed at these groups.

Christchurch's place promoters express differing views of the central city. The process of place promotion involves a dialogue between place promoters that is "open-ended, contingent upon the courses taken by ... one another's claims-making activity" (Ibarra and Kitsuse 1993, 32). Claims-making and rhetoric are important components of the Christchurch place promotional situation, particularly when an investigation looks beyond tourism to the meanings associated with residential and retail place promotion. Each promoter uses rhetoric which is calculated to influence or persuade an audience. Counter-rhetoric similarly appeals to values or beliefs that the claims-maker deems important. The central city, then, is depicted in different ways and there is no one sense of place. This is because places do not have single meanings or unique identities, but are hybrid, with multiple meanings (Goodwin 1993), which can lead to tension and conflict.

**Place and Sense of Place**

According to Violich (1985, 132), place is derived from three highly integrated sources. The first is the character of the natural environment, which includes topography, land
patterns, soils, climate and ecology and which sets the basis for the second source, the built environment that serves as a social instrument. Spatial structures and the way in which land is used determine the use of place and the meaning place has for a community. The last source, which is concerned with people and cultural identity, describes the “degree to which a place in its physical form and the activities it facilitates reflects the culture of those who use it” (Violich 1985, 132).

The relationships between places and people is often referred to as sense of place (Perkins 1988a). This concept has received considerable attention in geographical literature, with early approaches focusing on environmental perception studies that investigated individuals’ relationships to their environments (see Eyles 1985; Perkins 1988a). Later approaches such as that of David Ley (1981) saw sense of place as a much more social and interactive concept, “derived from the totality of an individual’s life” (Eyles 1985, 2), which includes social relationships:

Place is a negotiated reality, a social construction by a purposeful set of actors. But the relationship is mutual, for places in turn develop and reinforce the social identity of the social groups that claim them (Ley 1981, 219).

Eyles (1985) criticised the failure to take into account structural and cultural forces that impact on people’s relationships with places (see also Pred 1983). To Eyles (1985, 4), for example, “sense of place is seen as part of identity and as a manifestation of agency, and its significance lies in the interdependence of agency and structure”.

Structurationist perspectives see place and sense of place as “a product of the ongoing relationships between individuals, society, practice and structure, occurring in historically specific situations” (Perkins 1989, 62). Massey (1995, 187) also emphasised the importance of time to place and sense of place. Places, in Massey’s terms, are shaped by “constantly shifting articulations of social relations through time. Attempts to define a sense of place, in Massey’s (1995, 187) words, become “attempts to define, and claim coherence and a particular meaning for, specific envelopes of space-time”.
The Place of Cathedral Square

The Square is the Achilles Heel of the South Island (Local Authority, Respondent 3).

This promoter’s words exemplify the degree of urgency with which claims about the Square and the central city are expressed. Most of the claims about different senses of place centred around the meaning of Cathedral Square. The Square has been the focus of redevelopment for years and in order to understand conflicting meanings, it is necessary to first review historical and contemporary use.

Figure Thirteen. Cathedral Square (Postcard from Colourview Publications, Oamaru).
Christchurch’s Cathedral Square (Figure Thirteen), simply called the Square (though in the shape of a cross rather than a square) was not immediately part of the centre of the city in early European settlement days. Maori, who had settlements in what was to become the city area prior to European settlement, had not used the land that was to become the Square, since that area which is now called Victoria Square was closer to the river and therefore more useful as a trading place. This established an enduring pattern of the Victoria Square area, or Market Square as it was called then, as the primary centre of the city (New Zealand Federation of University Women 1995).

Because of its proximity to Market Square and the river, the North-East part of the Square was developed much earlier than the other parts and with the subsequent building of the Bank of New Zealand and the Cathedral in the 1870s, Cathedral Square “was no longer the Cinderella of central Christchurch” (New Zealand Federation of University Women 1995, 54).

The Cathedral was designed by Sir Gilbert Scott and Benjamin Mountford and is an example of the Victorian Gothic architecture that was popular at the time. It was founded in 1865 and took many years to complete: Consecration in 1881 still occurred in a tent on the uncompleted site and the final stages were completed in 1904 representing “a symbol of Anglican faith and English character in the centre of the city” (Temple 1980, 11). This cathedral is still the centrepiece of much of the Square’s promotion, but more recently, it has been argued that an emphasis on its architecture and value as a historic place is no longer enough.

There has been an ongoing debate over the future of Cathedral Square. Redevelopment plans have been part of this debate since 1991, “when it became apparent the Square was not fulfilling its primary function as the city’s central gathering place. The area was perceived to be unpleasant and unsafe” (Watson 1996b, 1). Over the last few years, the debate has included different views as to the Square’s function, for example, as a pedestrian precinct, a traffic interchange, a tourism attraction. The Christchurch City Council has consulted extensively with the public and, to this day, no satisfactory solution to its redevelopment has been found.

A number of proposals for redevelopment have been tabled and rejected. Among their goals were the provision of safe and weatherproof space for access to the buses, the
enhancement of pedestrian amenity and safety, the preservation or removal, depending
on the side of the argument, of North-South traffic, and the preservation of heritage
buildings, all in order to attract people to the Square (Crighton and O'Rourke 1996, 7).
Cathedral Square appears to be particularly important in the inner city design, because it
is "the heart of the city - it is probably one of the main things people remember about
Christchurch. It has to be up to standard" (Howell 1996, cited in Watson 1996c, 1). It
predominates in touristic place promotion.

Development proposals have initiated a continuing debate about the necessity for
through-traffic and the siting of bus terminals. More recently, and perhaps because of
the tiredness with the issue, claims have become more urgent: "Cathedral Square risks
becoming a dead city centre, like that of Los Angeles, if its $7.4 million upgrade does
not go ahead" (Murray 1996, cited in Bruce 1996, 1).

An investigation of claims-making and rhetoric in the sense of Ibarra and Kitsuse (1993)
can give an understanding of "members’ distinctive ways of perceiving, describing,
evaluating, and acting upon symbolically demarcated social reality" (Ibarra and Kitsuse
1993, 33, original emphasis). These claims employed by members of a social world
have constitutive or world-making qualities "in demarcating moral objects of relevance
to a ‘public’" (Ibarra and Kitsuse 1993, 32). Understanding these rhetorical idioms, or
the collection of claims that claims-makers use in order to persuade or discredit others,
is important to gaining an insight into the basis of the conflict.

Claims-making has centred on the safety aspect of the Square, with "getting rid of the
unruly elements from the Square" (Fahey 1996, cited in Mathias 1996, 1) seen as a
necessity in terms of safety. Otherwise, business may move out, Fahey (1996, cited in
Mathias 1996, 1) argued, citing the case of one "professional man who had moved his
business out of the Square this week after 30 years because he was tired of working in
an unsavoury environment".

In the context of tourism, the rhetoric of safety is also employed when arguing for the
safety of the whole of the inner city, as Elliott (1996, cited in Watson 1996a, 1) pointed
out: "It is incredibly important that Christchurch has a safe image for international
visitors”. This is often touted in terms of tourism first, that is, concern centres around removing elements that may be unattractive to tourists. But locals also have doubts about safety, as the annual Christchurch City Council residents’ survey in 1996 showed: “Sixty-nine per cent of respondents felt unsafe or very unsafe in the city centre by themselves at night” (Watson 1996d, 6).

The counter-rhetoric refrains from judging safety as unimportant, but this safety through clean-up is seen as taking away “much of the colour that made the Square an interesting place .... the City Mission caravan, food stalls and eccentric characters [are] ... all part of its interest” (Moore 1996, cited in O’Hanlon 1996, 1). Power relationships are involved in the exclusion of certain aspects of place, or as Massey (1995, 190) put it, “place ... is only maintained by the exercise of power relationships in some form”.

Claims are also made about housing. Central city Labour Member of Parliament, Tim Barnett (1997, cited in Jackson 1997, 4) is concerned about the pace of demolition in the inner city and the associated loss of an inner city identity. Having been approached by heritage groups and neighbourhood organisations about this issue, Barnett (1997, cited in Jackson 1997, 4) claimed that the central city identity will be destroyed by “a sterile city centre with Cathedral Square bordered by car-parks, streets full of anonymous tilt-slab concrete houses, and people made homeless by demolition of affordable housing”. The rhetoric, in this case, is one of entitlement and the concept of enabling entitlement is central to evoking reaction “assisted by the premise that the sacred objects or beings [potentially homeless people in this case] cannot save or help themselves and so must have the claimants acting on their behalf” (Ibarra and Kitsuse 1993, 37-38).

The counter-rhetorical strategy (Ibarra and Kitsuse 1993, 42) employs New Right rhetoric. A central city councillor disputed such claims and suggested that the demolition of inner city houses was necessary for urban renewal and that the displacement of cheap accommodation was not a problem but “tough love” (Harrow 1997, cited in Jackson 1997, 1): “These people [lower income central city dwellers] need tough love, not more handouts”. Harrow (1997, cited in Jackson 1997, 1) further suggested that he “could not see why disadvantaged people could not manage to “walk a
few hundred extra feet” into the inner city. Inner city dwellers become displaced as the central city is reshaped in the interests of urban revival.

Claims, rhetoric and conflict, therefore, centre around concepts of the function, use and meaning of the centre of the city. Cathedral Square is seen by some as a central place, where people come to experience the inner city. By others, it is seen as a hindrance to shoppers, in that it disconnects the main shopping thoroughfare. Yet others see it as a “place of displacement” (Accommodation Sector, Respondent 2), where entire groups become excluded, often in the name of safety. Safety - for tourists and residents - is seen to be important, but it is also claimed that a clean-up for safety reasons may take away the interesting elements of the Square and therefore leave it sterile. Most often stated was the concern with the length of time it is taking to settle on a permanent, or even semi-permanent, design for the central city area of the Square. Business in the inner city feared that too much change would eventually impact on the inner city as a successful marketplace, again, employing the rhetoric of the New Right:

The centre of Christchurch has got to settle down and accept that there is a limit to the amount of change that should be foisted on to the public if you want the marketplace in the centre of the city to function. There are such strong influences, like suburban shopping, that unless the centre of Christchurch is nursed a little, it will lose its market place and, if it does, it will become uninteresting for visitors. Those visitors are important to the community (Ballantyne 1996, cited in Rewi 1996, 5).

New Right rhetoric is particularly prominent in the current debate about the extent and direction of Christchurch City Council involvement in inner city promotion.

**New Right Rhetoric**

Economic logic is behind most city marketing or city selling approaches, though Philo and Kearns (1993, 3) argued that social logic may also be at work: “the self-promotion of places may be operating as a subtle form of socialisation designed to convince local people ... that all sorts of ‘good things’ are really being done on their behalf”. Culture and history are two pivotal components of the place product, not just, as Philo and Kearns (1993, 4) argued, as a resource for economic gain, but also as a “device for engineering social consensus”.

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Using a Marxist analysis, Philo and Kearns (1993, 16) argued that there are ‘other people’ who are left out of this process:

[These ‘other peoples’ ... possess other attachments to the city that differ from the arguably superficial attachments of the bourgeoisie - those to do with property-ownership and fancy possessions, the surface badges of cultural capital .... ‘other peoples’ have relationships with the city ... in which they live, work, rest, play and dream; often the places ‘left over’ after those with power have chosen theirs.

Philo and Kearns (1993, 18) claimed to have found

the key to why the city’s cultural capital can never be manipulated as consensually as the place marketeers would like. The marketeers have assumed that the places being sold are the spaces of bourgeois culture, and in a way they are right: the problems arise because in the process the marketeers also try to sell places that mean other things to the ‘other peoples’ of the city, who thereby resist the form that the selling takes (along with its primarily economic motivation) and who also resist the ‘bread and circuses’ element of this selling (its attempt to exert social control by convincing people of truths that are not their own).

What is needed, Philo and Kearns (1993, 20) suggested, is an investigation of what those “sold places” mean to the “other peoples” of the city in terms of employment and quality of life. It is too simplistic to assume in this thesis that there is no conflict in place promotion.\(^{17}\) Conflict does arise because culture and history are manipulated by place marketeers and this often “runs against the understandings of local culture and history built into the daily encounters with city spaces of the city’s ‘other peoples’” (Philo and Kearns 1993, 25). Both culture and history come to be contested, and, while certain aspects of this have come through in my description of the Christchurch case so far (e.g., Englishness versus new identity), there is scope for much more.

Whether or not a Marxist analysis of place promotion is helpful remains debatable, though it is clearly evident that certain values (the reader may call them ‘bourgeois’) are predominant and that certain other groups are excluded, primarily because of questions of power and access. Central city promotion aimed at residents is clearly a middle-class

\(^{17}\) It is acknowledged here that one of the limitations of this thesis is that particular groups (e.g., residents) have not been asked about their views of inner city promotion. Including the recipients of place promotion, though important when writing about conflict, goes beyond the scope of this thesis.
The remainder of this chapter concentrates on the different promotional angles that may - and do - cause tension, concern and conflict.

**Local Body Place Promotion**

In coordinating retail activity, the Christchurch City Council is involved in an activity that, by some, is considered to be non-core business. In recent months, a debate has surfaced about local body involvement in inner city promotion. The local manufacturers' association accused the Council of overlooking the city's basic infrastructural needs "in its push to promote enhancement projects" (Hannah 1996, 11). Traffic congestion, problems with infill housing and constraints on electricity supplies, Hannah (1996, 11) claimed, have made the city less attractive for manufacturing workers. Rather than place further emphasis on enhancement projects, Hannah (1996, 11) suggested, the City Council needs to manage current congestion problems.

A large part of the debate about Council involvement in non-core business is a micro-scale repetition of the same debates that happened at the national scale ever since the restructuring that started in the 1980s. Vicki Buck, the Mayor of Christchurch, and her councils have acted in a strongly interventionist fashion which flies in the face of current national economic trends. Public ownership of strategic assets, direct public body involvement in the local economy through investment and a strong resistance to user pays charges coupled with a strong social policy are not exactly flavour of the day for the rest of local, regional or national elected bodies (Brett 1996).

The Christchurch City Council has been criticised for being involved in "extraneous activities - such as employment, tourism or business promotion" (Kerr 1995, cited in Watson 1995a, 1). These activities are seen to be non-core business of local bodies and Kerr (1995, 11) argued that the Council is "confused about sound financial management and the proper boundary between public and private-sector activities". In a time when government is getting out of much private sector activity, the Christchurch City Council has done the opposite. As Brett (1996, 103) put it: "Just when the Business Roundtable

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18 In particular, the "other peoples" Philo and Kears (1993, 25) refer to do not appear here, except as subjects for the middle classes to argue over.
thought it had big government beat, along came Vicki Buck and the Christchurch City Council. Vicki Buck, the Mayor of Christchurch, and her Council have for years been instrumental in inner city enhancement projects such as

the casino, tramway, refurbishment projects such as Victoria Square and beautification of the inner-city Avon River bank and the development of a cafe culture [which] have changed the face of the city for visitors (Macfie 1996, cited in Brett 1996, 105).

Other new developments include a convention centre, a sports and entertainment centre to be completed in 1999, a new city art gallery, new inner city parks, the refurbishment of the public library and an enhancement of Cathedral Square, to name but a few of the Christchurch City Council’s enhancement projects. All of these have combined to change the face of the central city.

Vicki Buck (cited in Brett 1996, 111) pointed out that the Christchurch City Council has a vision of the city and wants to entrench this. The rhetoric employed is one of social responsibility, vision and foresight:

The tradition in Christchurch has always been to think way ahead. Can you imagine what Roger Kerr [Executive Director of the Business Roundtable] would have had to say about the city fathers’ decision to lock up an area the size of Hagley Park for public enjoyment? This is visionary stuff.

This rhetoric appropriates a particular reading of the past (e.g., ‘Christchurch planners have always been visionaries, far-sighted, involved, prescriptive’) to justify current practice. Brett (1996, 105) cited the Christchurch Press as a good barometer of how the mood with regard to supporting the Council has changed:

Five years ago when Buck was jaw-boning the city out of its depression and applying classic big-spending, Keynesian strategies to kick-start the province’s economy, the Press happily joined in with the Saatchi and Saatchi ‘Of Course You CANterbury’ campaign. Today the Press is firmly entrenched in the ‘core functions’ corner, rooting in a ponderous, Press-like fashion for the lobbyists who want to see local government reduced to a handful of functionaries letting out contracts to the razor-sharp private sector.
This is an interesting shift. Perhaps the underlying explanation for it is the protection and advancement of elite interests. At one time business welcomed intervention, at another it rushed to privately appropriate the profits of that intervention. Different interests currently claim the central city for different purposes.

**The City Centre**

You can put all the entertainment in the world in there, you can put fancy paving and everything else, but unless people actually spend money in that area, it’s not gonna survive (Local Authority, Respondent 2).

Aimed at the residential market and shopping tourists, the central city is being promoted as a shopping mall, with deliberate emphasis on its upmarket nature for locals and its non-foreignness for tourists. The city as a shopping precinct lays claim to a diversity of shops, in a “shoppers’ paradise, boasting over 1000 stores” (Bars, Restaurants and Cafes n.d.). The important point, Beaven (1996, 28) argued, is that “the centre of any successful city is always entirely different from the suburbs and shopping malls. The minute any city thinks that its inner core is like a shopping mall, it dies”. Focusing on the local market, promoters of the central city emphasise its non-sameness, non-ordinariness as a shopping mall. Suburban shopping malls, especially those that have only recently been developed, are seen as a threat to foot traffic numbers but their homogeneity also offers chances for the positioning of the central city as a mall. The city has strengths in terms of variety and choice and has the “awesome drawcard” of a “cathedral in the middle of a shopping mall” (Local Authority, Respondent 2). It is also an upmarket place, “this is not where you come to get bargains” (Local Authority, Respondent 2) and while people may actually be happy to “whiz down to the mall and get caught in their slippers and trackpants” (Local Authority, Respondent 2), when they come to the city, they dress up, it is an outing, an experience.

Other aspects of non-sameness, when compared to suburbia, include variety and ‘freshness’ ideas. The centre is a place that “has variety down to a fine art” (‘Thirteen Galleries’ 1996) and that “is blooming with fresh ideas” (‘Ten Florists’ 1996). Both of these claims are used to set the city centre apart from suburban shopping malls.
Besides claiming the place of the centre for shopping, place promoters also talked about it as an entertainment locale, the city's living room. It is claimed that "shopping is entertainment these days", and therefore it becomes important to advertise the entertaining features of the central city, such as its "soft adventure" aspects via tram rides or river punting, the promotion of certain heritage aspects such as some "wonderful old shops" (Local Authority, Respondent 2) and the centrality of the location, where action converges:

We just need to keep saying that this is the centre, this is the centre of everything, this is where things happen, this is where you can do things, this is where you'll find what you're looking for and it's a great time to come on in, except on Sundays, when everything is closed (Local Authority, Respondent 2).

Moreover, "Cathedral Square will not serve as a magnet for the city centre if the Council cannot entice shop and cafe owners back into the area" (Watson 1996e, 1). "People are not going to be attracted back to the Square just because it has been repaved" (Wyles 1996, cited in Watson 1996e, 1). "Its prime function should be as a market place, public assembly point, and a place for individuals to meet and enjoy" (The Wizard, cited in Oakley, Taylor and Mathias 1997, 9). Retailers complained about the way the place of Cathedral Square was unattractive to retail:

Twenty years ago, Christchurch Cathedral Square was a very very alive place. It was full of buses, cars, pedestrians, taxis, shops, theatres. And they closed it off, and when they closed it off, they basically shut it down. And that's why it's in the state it's in now. All the good retail is gone. You can buy retail for eleven dollars a square foot, whereas just down Hereford Street, it's 1,000 dollars. And that's the difference for business (Retail Association, Respondent 1).

The local business association saw the inner city, and Cathedral Square in particular, as a shopping precinct and interchange only, where traffic needs to run both ways:

If you don't have traffic running two ways North and South, you effectively cut the city in half. And so there's been a huge battle raging, mostly between the mayor's voices and the retailers' voices, because the mayor says it [Cathedral Square] has got to be a lounge, a living room, but it's not. It's an interchange, of all sorts of traffic and people (Retail Association, Respondent 1).

This was countered with the suggestion that retailers were not seeing the 'big picture':
Their interest in Cathedral Square is they want a road right through the middle of it, so it can go straight down to their shops. They are not interested in what’s best for the macro, and that’s the biggest problem we have with dealing with retailers, at the end of the day, they just want more money in their till, and they don’t give a damn about, they can’t see the big picture. But then maybe that’s not their job (Local Authority, Respondent 2).

Debated were the ways in which promotions should be run, in particular with regard to how much the place itself (as opposed to the goods and services that can be bought in it) should be part of a promotion. Some promoters argued that this could not be done with “balloons and clowns and events” (Retail Association, Respondent 1), but through getting a group of retailers together, picking a medium that is very strong, and all advertising it together, and promoting goods and services and products and prices ... You don’t waste money on advertising bricks, you advertise products in the shop (Retail Association, Respondent 1).

The rhetoric employed here is one that lays claim to the place of the centre as a medium through which products are sold. Retailers have what Eyles (1985, 124) termed an “instrumental sense of place ... one which sees place as a means to an end .... significant in the way of what it does or does not provide in terms of goods, services and formal opportunities”. The counter-rhetoric sees the Square as the living room of the city: “In short, the Square is analogous to the city’s living room, at the very heart or true centre of the City. It is a place to go to rather than go through. A place served by traffic rather than serving traffic” (CCC 1994, 27). This claim to place is based on a “social sense of place ... one dominated by the importance attributed to social ties and interaction” (Eyles 1985, 123-124).

**Chapter Summary**

The central city, as has been shown, is contested space. Looking beyond the tourism component of inner city promotion, it becomes apparent that there are conflicting claims as to the function, use and sense of place of the central city and this is reflected in place promotional messages. A discussion of the rhetorical and counter-rhetorical strategies used by those involved in central city place promotion illustrates the ways in which promoters attempt to claim the place of the central city for one purpose or another.
The safety of the Square is one aspect on which rhetoric and claims centre, with one side arguing that safety is important for the purposes of attracting both visitors into and locals back to the centre. The counter-rhetoric of loss of local colour, if supposedly ‘unsavoury’ elements of the Square are removed in the name of safety, and the rhetoric of entitlement claim the Square for locals who could potentially become displaced by more developments.

A further case of claims-making centres on the involvement of the Christchurch City Council in place promotion, employing New Right rhetoric to argue against the appropriateness of local body involvement in this. The place of the centre, in this claim, should be left to business. The counter-rhetoric places the involvement of the Christchurch City Council in historical context and employs the claim that the Council has always been visionary.

Contrasting meanings of the centre of the city are the basis for the last set of claims. Local retailers see the place as an interchange whereas the Council claims the place as an attraction, for both locals and visitors. Differing views of the function and use of promotions are central to this. To some retailers, the place is simply a marketplace. The Council, by contrast, claims the place as entertainment locale, centre, stage.

In this chapter, I have outlined the rhetoric and counter-rhetoric employed in the place promotional context of the central city of Christchurch. It has once again been shown that place promotion - in the Christchurch context - has little to do with a loss of local meaning. On the contrary, meaning becomes established through a process of claims-making and rhetoric that negotiates the sense of place and local meaning. The following chapter will draw together my argument so far with a discussion of the implications for place promotional theory.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

Introduction

I set out at the start of this thesis asking myself ‘why would a city located in the South Island of New Zealand, a country in the remote South Pacific Ocean, want to describe itself as the most English city outside of England’? As I discovered along my research path, place promoters had been asking themselves the same question. Englishness and the English gardens of Christchurch, while still part of it, are only one component in an increasingly complex picture of place promotion. Nowadays, the city promotes itself as something more than the English Garden City. While holding on to its English garden roots, Christchurch promoters find it necessary to emphasise other things. More importantly, however, replacing the English Garden image proves to be a difficult process. Christchurch is still searching for an urban identity, and this becomes apparent through the continuing use of Englishness as the first layer of a promoted image, which puts on top of this first layer varying meanings of the city such as its suitability for activities or experiences in place, its function as an adventure gateway, or its ‘cosmopolitan cafe culture’.

I began my research process by examining the imagery used to ‘sell’ the city of Christchurch to tourists, residents and potential investors. I examined the way in which texts and pictures were used to represent Christchurch to its visitors and citizens. I asked the makers of those texts and pictures what their place promotional messages were. My initial expectation was that the central city of Christchurch would be ‘remade’ “in the image of tourism” (Hughes 1992, 33). During one year of close inspection of advertising material and interviews with place promoters, however, I discovered that local place promotional practices went far beyond that initial expectation. To some extent, the opposite occurred: The promotion of Christchurch has to do with a local search for identity, in the context of influential global forces. Place promotion, in this way, becomes a vehicle for testing and contesting urban identity in
Christchurch. It becomes a medium for asserting identity in a world heavily influenced by global forces, particularly in view of the changing nature of the local sense of place. In this chapter, I summarise the findings of my substantive chapters and conclude by drawing together my main argument and offering suggestions for future research.

The Chapters

In Chapters One and Two, I set the context for the remainder of this thesis. I introduced the case study and examined my theoretical orientation and methodological intentions. I looked to Giddens (1984), Shields (1991) and Massey (1995) for guidance on the organisation of social research and, as a result, my understanding of the construction of place promotional meanings included the notion of purposeful, conscious action constituting place in a time-space context. I understood place promotional meanings to be socially constructed and set in both place and time, and therefore linked to other places and other times. Following this explanation of my methodological orientation, I described Christchurch, its history, geography, economics and politics and introduced the case study of Christchurch place promotion. I inspected local and global connections and thereby set the informative context for the three substantive chapters that followed.

In Chapter Three, I reviewed Christchurch’s English Garden image. I explored the way in which the garden city image is linked to Englishness and how in contemporary place promotion, there is a deliberate attempt to get away from the Englishness of Christchurch in favour of a new, more independent, as yet undefined identity. I argued that the label ‘garden city’ is more than a simple promotional title. It has historical connections to settlement days. In post-colonial societies like New Zealand, the taming of the wilderness and the creation of gardens and productive countryside came to stand for the victory over unfamiliar terrain, the building of national identity and this still has a special place in New Zealand place promotion. The use of nature, therefore, has always been part of New Zealand’s place promotion. Colonial place promotion reflected values to do with the taming of the wilderness and the infusion of Englishness into an unfamiliar landscape. Contemporary post-colonial place promotion, by contrast, depicts Christchurch as less boring than an English garden. There is much more to
contemporary city imagery. ‘Cosmopolitanism’, as described by place promoters in terms of the ‘cafe culture’, expresses a search for identity and a breaking away from the old. The English garden image of Christchurch is linked historically to settlement days while at the same time it is used by current place promoters as a tool with which a new - as yet uncertain - identity of the city is negotiated.

In Chapter Four, I continued this thread by showing how city heritage in Christchurch is connected to the land. That is, urban identity is difficult to negotiate in a national place promotional context that has historically relied on nature imagery and that continues to appropriate natural rather than built environments. Things rural beyond Christchurch and the gardens in the city, therefore, take on enduring importance in the absence of a well-defined urban identity. It is for this reason that Christchurch place promoters deem it necessary to promote more than the city and its attraction - it is also vitally important to point out the connections to the ‘Adventure Playground Canterbury’, where spectacular activities in scenic settings are available to the visitor. This is because it is vital to be “more than another city” (Local Authority, Respondent 1).

In Chapter Five, I introduced one more meaning of the city - that of place claimed by different interests. Touristic place promotion is only a partial reading of the inner city and the promotion directed at other groups identifies a somewhat different picture. Massey’s (1995, 183) argument of places as “hybrid” is taken to the full here. Interpretations of the inner city of Christchurch are constantly negotiated and therefore temporary and not at all certain. The process of place promotion involves a dialogue between place promoters all of whom have different social and historical issues that they bring to the forefront of the negotiation. This negotiation takes the form of rhetoric and claims-making (Ibarra and Kitsuse 1993) and contrasting meanings of the centre of the city are the result. It is once again shown that place promotion - in the Christchurch context - has little to do with a loss of local meaning or a homogenising of meanings. On the contrary, place promotion is the outcome of local meanings as well as a tool by which local meaning becomes established in a dialogue between the languages of history, globalisation and everyday life in the city.
Revisiting my theoretical material introduced in Chapter One is appropriate at this stage. The place promotional literature that was reviewed at the start of this thesis suggests that the practice of place promotion, in most cases, leads to places becoming like each other as they search for distinctiveness. In the case of cities, this supposedly leads to the promotion of a homogeneous post-industrial consumption-oriented place product in the context of changing economic functioning and shifting global connections.

Furthermore, place promotion, in particular that directed at tourism, is thought to lead to a loss of local meaning as places become packaged and shaped by a culture of consumption (Hughes 1992). In this thesis, I have shown how such a view is partial only. With Shields (1991), Massey (1995) and Cloke and Perkins (forthcoming a and b), I argue that place promotion endows places with meaning, but this meaning is linked to a place’s history, its place in the global economy and its everyday use.

Place promoters are conscious actors, situated in place and time, and action is based on an understanding of historical and spatial connections. More importantly, though, this action is partly constitutive of “what that history is and of the influences that act to change it” (Giddens 1984, xxviii). Social action, such as the practice of place promotion, is “ordered across space and time” (Giddens 1984, 2) and place promoters contribute to the reproduction of imagery which partly constitutes a place. Revisiting Shields’ (1991, 60) words emphasises this point: “Partly through ongoing interaction, a site acquires it own history; partly through its relations with other sites, it acquires connotations and symbolic meanings”.

In summary, then, neither a globalisation perspective nor one focusing exclusively on local developments is helpful to understanding place promotion in Christchurch. Places and their meanings are established at the intersection of the global and the local and are constituted - and constitutive - of both. That is, economic influences, in the form of tourism, in the Christchurch case, may influence the scale of touristic place promotion but will only be one influence on local place meanings. Local uniqueness is always a product of wider influences, just as the shape of the global begins in the local. Neither can exist without the other. It is indeed, most appropriate.
to think of places, not as areas on maps, but as constantly shifting articulations
of social relations through time; and to think of particular attempts to
characterise them as attempts to define, and claim coherence and a particular
meaning for, specific envelopes of space-time (Massey 1995, 188).

Research Limitations and Future Research

In this thesis, I have sought to reveal the city of Christchurch, New Zealand, as a site of
intersecting forces. Local place promotion is a medium through which these
intersecting forces test and contest identity. It is appropriate here to acknowledge the
limitations of my findings. It is inevitable that this identity is partial only, and, it could
be argued, elitist. Christchurch residents have little influence over this place promotion
and are the recipients of meanings about the inner city that are not necessarily their own.
Future research, therefore, may look towards identifying the meanings of the inner city
to residents and tourists, in order to understand how partial the reading of the inner city
discovered in this thesis is. For the time being, however, I conclude by arguing that the
city of Christchurch, in its place promotional meanings, is characterised by constantly
shifting and re-negotiated expressions of social relations in place and through time. In
the current “envelope of space-time” (Massey 1995, 189), this meaning has as much to
do with a search for a local urban identity as it has with touristic practices.

Contemporary representations of Christchurch, as evidenced in its place promotional
material, cannot be understood as free-floating expressions of current society. Imagery
employed in place promotion lies at the intersection of, and in some way is a product of,
local and global changes and therefore needs to be inspected in the context of these local
and global changes, both historical and contemporary.

Place promotion, then, negotiates a sense of place in a continuous dialogue between
place promoters which, in the Christchurch context, employs the languages of history,
globalisation and everyday life in the city. The city’s current image reflects cultural,
historical and social influences in place and, more importantly, over time. The stories
that are told about the city of Christchurch by its promoters offer a particular
representation of the city, but, contrary to Hughes’ (1992) argument, they do not lead to
a loss of meaning or an erasure of history. The ‘place’ of Christchurch and its local
meaning is created by purposeful actors. It is hybrid, contested and constantly changing, but that is its essential character. The image of Christchurch is not a definite record of a particular place at a point in time, but is negotiated and articulated by sets of social and historical relationships. Place promotion is a cultural practice that endows places with meanings and these meanings are linked to a place’s history, the past activities that took place in it, its global connections and its everyday use:

We promote the city to tourists, yes, and some of this promotion is designed to attract tourists, but it is also what we think about the place - you cannot take yourself out of the process. I was born and grew up here - I have a definite picture of the city and its history - that is what gives me the inspiration to write about it. And I walk through it to work every day and I see things and get ideas (Advertising, Respondent 2).
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Appendix One

Interview Guide

The following questions are a collation of the main questions used in the 22 interviews. The order is incidental, as each interview guide was slightly different, customised for the person / organisation involved.

- Organisation and its involvement in Christchurch place promotion
- Person’s role in organisation
- Who do you work with in terms of city promotion?
- What do you promote about Christchurch?
- How do you select what goes into your promotional material?
- What, to you, is the main image of Christchurch?
- What would you describe as Christchurch heritage?
- How authentic is the picture that is promoted of Christchurch?
- Could you indicate several major changes in the Christchurch central city in the last decade which you feel have been particularly important?
- Why are they important, what did they change?
- What do you think will happen next?
- How important is tourism for Christchurch?

Following a set interview guide, I then proceeded to talk with interviewees about the promotional material they produced / used and had them explain, in detail, what was behind the selection of photographs and texts.