TEMPORARINESS, BELONGING AND PLACE: WORKING HOLIDAYMAKERS NEGOTIATING REGIONAL AUSTRALIA THROUGH SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

A thesis submitted by

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Abstract

This thesis is an ethnography of working holidaymakers undertaking seasonal agricultural labour as part of a temporary migration scheme, based on fieldwork in the Lockyer Valley region of South East Queensland, Australia. It is primarily a study of temporariness and place that considers how embedded structural inequalities associated with forced transience impact working holidaymakers' everyday encounters. Through both immersive and targeted participant observation, this thesis considers the shifting positionality associated with being a researcher 'at home', while negotiating the methodological challenges of capturing a mobile population in place. Instead of tracing the routes taken by a transient population, this thesis departs from other studies of temporary migrants by firmly situating itself in a single location. This approach offers new possibilities for interrogating the interrelations between temporariness, place, and belonging, recognising that mobility is comprised of a series of arrivals, momentary pauses, and departures.

Hundreds of thousands of young, independent overseas travellers are directed towards seemingly isolated regional settings across Australia each year, via the specific conditions attached to a Working Holiday (or 417) visa subclass. Established as a source of labour and opportunity for generating tourist revenue, the program enables applicants to spend twelve months in the country, with no restriction on freedom of movement. The program stipulates that individuals must fulfil visa requirements through employment in industries with identified labour shortages. In order to extend their stay for the maximum duration, working holidaymakers must undertake casual labour for specific lengths of time. A majority of working holidaymakers choose to travel to lucrative, productive, and diverse agricultural settings, where short-term, casual employment is relatively easy to acquire. One consequence of the current Working Holiday visa designation, perhaps unintended, is a predicament of vulnerability and the state's complicity in generating precarity.

The regional areas working holidaymakers travel to are often imagined through frameworks of boundedness and stasis, meaning they have different encounters with the landscape than long-term residents. The combined effect of localness and

perceived ability to genuinely ‘claim’ space is further accentuated by external influences on working holidaymakers’ time, which force states of displacement and transience. As migration status intersects with other aspects of identity, such as ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic class, the locations working holidaymakers inhabit (including accommodation, commercial settings, and places associated with governance, faith-based networks, employment, and public life) present differently within this heterogenous population. Further tensions can arise as working holidaymakers oscillate between roles of ‘worker’ and ‘tourist’, and are required to negotiate skill and agency. This thesis argues that there are distinctions between working holidaymakers who embrace transience and those who resist it as they negotiate the Working Holiday Visa scheme, and that this divergence has implications for place-making and relational practices enacted as part of their everyday lives.

Accounting for the multiplicity of experiences in regional settings, this thesis is specifically concerned with the ways by which working holidaymakers – as both temporary migrants and seasonal agricultural workers – navigate the mundane spatial impacts of structural inequalities on their patterns of mobility, domesticity, employment, and relationships. I draw attention to the ways working holidaymakers seek out agency in circumstances that tend to invite systemic precarity. The results of a thematic analysis show that they develop unique strategies to ameliorate these effects, which are enacted through divergent forms of mobility, embodied knowledges, and the creation and maintenance of fluid communities.

Certification of thesis

This thesis is entirely the work of Esther Ruth Anderson except where otherwise acknowledged. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Celmara Pocock

Associate Supervisor: Associate Professor Andrew Hickey

Associate Supervisor: Dr Robert Mason

Student and supervisors signatures of endorsement are held at the university.

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When I first began my doctorate, I was not expecting life to become so turbulent, and for this thesis to be the only constant. I am grateful for the stability it offered. My thesis and I owe our existence to many others. Here are some of them.

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I want to acknowledge all of these people (and pets) in the creation and conclusion of this work, but with immense pride, I make one final dedication: to the person I have become and am still becoming. Jodie Whittaker said it well at the start of her tenure as the thirteenth doctor in *Doctor Who*:

> *…there's echoes of who I was, and a sort of…call towards who I am, and I have to trust my nerve and trust all of these new instincts, shape myself towards them. I'll be fine, in the end. Hopefully.*

I eagerly await whatever comes next.

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Chapter 1: Working holidaymakers in context

Each year, hundreds of thousands of working holidaymakers (typically young, independent overseas travellers) come to Australia. They are generally pushed towards isolated regional settings via various temporary migration schemes. Regional communities and transient labour populations are mutually interdependent; rural areas depend on seasonal labour to sustain agricultural industries (Tan & Lester 2012, p. 360) and 'unskilled' labour allows seasonal workers (who are most often working holidaymakers and other temporary migrants) to earn money, sustain travel and satisfy visa requirements (Robertson 2014, p. 1919).

Various temporary work visas are in current usage across Australia. Place- or industry-based temporary migration schemes such as employee-sponsored temporary work visas like the Seasonal Worker Program (Bedford et al. 2017; Dun & Klocker 2017; Lee & Nishitani 2017), or subclasses 'Work and Holiday' visa[1] (as subclass 462) (Hugo 2014, p. 874), and the Working Holiday visa[2] (subclass 417) (Dauvergne & Marsden 2014, p. 534) direct a person's patterns of mobility in space and time, inspiring different experiences. This study focuses its attention on the working holiday visas (inclusive of both the 417 and 462 subclasses), and the large number of working holidaymakers who live and work in Australia under its conditions. The conditions of the Working Holiday visa scheme ensure that holidaymakers are a distinctly transient population with limited socioeconomic capital. Through this temporary migration scheme, working holidaymakers have little access to the networks of support or security that are present in broad notions of citizenship. Temporariness is not an inherently vulnerable status; however, it is commonly assumed to be associated with a lack of belonging to a particular place or community (Massey 1994, p. 169; Cresswell 2004). In the regional settings where large numbers of holidaymakers live and work, temporariness is made more complex through stereotypes that influence how inclusion is determined.

[1] The 462 visa enables approved applicants to: "…do short-term work in Australia to help pay for your holiday; study for up to 4 months; travel to and from Australia as many times as you want", and "do specified subclass 462 work to become eligible for a second Work and Holiday visa" (Department of Home Affairs 2020a). Recent changes have permitted a subsequent third Work and Holiday visa to follow.

[2] The 417 visa "lets people 18 to 30 years old (inclusive) - except for Canadian and Irish citizens up to 35 (inclusive) - have their first extended holiday in Australia and work here to help fund their trip" (Department of Home Affairs 2019b).

As temporariness and transience inscribes conditions for exclusion in the landscape, working holidaymakers become marginalised, and typically maintain far less claim over space than long-term residents. In these circumstances, holidaymakers are increasingly isolated; they are subject to a greater likelihood of risk, encounter workplace exploitation, and their stays are permeated by an underlying sense of vulnerability. Lacking tangible networks of authority, opportunities for seeking redress or recourse can be difficult to obtain. One consequence of the current Working Holiday visa designation, perhaps unintended, is a predicament of vulnerability that proliferates working holidaymakers' everyday lives. As such, this thesis considers the landscapes working holidaymakers inhabit, how their employment is structured, and the ways they challenge social worlds, or produce relational reconfigurations of being-in-the-world. There is also no singular working holidaymaker identity, as these temporary migrants comprise a diverse group of people. This thesis argues that there are distinctions between working holidaymakers who embrace or resist transience as they negotiate the Working Holiday Visa scheme, and that this divergence has implications for place-making and relational practices enacted as part of their everyday lives.

By way of further introduction to this work, I am reminded of an anecdote from the field; a rich moment filled with sudden ethnographic clarity. To imagine this moment, that has long since faded, visualise a cinematic zooming-in on a map, from broad, indistinguishable features, to vivid detail. To shift from voyeur to a person fully seeing and knowing a place, as de Certeau (1984, pp. 91-2) writes, it is important to be at the ground level. It is hard to see specific stories from above. Returning to the scene: an agrarian landscape, spotted with towns of varying size, is abruptly and unceremoniously cut through the middle with busy highway. At the centre of the flat, lush and green valley floor, there is one sprawling town that immediately abuts agricultural farmland on all sides. The outer boundaries of the town are more industrial, but this landscape is quickly replaced by residential areas, then a central business district occupying four blocks of one-story buildings. Inside this approximate one-kilometre radius, there is a place that is almost exclusively occupied by working holidaymakers. It only unfolds once per week, and abruptly disappears after a few hours. It is a soup kitchen in a cavernous church hall. Local residents rarely attend this event; it is unlikely that many know of it at all. The

exception is the organisers – two retired church members – and a small accompanying group of volunteers.

Early one Monday evening in spring, the room was abuzz, and people trailed in to find quickly-filling seats at plastic trestle tables. Announcements preceded a free meal; first, one of the organisers offered a welcome, then, a male working holidaymaker walked up to the dais. Gabriele[3], as he introduced himself, was an Italian working holidaymaker promoting a self-organised, free comedy show to be held at a nearby caravan park, where many holidaymakers lived. The self-described comedian-turned-farmworker hoped to bring people together, and inject some much-needed life into Sundays, a day that he described as being "empty, lonely, and quiet" for many temporary residents, because they didn't work and few shops were open. The performance would be entirely without language, so that all attendees could understand its content. Although seasonal rain repeatedly prevented the comedy show from taking place, the proposed event represented an entirely unanticipated act of community-building. It is this cultivation of belonging – and also, wholesome, comedic moments – mobilised as a salve against spatial dislocation, isolation, and even varying forms of vulnerability that I want to explicitly draw attention to moving forwards. This anecdote and motif of convergence in a single location provide a narrative anchor for the thesis, highlighting how working holidaymakers find unique strategies for negotiating unfamiliar regional settings and finding some modicum of comfort in their relationships with others.

Research scope

The opportunities and constraints presented by the Working Holiday visa program in Australia are the key foci of investigation in this thesis. As a geographically-situated study, this project positions itself in the regional context, while also relating to the national and global experiences of seasonal workers and migrants more broadly. By focusing on regional areas that are economically reliant on the agricultural industry, this study considers how the regional space comes to be encoded with the conditions for belonging and exclusion, and the extent to which working holidaymakers find themselves inhabiting a complex landscape of divergent power relationships and

[3] Pseudonyms have been used for all participants mentioned throughout the thesis.

spatial arrangements. In doing so, I am specifically concerned with the mundane spatial mobility of working holidaymakers' everyday lives, and how that rests at the axis of temporariness, transience, differential belonging, and institutional or infrastructural conditions that are tangentially risk-averse. Cemented, or rather firmly planted (excusing the agricultural pun) in discursive notions of space and place, I am reminded of Soja (1996, p. 31), and the interrelations or tensions between perceived, conceived, and lived space:

> *…a knowable and unknowable, real and imagined lifeworld of experiences, emotions, events, and political choices that is existentially shaped by the generative and problematic interplay between centers and peripheries, the abstract and concrete, the impassioned spaces of the conceptual and the lived, marked out materially and metaphorically in spatial praxis, the transformation of (spatial) knowledge into (spatial) action in a field of unevenly developed (spatial) power.*

This definition is what foregrounds my analysis; that there are significant divergences between normative perceptions and uses of the agrarian space, and how it comes to be inhabited by temporary seasonal workers. Owing to the ephemeral nature of working holidaymakers' presence in regional settings, the narrative and tonality of the thesis is drawn from spatial observation, informal discussions and unstructured interviews, rather than recorded interviews. The constant rotation of new individuals in my participant group meant that trust had to be constantly re-established. Continuously new, and short-lived, relationships seldom warranted a follow up semi-structured interview.

In this immersive, ethnographic study, I explore the everyday lives of holidaymakers living and working in the agriculturally-rich Lockyer Valley region of South East Queensland, Australia, particularly focusing on the enmeshed tensions that arise from being a transient population in a place conceived as stable, and what lived realities and spatial practices come to emerge. It is here where my own personal history begins to become increasingly intertwined with this research – I spent my formative years living in this particular rural area. Guided by the following research questions, I returned to my 'hometown' and explored emergent themes of working

holidaymakers' sense of place, feelings of community, and experiences with temporariness and transience:

i. How do working holidaymakers adapt to challenges presented by the regional Australian landscape?
ii. In what ways do working holidaymakers circumvent the constraints presented by the conditional short-term labour of temporary migration visa programs?
iii. What are the benefits and limitations of engaging with transient populations through a singular place-based approach to research?

In responding to these questions, this thesis begins by outlining the context for this study, which includes a narrative history of media representation of working holidaymakers and transient, temporary migration more broadly in regional contexts. This is followed by a review of relevant literature, including key theoretical concepts and notable departures from them. A subsequent discussion of ethnographic methods comprises a critical analysis of challenged encountered during my fieldwork and the strategies used to circumnavigate them.

The remainder of the thesis comprises four thematic chapters, which discuss the impact of conditional temporariness on working holidaymakers' patterns of mobility; the variability of domestic life and leisure; interplay between skill and labour, and strategic practices of cultivating relationships. In a concluding chapter, I offer some suggestions as to how the rural space can better accommodate working holidaymakers and their specific needs. Through an emotive, narrative exploration of temporary migration and seasonal agricultural labour in one rural Australian town, I draw attention to key concerns, such as the ways working holidaymakers seek out agency in circumstances that tend to invite systemic precarity.

Working holidaymakers

Young overseas travellers are directed to rural areas in Australia through the conditions that are stipulated as part of the Working Holiday (417) and Work and Holiday (subclass 462) visa programs. The scheme was originally developed to

facilitate cultural exchange, fulfil national short-term labour requirements and allow visa-holders to supplement their travel with paid employment in specific industries. The first iteration of the Working Holiday (subclass 417) temporary visa was introduced in 1975, exclusively available to travellers from the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Canada, before the Work and Holiday (subclass 462) came into effect in 2005. In time, the working holiday schemes were eventually being opened to individuals from additional partner countries, which allow reciprocal temporary work visa agreements with the Australian Government (Reilly 2015, p. 475). As a result of his gradual expansion, the number of applicants for the Working Holiday visa schemes has considerably increased since its inception. Table 1 below, with information drawn from the most recent Working Holidaymaker visa report (Department of Home Affairs 2021, p. 5), shows the current countries which are included as part of the visa scheme:

Table 1: Working holiday partner countries

Visa class	**Eligible countries**
Working Holiday visa (417)	Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, the Republic of Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom
Work and Holiday visa (462)	Agreements in place at the time of fieldwork (prior to 2016): Thailand, Chile, United States of America, Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia, Argentina, Uruguay, Poland, Portugal, Spain, China, Slovak Republic, Slovenia. Agreements in place post-fieldwork: Israel, Hungary, San Marino, Luxembourg, Vietnam, Singapore, Peru, Austria, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Greece.

The current conditions of both the Working Holiday and Work and Holiday visa are the same, with eligibility for each being determined by the applicant's country of origin. From this point in the thesis, the visa schemes will be referred to collectively as part of the Working Holiday visa program, and visa holders as working holidaymakers, reflecting official terminology. According to the Department of Home Affairs, the only "key differences between the two visas are that Work and Holiday visa arrangements generally have caps on the number of visas granted annually and additional eligibility requirements" (2021, p. 3). Additional eligibility requirements attached to the Work and Holiday visa include conversational English

skills. Applicants from some partner countries under this specific visa are also required to complete a minimum of two years undergraduate study prior to applying and have government support. Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the subsequent global pandemic, a total number of 209,036 people travelled to Australia under the Working Holiday visa programs in the 2018-19 financial year (Department of Home Affairs 2020b). In the same year, the majority of approved applicants were from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, South Korea, and Taiwan. Negotiations are in process to expand the scheme to a further 17 partner countries, but these have not yet been ratified or put into effect at the time of writing. Indicative countries include Andorra, Brazil, Costa Rica, Croatia, Fiji, Iceland, India, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Switzerland (Department of Home Affairs 2020b).

The Working Holiday visa scheme allows an approved applicant to live, work, and travel within Australia for a period of up to one year. Applicants must be aged between 18 and 30 (in most circumstances), and not be accompanied by any dependent children (Clarke 2005, p. 320). While their visa is valid, working holidaymakers are given the freedom of movement to travel anywhere in Australia (or to leave the country). Since 2005, holidaymakers have also been permitted to stay for a second year, provided they meet certain conditions. To be approved for a visa extension, holidaymakers must complete 88 days (roughly three months) of work in specific industries in regional Australia, including plant and animal cultivation, fishing and pearling, tree farming and felling, mining, and construction. Working holidaymakers can find work outside of these industries, but such employment does not accumulate towards a further visa application. At the time this study took place, working holidaymakers were only permitted to work for periods of up to six months with a single employer (Howe et al. 2018, pp. 200-1). Recently, however, the Australian Government has amended the Working Holiday visa to permit a third year of residence and employment, from the 1st of July 2019 onwards (Department of Home Affairs 2019b). Working holidaymakers on a second-year visa will be able to apply for a third year stay, on the conditions that they undertake six months of

specified employment[4]. The planned revisions to the Working Holiday visa will allow visa-holders to work for a single employer in their second year for up to twelve months (Department of Home Affairs 2019b). It is worth noting that not all working holidaymakers choose to stay for a subsequent year, which is illustrated by the following comparative table, with drawn from data taken from the most recent Working Holidaymaker visa program report, inclusive of both visa subclasses (Department of Home Affairs 2020b). The sharp decrease in working holidaymakers granted a visa between 2019-20 can be explained by the initial impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic and limitations on international travel:

Table 2: Table of Working Holiday visa holders in Australia.

Visa scheme		**2015-16**	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**
Working Holiday visa (417)	**First year**	159,409	157,858	152,622	142,805	92,282
	Second year	36,264	34,097	32,828	37,418	28,316
	Third year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,075
Total		195,673	191,955	185,450	180,223	122,673
Work and Holiday visa (462)	**First-year visa**	18,910	18,647	21,667	23,012	19,845
	Second-year visa	N/A	409	3,339	5,801	6,128
	Third-year visa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	603
Total		18,910	19,056	25,006	28,813	26,576
Total holidaymakers		215,583	211,011	210,456	209,036	149,249

Under the current practical iteration of the scheme, many holidaymakers seek out seasonal agricultural labour in regional Australia to fulfil second-year visa requirements. Some also undertake agricultural work to fund their holidays, regardless of the length of their stay. These ongoing patterns of migration across the country are a direct response to twin issues of a shortage of labour, and a desire for cheap labour. In many rural areas, casual, seasonal work such as this is perceived as undesirable and as the work that local residents do not want (Argent & Tonts 2015, p. 146; Underhill & Rimmer 2016, pp. 612-3; Thompson 2018). In part, this void is also produced by the continual outmigration of youth in regional areas (see Alston 2004; Davies 2008; Leyshon 2008, 2011; Dufty-Jones et al. 2016), and an aging population (Joppe 2012, p. 664; Tan & Lester 2012, p. 372).

[4]The move has attracted criticism from both working holidaymakers and public advocates for the safety of temporary labour migrants, including Rosie Ayliffe, whose daughter Mia Ayliffe-Chung was murdered by a fellow backpacker in 2016. In an interview with the *ABC* (Mullins 2019), Ayliffe questions the decision on the basis that "expanding the working holiday scheme would only increase the number of backpackers exposed to potentially horrific circumstances".

While seasonal agricultural labour is classified as 'unskilled', and casual employees do not typically require formal qualifications, in reality, it is labour-intensive. Working holidaymakers provide a guaranteed workforce, with the conditions of the visa program being a catalyst for their labour. Historically, approximately 90 per cent of working holidaymakers have been employed in these sectors (Phillips 2016). In rural areas where local economies are dependent on agriculture, farm work is readily available and relatively easy to obtain year-round. While some locations have definitive planting and harvesting seasons, other agriculturally-rich areas produce a wide variety of crops, with no clear break or significant fluctuations in the amount of labour required. It is therefore possible for holidaymakers to find consistent employment throughout the duration their visa is valid.

Media portrayals of working holidaymakers

Significantly, media portrayals of young transient migrants in Australia use terms such as 'working holidaymaker' and 'backpacker' in specific ways. Their contrasting usage reveals how a fluid, amoeba-like population of temporary migrants, travellers, and short-term labourers are viewed in a variety of contexts. Within the broader Australian social and political landscape, 'backpacker' is used to refer to young, predominantly European, independent travellers in tourist locations. The term 'backpacker' suggests romantic imagery of carefree youths, who spend their days travelling along the east coast of Australia in Kombi vans, relaxing on Bondi Beach, or finding themselves at the centre of a series of self-created mishaps (Loker-Murphy & Pearce 1995). Backpackers are frequently depicted as noisy and disrespectful troublemakers, 'litter bugs', 'binge drinkers', and 'hooligans' (Peel & Steen 2007; Jayne et al. 2012). In recent years, media stories about backpackers in national news outlets have told of an illegal Sydney beach party on Christmas day 2017 (Cross 2017), a mass-drug overdose in Western Australia (Powell & Carmody 2018; Wolfe 2018), or travellers involved in horror car crashes (Groom 2018) or being trapped in unpredictable floodwaters (Sexton-McGrath 2018). They are alternatively portrayed as a self-reliant population and a source of tourism revenue (see Prideaux & Shiga 2007), responsible for the sometimes dramatic or injurious consequences of their own behaviour.

In contrast, the term 'working holidaymaker' is specifically used to refer to an individual holding a Working Holiday visa and employed in short-term labour. Although holidaymakers can be located in a variety of contexts and are likely to spend time both working and travelling, the working holidaymaker identity is quickly becoming synonymous with that of a young person travelling from overseas and finding farm work in regional and remote areas (Nagai et al. 2018b, p. 67). As Brennan (2014, p. 95) argues, these contrasting identities of backpacker and working holidaymaker are mostly distinct and are used to refer to groups of young overseas travellers in different contexts. There may be subtle distinctions between the backpacker and working holidaymaker identity, but in reality, these terms are often used interchangeably. These fluid categories are particularly evident when individuals holding a Working Holiday visa move between travel and employment, leading the differences between backpacker and holidaymaker to become blurred. In Australian news media discourse, these identities are readily conflated at times, which creates the perception of a homogenous population that is increasingly politicised.

While public and political discourse (as evidence by the labelling of the 'backpacker' tax discussed in the subsequent section or the 'backpacker English class' attended as part of ethnographic fieldwork in this study treats these terms as synonymous, they are not necessarily distinct categories, but overlapping aspects of identity. Many working holidaymakers enact typical 'backpacker' behaviours, but as a heterogenous group of people, not all choose to adhere to such identities and practices. As this thesis continues, I draw attention to diverse ways in which working holidaymakers choose to engage with the Working Holiday Visa scheme, in ways that differ from its original conception.

Working holidaymakers in political discourse

An underlying awareness of working holidaymakers' presence and their labour has been the subject of ongoing political debate in recent years. This definitive increase in visibility occurred in early 2015, after an expository documentary (provocatively titled 'Slaving Away') (Meldrum-Hanna & Russell 2015) was first aired on the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* (ABC) program 'Four Corners'. The program focused on the exploitation of working holidaymakers at factories and farms in

regional Australia, resulting in the issues facing many of these temporary migrant workers becoming known to a wider audience. The documentary's release engendered subsequent waves of stories about holidaymakers in Australia, predominantly relating to their safety, workplace conditions, and rates of pay. In the ensuing years, political debate centred on how to combat the prevalence of 'unscrupulous' labour-hire contractors and the so-called 'backpacker tax'.

The 'backpacker tax' refers to provisions in taxation policy for temporary migrant workers in Australia. A protracted period of heightened political disputes, confusion, and uncertainty precluded these measures being introduced, largely owing to a lack of consultation and modelling reportedly conducted on the issue by the Australian Government (Jericho 2016; Steen & Peel 2015). Prior to 2015, when these measures were initially proposed, temporary migrants were entitled to the same taxation principles as residents. They were entitled to the 'tax-free threshold' (meaning no tax applied to the first AUD$18,200 of annual earnings) and were not subject to additional compulsory taxation on their superannuation (which frequently goes unclaimed). Superannuation refers to money put aside by an employer, on top of an individual's wages during their lifetime, which is then made available on retirement or on reaching 65 years of age (Australian Taxation Office 2020). Government superannuation laws calculate that mandatory superannuation contributions must be made if the employee earns over AUD$450 in a month, at a rate of 9.5 per cent of their total earnings. This amount is automatically put into a superannuation fund, but individuals can also make voluntary contributions. Working holidaymakers were entitled to be taxed at the same rate as Australian residents and were classified as residents for tax purposes throughout the duration of their stay in the country. However, in 2015, it was ruled that temporary migrants do not constitute Australian residents and should therefore be taxed at a higher rate – 32.5 per cent for every dollar earned, a 95 per cent tax on superannuation, and no tax-free threshold (Rosewarne 2016).

Despite projected multi-million dollar increases to government revenue as a result of changes to taxation, the decision to increase the tax for which temporary migrants were liable was the cause for much concern (Iaquinto 2018). News media discourse speculated that working holidaymakers would be hesitant to travel to Australia, and

would seek short-term, unskilled employment elsewhere (O'Callaghan 2015; Kuchel 2016). In doing so, this series of events was predicted to have the adverse effect of drastically reducing tourism revenue and harming the national agricultural industry (Bryant 2015; McKillop 2015). Eventually, after a further 18 months of debate, the Australian Senate passed what has come to be known as the 'backpacker tax' in late 2016 (Howe 2016). Under these revised taxation measures, overseas travellers living and working in the country via a Working Holiday or Work and Holiday visa are automatically taxed 15 cents of every dollar earned, and their superannuation is subjected to a 65 per cent tax. Four years after the revised measures were initially established and implemented, there are still ongoing calls to eliminate the backpacker tax altogether, claiming that it has contributed to increased labour shortages (Worthington 2017; Bagshaw 2018). However, this claim has not yet been formally substantiated.

An additional sphere of political discussion relating to working holidaymakers in recent years encompasses their encounters with labour-hire contractors. Labour-hire contractors act as intermediary employment providers for both working holidaymakers and agribusinesses. In this relatively common practice, labour-hire contractors employ working holidaymakers, who are then subcontracted to farmers requiring seasonal staff to fulfil short-term seasonal agricultural labour needs (Underhill & Rimmer 2016, p. 617). Farmers will typically pay contractors a nominal amount of money (covering holidaymakers' wages, fees for the contractor, and any other expenses). The benefit of such an arrangement is that farmers, who are often too focused on overseeing farm management, are able to outsource the procurement of staff or their replacements, if they move on to other employment or travel elsewhere.

Given that farmers' primary source of labour is working holidaymakers (a conditionally transient and temporary population), it can be convenient for the responsibility of handling everyday employment to be held elsewhere. Working holidaymakers, who can also experience difficulty finding work, and are subject to the needs of often short-term or abruptly concluding harvesting seasons, can also benefit from seeking out labour-hire contractors. In theory, being employed by labour-hire contractors ensures consistent work and reduces the impact of potential

underemployment, as many of these providers service multiple farms in a single region. Some labour-hire contractors also provide working holidaymakers with accommodation and transportation to and from places of employment, at an additional cost. This convenient, all-inclusive package is appealing to many working holidaymakers, as it appears to make the process of negotiating the regional space and obtaining days for an additional visa much easier.

However, discrepancies can arise in these working relationships and unethical practices can emerge (Tranfaglia 2015). Widespread narratives of wage theft and a lack of government intervention in varying employment contexts are increasingly common (Clibborn & Wright 2018). In a number of instances over recent years, farmers have paid labour-hire contractors enough to cover working holidaymakers' wages, but a substantial percentage of this money has been withheld by the contractor (Thornthwaite 2017, p. 262). A recent study by Berg and Farbenblum (2017) sought to identify rates of wage theft experienced by various categories of temporary migrant in Australia, including international students and working holidaymakers. Key findings indicated that the practice is endemic. Specifically, the research indicated that 32 per cent of all working holidaymakers surveyed (1,440 people in total) "earned $12 per hour or less in their lowest paid job" (2017, p. 26); considerably less than the AUD $22.13 award rate at the time. Notably, most respondents (78 per cent) were keenly aware of the correct rates of pay and that discrepancies were occurring (2017, p. 34). A subsequent 2018 parliamentary inquiry into wage theft across Queensland (Queensland Parliament 2018) resulted in the State Government defining wage theft as a criminal offence (Grace 2019).

Longstanding government and independent bodies such as the *Workplace Ombudsman* or *Fair Work Austra*lia are in place to respond to any relevant concerns, including wage theft or other undesirable practices (whether conducted by labour-hire contractors or any other employer). However, the likelihood, ability, or willingness to lodge official complaints can be inconsistent, as both Farbenblum and Berg (2017) and Campbell et al. (2019) suggest. In 2016, the Australian Government and several state governments held independent inquiries into the practices of the labour-hire industry and their involvement with working holidaymakers more broadly (see Commonwealth of Australia 2016; Queensland Parliament 2016b). In

these inquiries, individuals were invited to provide either anonymous or public submissions relating to their personal experience, or expertise. In combination, these investigations enabled the development of new regulations and a more tightly-controlled industry, as Queensland, South Australian, and Victorian State Governments all enacted legislation in 2017 (Kotsios 2018). Since April 2018, the newly operational *Queensland Labour Hire Licensing Act 2017* has required labour-hire contractors to pass several tests, and to be considerably more transparent in relation to record-keeping and wages.

The exploitation of working holidaymakers also occurs outside spaces of employment. Stories of poor living conditions, violence, and sexual or gendered harassment and assault are more tangentially linked to the act of seeking employment (Feller 2017; Reynolds 2018). In recent years, news reporting has depicted a rise in young, predominantly female working holidaymakers drawn in by the false premise of unverifiable employment in regional areas. In 2014, it was made public that a nineteen year old woman from Germany was held captive and sexually assaulted by a 48-year-old man in Cottonvale, Queensland (Wilson 2016), just two hours' drive from the Lockyer Valley region. The man had advertised available work on an online backpacker job board, but in reality, he had conspired to drug and assault the woman shortly after her arrival. Then, in 2017, a 24-year-old Belgian holidaymaker was kidnapped and assaulted by a 53-year-old man near Murray Bridge, in South Australia (Allen 2017). The young woman had reportedly posted an advertisement looking for employment, which was answered by the perpetrator. These stories, and many, many others (cf. Opie 2017a, 2017b; Tyeson 2017; Bavas 2018) are part of an ongoing narrative of violence committed against both backpackers and working holidaymakers in the Australian landscape.

Research context

Agriculture and migration are inseparable from the post-settlement Australian landscape. Historically, migrant workers have long undertaken seasonal agricultural work across regional and remote areas of Australia (Hanson & Bell 2007). Most notably, increased waves of economic migrants and burgeoning industries in the early 19th century saw vulnerable populations forced into insecure agricultural work

(Saunders 1982). Within early iterations of the Australian sugar industry, 'blackbirding' referred to the act of deceptively or forcedly recruiting Pacific Islanders for their labour (Stead 2019, pp. 136-7); the effects of sugar slavery and the colonial diaspora are still felt among the South Sea Islander community today (Banivanua Mar 2006). In the late 19th century, southern European migrant workers (many of whom were derogatorily referred to as 'black Italians' or 'Dago') were also employed as contract labourers across Queensland (Moraes-Gorecki 1994), alongside Asian migrants from China and Japan (Frost 2002; Loy-Wilson 2014). This formalisation of inequality and the construction and maintenance of 'outsider' identities has been rendered into the fabric of many state-wide regional economies, via agricultural-based migration (Henderson 2005).

The Lockyer Valley region

One such location is the Lockyer Valley region, an agriculturally-rich and diverse landscape in South-East Queensland, Australia (see Figures 1 and 2 below[5]), where this study is based. In the region, histories of migration and agricultural work can now be found interwoven into rural mythologies and persistent ideas about identity and belonging. Many early settlers in the Lockyer Valley during the 1800s were northern European migrants such as Britons, Germans, and Scandinavians (Hatoss 2006; Ganter 2014). Tampke (2006, p. 82) credits the cultivation of dense scrubland into arable territories to many of these "rural pioneers". Taken together, these northern European migrants farmed lands alongside small numbers of Asian residents and the Turrbal and Jaggera peoples (Kerkhove & Uhr 2019, p. 28-30). Today, these agricultural legacies are reflected in the German names of streets, institutions, and the many well-known local farming families still living in the area. However, contemporary rural narratives largely overlook the custodianship of Aboriginal peoples in Australia, in addition to their rich agricultural knowledge, and extensive claim over this geographical space that existed prior to settlement, which is altogether consistent with the colonial claim of 'terra nullius' (Bird-Rose 1996).

[5] All maps provided in the thesis are used under open license (*Open Data Commons* and *Open Database Commons*) and copyrighted to OpenStreetMap (2020) contributors.

Figure 1: The Lockyer Valley region (indicated in red), Australia.

***Approximate map scale**: 1 centimetre: 20 kilometres.*

The Lockyer Valley region occupies 2,272 square kilometres. The landscape is sparsely populated relative to its size, with the most recently available census data estimates that 39,486 people live in the region (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). The Lockyer Valley is an increasingly culturally diverse landscape. Approximately 68.3 per cent of its current residents were born in Australia, with the remainder born overseas. People from non-English speaking backgrounds account for just 6.9 per cent of the population (Lockyer Valley Regional Council 2018). Although the region is comprised of several smaller towns, the greatest concentration of people currently residing in the Lockyer Valley live in Gatton (approximately 7,100 people) (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016), a relatively small town which operates as the industrial, commercial, and residential centre of the region (see Figure 3).

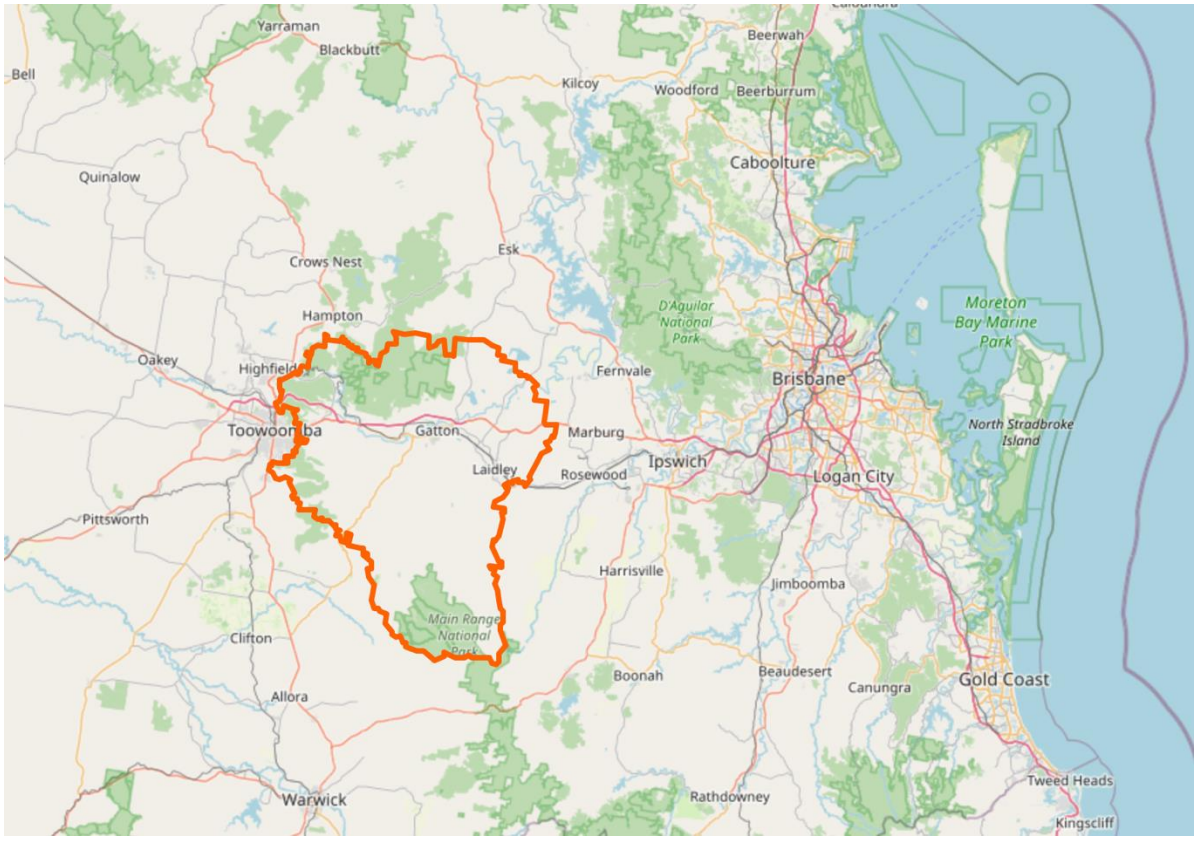


Figure 2: Map of the Lockyer Valley shown in relation to the state capital of Brisbane and the regional centre of Toowoomba.

***Approximate map scale**: 1 centimetre: 20 kilometres.*

Gatton is located approximately half an hour's drive (37 kilometres) by car from the nearest urban centre (Toowoomba), and just over an hour (93 kilometres) from the Queensland state capital (Brisbane). It sits within a very wide, flat piece of countryside, on fertile alluvial soils. Notably, a number of farms directly abut the residential areas surrounding the town's central business district. Although well-connected and accessible, Gatton and its immediate surroundings can be easy places to overlook. Set off the main highway, the town is not a typical stopover for those driving long distances, and neither is it a well-known tourist destination. However, some inter-city buses do travel through the town.

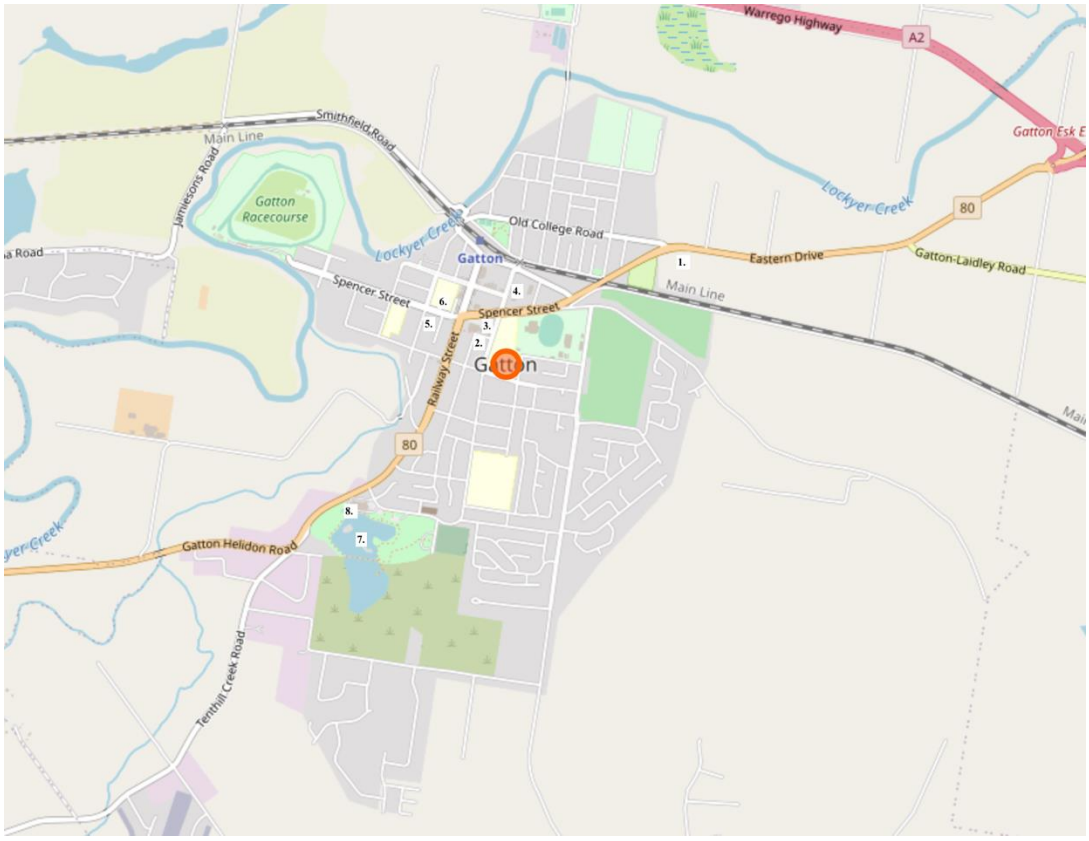


Figure 3: Gatton, including its central business district, residential area and significant locations for working holidaymakers.

***Approximate map scale**: 1 centimetre:1 kilometre. **Map key:** 1. Gatton Caravan park, home to many working holidaymakers; 2. Coles nationwide grocery store chain location, situated inside the Gatton Plaza shopping complex; 3. McDonald's takeaway restaurant (Gatton Central store), 4. Gatton Baptist Church, which hosts the weekly backpacker English class; 5. Gatton Shire Hall, where the monthly council barbeque for working holidaymakers is held; 6. Gatton Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which hosts the weekly soup kitchen; 7. Lake Apex and surrounding parklands; Lockyer Valley Cultural Centre precinct, including the Gatton Library and Information Centre.*

Gatton and the rest of the Lockyer Valley are predominantly known for agricultural exports. The local economy is built on this industry; farming is extensive across the entire region, and a significant number of residents (approximately 18 per cent) are directly employed in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (Lockyer Valley Regional Council 2018). Historically, potatoes and onions were the primary crops grown in the area, but in recent decades, produce planted and harvested at its farms have diversified to the point that the region is now referred to, at least for tourism purposes, as the 'national salad bowl' (Lockyer Valley Visitor Information Centre

2015b). While potatoes, onions, and broccoli remain major crops, varieties of fruit, vegetables, hay, cereal crops, and herbs are also produced throughout the year. The Working Holiday visa has created further demographic shifts in the Lockyer Valley, and the agricultural sectors. Although not all seasonal agricultural labourers in the region are holidaymakers, farm work is an accessible means of earning money and fulfilling the requirements for a second-year visa application. As such, Gatton and the Lockyer Valley present an opportune case study for understanding the intersections between transient and fixed populations in regional Australia.

In recent years, agricultural labour in the Lockyer Valley has created opportunities for new subsidiary industries to develop, particularly in conjunction with the increased presence of working holidaymakers and need for ongoing short-term labour. A number of labour-hire contractors operate in the region, acting as both employment agency and intermediary between working holidaymakers and farmers. Although, as previously noted, sourcing and providing employment is not necessarily synonymous with involvement in problematic, controversial, or even illegal practices, much of the local reporting on this employment class centres on such incidents.

In mid-2014, the regional council gave approval for a historical hotel and bar located in the main street of the Gatton central business district to be turned into a backpacker hostel (Barry 2014). This potential development was widely celebrated, as budget accommodation for short-term, seasonal workers was limited. A year later, the hotel was declared to be 'unsafe' (Kuchel 2015b) and was subsequently destroyed by a fire in November 2015 (Wilson 2015), in circumstances that were eventually deemed not to be suspicious (Witsenhuysen 2017). The developer, a former labour-hire contractor, had a history of violence against his staff; in 2012, he was convicted for pouring boiling water on a worker's face, after they reportedly expressed interest in finding alternative employment (McKenna 2015). On the 10th of November 2015, six hundred seasonal workers arrived at a Lockyer Valley farm in several buses chartered by labour-hire contractors, despite only one hundred staff being needed to pick vegetables. The workers reportedly became agitated when not given employment, resulting in an intervention by the police, and eventual investigation by the regional council, State, and Commonwealth Governments. The

event was called an “immigrant invasion” in the local newspaper and was blamed on a “dodgy contractor” (Miko 2015).

A series of other incidents followed, including one occasion the same year which saw the then-Department of Immigration and Border Protection and Australian Federal Police, conduct an unannounced raid on a prominent local farm. One hundred of these hopeful workers were detained on the grounds of working illegally (Branco 2015; Worrall 2015). The grower attributed the cause of the raid to a labour-hire contractor who was “not operating compliantly” (Kuchel 2015a). It is important to note that it is unclear whether any of these individuals were working holidaymakers – this detail is included to provide broader context relating to seasonal agricultural labour in the region. Then, in 2016, a different labour-hire contractor was discovered to have collectively underpaid 107 workers, including 35 working holidaymakers, over $15,000 in wages, without the knowledge of the farmer (Potter 2016). Another labour-hire contractor operating in the Lockyer Valley region repeatedly appeared in court for providing unsafe housing to working holidaymakers in Gatton. The contractor was investigated in 2013, 2015, and 2017, resulting in a total of $95,000 worth of fines issued to the same person by the *Toowoomba Magistrates Court* (Witsenhuysen 2015; Hardwick 2017).

The reporting of these events tended to focus on farmers’ needs, and inconveniences that were put upon them, implicitly prioritising the circumstances effecting local economies and agricultural narratives. The impact of precarious employment, a lack of suitable alternative accommodation, or exploitation and vulnerability were largely unexplored. Ultimately, the representational politics that are evoked in portrayals of working holidaymakers as unwitting victims (Peel & Steen 2007, p. 1063) were maintained by the reporting of these events. Although these incidents were attributed to the actions of some labour-hire contractors operating in the Lockyer Valley region, and subsequently isolated, they demonstrate the impactful nature of the broader social, political, and economic landscape that working holidaymakers find themselves in when seeking out seasonal agricultural employment.
Counter-measures to these incidents (and similar events not depicted) began in late 2015 and early 2016, including the conception and organisation of a monthly free ‘backpacker barbeque’ by the Lockyer Valley Regional Council, the weekly soup

kitchen organised by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and various other events. Other responses included greater visibility of unofficial, unpaid local 'advocates', who act as individually-motivated intermediaries between working holidaymakers, employers, and authorities. They also provide on-the-ground practical support to those working holidaymakers they come across. Although these actions and people (which will be elaborated on throughout subsequent chapters), are shown to have a practical benefit, they are unable to guarantee reaching and providing support to a majority of holidaymakers in the area.

Progressing the argument

This depiction of events in the Lockyer Valley region provides a point of departure for this study, by way of contextualising local incidents as part of the broader global spatial patterns of temporary migrant labour. While it is fundamental to recognise that agricultural work or regional areas in Australia is not inherently exploitative and exclusionary, the structural constraints associated with the Working Holiday visa system create difficult, unpredictable circumstances for working holidaymakers. It is also critical to recognise that working holidaymakers are a heterogeneous population, and that any of the privilege afforded to them as a highly mobile group is experienced through individual aspects of identity, such as gender and ethnicity. As this thesis progresses, it is concerned with how working holidaymakers in Australia can develop vastly different ways to negotiate the challenges associated with temporary migration and seasonal agricultural work. Diffracted through these aspects of identity, this thesis explores how working holidaymakers develop distinct patterns of mobility, domesticity, employment, and relationships in the regional space. I develop the argument that these often unanticipated ways of interpreting the temporary labour migration system allow working holidaymakers seek out agency in circumstances that tend to invite various kinds of systemic precarity.

Chapter 2: Ideological convergences and departures

As they travel to regional areas seeking out seasonal agricultural employment, working holidaymakers find themselves in a setting that is constantly changing. These locations can be understood through frameworks of boundedness and stasis. As a diverse population, individual working holidaymakers inevitably have distinct encounters with belonging and exclusion in such places. Accounting for these challenges, how do working holidaymakers – as temporary migrants and seasonal agricultural workers – navigate a location that is typically conceived as being relatively stable?

Following Wylie (2005, p. 240), I am concerned with how moving through space means being "'in' the landscape, but also up against it". For temporary migrant workers, moving through places means contending with structures of migration and employment, connecting these broader systems with specific settings. As this chapter proceeds, a sense of place presents itself as critical to the everyday lives of temporary migrant workers in both global and national contexts, and the varied forms of exploitation and agency that emerge from these specific circumstances. In doing so, it becomes possible to reflect on the contextuality of supply chains and the invisibility of labour and production that enable consumption elsewhere (Harvey 1990). By exploring elements of placemaking, such as embodied knowledge, time, and relationships with others in the context of transience, the ways working holidaymakers living and working in the Lockyer Valley navigate public space and domestic life comes to the fore.

A global migrant workforce

Migrant workers are everywhere, comprising a significant, but largely invisible element of global supply chains. While their labour is integral to local and global economies, these workers regularly contend with issues that significantly impact their safety and security. These include negotiating legal status and their often limited access to social security, frameworks of support, and healthcare. Extant research on migrant workers, particularly those who are more temporary, show that various forms of exploitation and violence factor into their everyday lives, forcing workers to find space for negotiation and agency in unexpected ways. An enduring

and emphatic relationship between marginalised temporary migrant workers and manual labour necessitates a critique of the problematic application of the 'skilled' and 'unskilled' binary.

A global phenomenon of labour migration

Labour migration, or the practice of taking up work in contexts further afield than places of residence, is a widespread spatial pattern, in a world with increasing economic disparity between people. While there are many reasons for labour migration, socioeconomic class is a critical factor that influences the need to look for work elsewhere (Ruhs & Anderson 2010, p. 29). Cyclical modes of migration can follow annual or seasonal trails (Ball et al. 2011; Skeldon 2012; Sykes 2018) or focus on a brief, one-time displacement to a single location (Koleth 2017; Howe et al. 2018). Many historical and contemporary global patterns of movement can be attributed to labour migration, whether migration constitutes a permanent relocation, a cyclical arrangement, or a temporary practice. These patterns of labour migration can be structured by the conditions of temporary migration, or by the work itself. The ability to work may be governed by political conditions or the seasonal nature of the labour being taken up (such as agriculture or tourism), or both of these factors combined. The people who seek out this kind of labour are broadly referred to as temporary migrant workers. Rather than being a homogenous population, temporary migrant workers comprise people from a range of countries and socioeconomic classes, with an array of ethnicities, ages, and genders. Each has their own individual justifications for undertaking transience that necessitates labour.

International research on the migrant workforce

Across vastly different global contexts, agricultural production and consumption is especially dependent on these 'unskilled' workers. Temporary migrant workers are equally reliant on this casual labour, creating conditions of mutual dependence. However, these are also permeated by narratives of exploitation and agency. This varies from location to location, dependent on local histories, laws, and regulation. One commonality across these varied geopolitical structures of temporary labour migration is the need to take up what Reid et al. (2014) refer to as 'survival jobs'.

Many of these patterns of migration depict diverse populations taking up casual agricultural employment, including Latinx workers in the United States of America (Alvarez 1995; Mares 2019) and Eastern European migrants in the United Kingdom (Weishaar 2010). These migrants travel elsewhere in search of work through a variety of channels. These include authorised migration streams, such as temporary migration programs in Canada (Binford 2019) and the United Kingdom (Consterdine & Samuk 2018), and temporary work visas in the United States of America (Sandovici 2018, p. 425). Other, unauthorised streams of labour migration include undocumented workers who travel via border crossings (Chavez 1994). These workers tend to encounter a range of issues relating to migration, including questions surrounding their citizenship status, a lack of legal protections, and limited opportunities for seeking redress. As part of their everyday lives, temporary migrant workers also reckon with exploitation, violence, and various modes of seeking out agency. As the varied modes of migration undertaken by global temporary workers demonstrate, questions of agency are not simply reduced to renderings of the marginalisation of agency, but are a result of complex negotiations.

Exploitation and violence

These transient populations encounter high levels of risk and exploitation as they undertake this labour. These issues of exploitation are made most visible in the extensive body of research relating to transient migrant farmworkers in the United States of America, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Critical anthropological work has been conducted about the cumulative physical impact of seasonal agricultural labour on migrant workers' health (Saxton 2015; Cohen 2017). Horton (2016) specifically demonstrates that repetitive strain and difficult environmental working conditions can result in both acute conditions and chronic injuries for Latinx farmworkers in California. Elsewhere, in Canada, employment status is hinged on acceptance of precarity, ambiguity of citizenship status and subsequent rights, economic exploitation (Kato 2013; Silverman & Hari 2016), and even the distressing commodification of women's bodies via gendered harassment and violent removal of sexual agency (Cohen & Caxaj 2018, p. 101).

In these circumstances, the impact of the institution becomes metaphorically inscribed on temporary migrant workers' bodies (see Farmer et al. 2004; Benson 2008; Vogt 2013). Scheper-Hughes' (1993) concept of 'everyday violence' offers a valuable framework from which to identify the locus of power that produces these extreme circumstances. Specifically in relation to temporary migrant workers, it can be understood as "the normalized, micro-interactional expressions of violence on domestic, delinquent, and institutional levels that produces a common sense of violence and humiliation" (Holmes 2013, p. 90). Although, in most instances, this type of trickling, indirect everyday structural violence is used in reference to people who have a greater inability to remove themselves from unfavourable contexts, or those whose existence and employment is inextricably tied to a state that benefits from their subjugation and perceived illegality. Temporary migrant workers employed in the agriculture industry appear to be particularly susceptible to these effects, as the conditions of short-term, manual, and undervalued labour can create circumstances of invisibility.

Agency

A critical element in these global contexts of labour migration is how workers negotiate inherent structural inequalities. In these contexts, temporary migrant workers who are either seeking out or employed in agricultural labour express agency through substantially more risk-averse behaviours. In diverse global contexts, these practices range from dangerous border crossings to secure employment or enduring a permanently temporary legal status.

For example, Latinx workers regularly undertake dangerous border crossings to the United States of America in the search for seasonal farm labour (Holmes 2013). While the pathways to various agriculturally-rich environments across the country represent a discerning annual choice for many workers, they are also symbolic of the routinisation of vulnerability encountered by migrants in such labour contexts (Weiler et al. 2016; Zlolniski 2018). De León (2015, p. 209) places the relationship between agency and violence in harsher perspective, describing the deaths of migrants travelling across the Mexican-US border via the Sonoran Desert in Arizona. The desert becomes a gathering place for bodies and disrupted searches for economic opportunity. Other locations necessitate similarly difficult, but differently

risk-averse choices: the need for workers to undertake labour migration in Canada produces a sizable population that perpetually exists outside notions of citizenship (Rajkumar et al. 2012; Preibisch & Otero 2014), while some migrant workers in the United Kingdom view flexibility and uncertainty as a mundane survival strategy (Sudworth 2014).

While these behaviours are necessitated by the systemic inequalities of transient labour, they also present a reconfiguration of agency that is more closely related to negotiating exploitation and violence than freedom of choice. These temporary migrant workers, who are often positioned within frameworks of illegality or may have experienced forced migration, have limited opportunities for seeking redress for various injustices. Accounts of undocumented migrant workers in places such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Canada are, however, different to that of the working holidaymakers who form the focus of this study. There are several commonalities between these disparate groups, notwithstanding the point that regardless of the mode of migration, temporary migrant agricultural workers throughout the world face situations that are indeed problematic and at times, dangerous.

Temporary migration and 'unskilled' labour

A further commonality that connects most temporary migrant workers, however, is the differentiation between 'skilled' and 'unskilled' work. Form (1987, p. 31) argues that skill level can be systematically calculated according to job complexity, including "the level, scope, and integration of mental, interpersonal, and manipulative tasks". Work in these industries typically requires comprehensive training or formal qualifications (such as vocational certificates and university degrees) before obtaining employment. Skilled migrants are further evaluated on the basis of other 'desirable' attributes, including age and English-language abilities (Weller 2017, p. 2). Although skilled migrants still face specific challenges relating to their legal status, overall, they are likely to enjoy greater social and economic security (Panda & Mishra 2018, p. 1196).

While skilled migrant workers are seen to utilise their specialised knowledges individually, temporary migrant workers in low or unskilled roles offer collective value (Dauvergne & Marsden 2014, p. 526). Unskilled labour is still dictated by need and opportunity, but tends to disregard personal histories. This is because work that is unskilled comprises menial duties that do not always require formal qualifications. Much of seasonal agricultural labour can be included under this broad category, on the basis that casual workers undertake specific tasks which are stretched and separated out into individually specialised roles.

The 'skilled' versus 'unskilled' binary is however, problematic. These terms can operate as an obstructive misnomer (Cutler 1978). Although information critical to workplace processes can be acquired on-the-job, rather than beforehand, manual labour still requires specific forms of knowledge. In addition, using 'unskilled' when referring to migrant workers risks solidifying the relationship between marginalised populations and undervalued employment, creating conditions where such individuals are only imagined as being capable of taking up service roles. 'Low wage' or 'low quality' work are other potentially useful descriptors (Tazreiter 2013; Wright & Clibborn 2019). These terms are deployed to acknowledge the interrelation between wages, quality of life, and perceived satisfaction that often accompany the manual tasks taken up by marginalised populations. Taking these critiques into account, it is worth acknowledging the other, 'softer' skills that migrants are simultaneously expected to acquire – developing cultural competency in order to facilitate a smooth assimilation into dominant modes of being (Sakamoto et al. 2010, p. 147). This expectation of cultural assimilation is more explicitly connected to more permanent modes of migration, as a means of transformation into a pliable, and 'culturally compatible' migrant (Helleiner 2015). However, it may be that temporary migrant workers are unlikely to have the time or ability to alter their identities in such a way, especially when the short-term nature of their labour tends to involve separation from broader social structures.

Australian research on migrant workers

While there is a long history of migrant agricultural labour in Australia, shifting policies relating to migration and cultural diversity create problematic and challenging conditions for migrants. Contemporary forms of migration show that

temporary migrant agricultural workers, like in the global context, have to contend with the effects of structural inequalities, via different forms of exploitation. As such, opportunities for agency are also different.

A long history of migrant agricultural labour

There is a long and storied history of agricultural knowledge and labour in Australia. It begins with localised Aboriginal agricultural epistemologies and original conceptualisations of place, upon which successive overlays of meaning have been cast over ever since; most recently, those of migrant workers (as outlined in Chapter 1). As various groups of migrants have settled permanently in the country, horticultural knowledge travelled with them and was mobilised as a means of subsistence. Migration into regional areas can be seen in 19th century Chinese migrant legacies (Frost 2002; Ganter 1999), in addition to post-war Greek and Italian family farms and market gardens (Missingham et al. 2006, p. 134). More insidiously, these labour histories also include the indentured servitude of South Sea Islanders in North Queensland sugarcane fields, resulting forced displacement and cultural diasporas (Stead & Altman 2019). Agricultural labour, to a lesser extent, has also involved local workers following seasonal annual pathways (Henderson 2009). However, with increasing reliance on temporary migration programs, these workers have become less visible in public and political discourse. In recent years, agricultural labour is increasingly undertaken by temporary migrant workers, who do so under the conditions of various migration schemes. These overseas workers, who participate in cyclical migration schemes or once-off temporary programs, contend with the shifting milieu of Australian Government policy.

Changing Australian policies

Temporary labour migration in Australia operates under specific circumstances, where policy-driven and practical iterations of multiculturalism create unique conditions for migrant workers. Narratives of temporary migration in Australia, as part of the continually shifting cultural landscape, exist alongside the social and political legacies of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism in Australia emerges as a two-fold phenomenon – as the political remnants of an Australian Government intent focusing on the relationship between social cohesion and cultural diversity, and as a social fact. Officially implemented from the 1970s until 1996, multiculturalism as

social policy was based on two main principles (Dunn & Nelson 2011). First, as an attempt to lessen inequalities and conditions that relegated culturally diverse individuals to marginal spaces; and second, to create an understanding of the "plurality of cultures within Australian society, with parity of recognition, respect, and value by the society" (Poynting & Mason 2008, p. 234). This version of national multiculturalism frequently manifested as a circumscribed tolerance for migrants' cultural practices in public on the part of the Australian populace (Moran 2011; Hugo 2014). Discernible differences between an initially positivist policy and the realities of everyday life are also stark (Joppke 2014, p. 286). Robertson and Colic-Peisker (2015, p. 72) note that many identities are excluded by an implicit focus on the exceptional, or the 'culturally compatible migrant', [leaving] "the 'everyday' perspectives of residents underexplored".

After increasing criticism, the policy was gradually set aside by the Australian Government[6]. Its perceived failure came to rest on the notion that it had created an overwhelming fragmentation of cultures within Australia, although this can be attributed as being a response to the "gradual weakening of ethnicity as a structural barrier", and an ethos of tolerance, rather than acceptance of migrants (Colic-Peisker 2011, p. 579). Eventually, multiculturalism was replaced by a movement towards a more cohesive national identity and notions of citizenship, which in itself, is exclusionary (Moran 2011, p. 2153). Hage (1998, p. 49) writes that a shifting emphasis towards citizenship equates to expectations of 'naturalisation', arguably a renewal of earlier policies such as the *White Australia Policy* or *Assimilation Act*, but draped in newer, fresher, and deceptively palatable words (Ho 2014, p. 31).

Multiculturalism also emerges as a social fact that is observable in everyday life. The acute manifestations of 'everyday multiculturalism' (Wise 2012) are mundane, and often too familiar to be extracted into analytical countenance. Interactions between diverse groups of people or individuals in public space, in places such as the shopping centre or the main street (Wise 2010, p. 918) represent both the reality of

[6] It is important to note that most state governments in Australia still have an agency dedicated to multiculturalism and the needs of culturally and linguistically-diverse (CALD) residents. In Queensland, these state-specific interests are represented by the *Department of Local Government, Racing, and Multicultural Affairs*.

population demographics, and manifestations of policies stemming from various levels of government that relate to cultural and linguistical diversity. Uneven and differential access to socio-economic inclusion are also revealed through such interactions (Bloch & Dreher 2009, pp. 195-6; Lobo 2015, p. 62). This phenomenon is what Radford (2016) similarly refers to as 'everyday otherness' – the combination of an emotive, emphatic resistance to visibly different migrants, and the underlying assumption that whiteness is a core marker of the Australian identity (Schech & Haggis 2001). This combination of policy-driven approaches to multiculturalism and the everyday practical logics of diverse communities is particularly symbolic in the Lockyer Valley region, where configurations of multiculturalism become conflated with cultural geography[7]. In this instance, by examining everyday multiculturalism as social fact, it is possible to reimagine public space and the relationships between migration and belonging. Although Wise's concept of everyday multiculturalism is predominantly contained within cities and urban space, it also offers new methods of exploring the territoriality of temporary migrants' mundane mobilities in other contexts.

Contemporary forms of agricultural labour

In the Australian context, seasonal agricultural labour is often conducted by temporary migrants, but this relationship is not an exclusive one. The demographic of the casual agricultural workforce is drawn from refugee and migrant communities, international students, and local residents or Australian tourists, in addition to transient migrants from the working holiday visa scheme and the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP). Campbell (2019, p. 56) also notes the presence of 'undocumented migrant workers', who comprise a much smaller group; these workers may have an expired visa, or be working despite their visa not permitting them to take up paid labour.

Prior to the introduction of the working holiday visa program, agricultural was frequently conducted by a now-declining workforce of local or 'permanent itinerant' Australian residents (Hanson & Bell 2007, p. 107). Local or itinerant workers still

[7] The local presence and strength of the divisive, conservative, far-right political party *Pauline Hanson's One Nation* in the 2019 Australian federal election had an impact at a national level. On the 12th of May 2019, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that "in Australia's salad bowl, [party leader] Pauline Hanson is like Elvis Presley". While the candidate Chris O'Callaghan failed to win the seat of Wight, which represents the Lockyer Valley, the party received considerable support.

comprise a portion of the workforce today, tending to be 'low-skilled' and socioeconomically marginal. In most instances, local workers are viewed as uninterested by potential employers and are ultimately sidelined in regional job markets in favour of working holidaymakers. However, Tan & Lester (2012, p. 375) note that "employers have an incentive to overstate their need for WHMs [working holidaymakers] as employees as they are usually paid less than similar domestic employees". This assumption exists alongside the knowledge that there is little impetus for local workers to take up precarious, casual labour that may not offer adequate remuneration[8].

An additional historical pattern of agricultural work in Australia includes labour conducted by various refugee and migrant communities (as indicated in Chapter 1, p. 15. This included multi-generational family-run farms (Missingham, Dibden & Cocklin 2006, pp. 134-5), casual labouring, and market gardening (Frost 2002; Loy-Wilson 2014). Today, many people from refugee and migrant communities continue to undertake agricultural work in regional areas, although this is more likely to take the form of casual labour. Harvesting (Curry et al. 2018; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2006) and meat processing (Piller 2014) are common employment pathways. In many circumstances, this type of work permits refugee or permanently-settled migrants to utilise pre-existing skills and find employment that does not require professional qualifications (which are frequently not recognised).

Casual work within the agricultural sector is also taken up by international students enrolled at Australian universities, to a lesser degree (Tan & Lester 2012, p. 370; Barry 2021, p. 48). However, it is likely that their political positioning as 'students' rather than informal labour migrants obscures their role as casual workers (Robertson 2014, p. 1916). Many of these students, who are from non-English-speaking backgrounds, are also subjected to various kinds of racialised precarity and exploitation in the workplace. Farbenblum and Berg (2017, p. 47) noted in a study

[8] It is critical to note that since COVID-19 international travel restrictions to Australia were implemented and limited the pool of working holidaymakers, there have been increased calls for Australian residents to take up seasonal farm work. As reported by *The Guardian* on 11th April (McGlone 2021), there is little incentive to do so. Despite financial incentives, the *Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job* Australian Government program has not been extensively taken up by potential workers.

on wage theft in Australia that a majority of this cohort are well-versed in workplace rights and entitlements, but do not expect to earn the minimum wage while on a temporary visa.

Within the category of work conducted by temporary or circular migrants, labour is typically sourced through a series of temporary visa programs, including the working holidaymaker visa program (Chapter 1, p. 5) and the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP). The SWP is a sponsored agricultural work scheme that is exclusively targeted at Pacific Islander nations. It is intended to address labour shortages, while contributing to the economies of Pacific Island nations through remittances sent home by workers (Dun & Klocker 2017, p. 28). These workers tend to engage in cyclical practices of migration between work and home, but have limitations on their movement while in Australia (Lee & Nishitani 2017). As a sponsored program, an employer is required to be registered and approved at a government level in order to participate (Bedford et al. 2017). However, a combination of limited freedom of movement and micro-level governance has the effect of exacerbating the vulnerabilities of Pacific Islander workers (Stead 2021, p. 13). Although the program is touted as having multi-directional benefits for all involved, workers have no opportunity to seek out alternative employment, often feel subjected to racialised inequalities, and experience difficulties in navigating these regulatory mechanisms (Petrou & Connell 2018).

Other schemes, including the working holidaymaker visa program (which is the focus of analysis in this thesis), permit individuals to seek out work anywhere in Australia and have no restrictions on movement (Robertson 2014). This is in stark contrast to the limitations placed on Pacific Islander workers in the SWP. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, only work in specific industries counts towards an additional visa and extended stay. Any employer is permitted to hire working holidaymakers, which in industries such as agriculture, can result in a preference for short-term, transient workers who are motivated to take up such labour. This dependence on migrant labour can contribute to reducing the attractiveness of hiring local workers, who are envisioned as having little incentive to take up insecure work. Such schemes can also contribute to formalising the marginalisation of migrants (Campbell 2019, p. 77). However, working holidaymakers are a heterogeneous

population, and so it is critical to not overstate any vulnerabilities at the expense of privilege. Visa eligibility requirements largely guarantee that applicants are comparatively affluent, educated, and middle class with high levels of mobility. While tending to be characterised as exclusively white European 'backpackers', working holidaymakers are in fact drawn from a range of countries; as a result, any sense of privilege is uneven and subjective.

Responding to exploitation

Temporary labour migration in Australia operates under specific circumstances. While labour laws are in place to reduce the impact of workplace exploitation and respond to any potential violations, the nature of the visa system that permits temporary migrants to take up employment ensures they stay on the move. In this sense, the structural context underpins many of the problems encountered by temporary migrants in Australia, accentuating direct physical violence and vulnerability. It is also critical to note that temporary migration in Australia is governed by frameworks of regulation and control. Social security is primarily determined through the concept of citizenship – or, who has the legal right to social services within the state. What citizenship also determines, however, is who belongs and who does not within the specific confines of the national population (Robertson 2015a, p. 943; 2016, p. 2274). As a status that is affirmed by permanent residency and accumulated socioeconomic capital, the affordances of citizenship are not possible for temporary migrants.

It is worth clarifying that questions of exploitation and vulnerability should not be cast as a common and all-pervasive issue. There is significant variation under the generic title of 'temporary migrant worker', and indeed, even within the broad category of working holidaymaker (as subsequent chapters will discuss).Temporary migration schemes in Australia each have specific attendant conditions, which control factors such as length of stay and access to employment and education (as depicted in Chapter 1). Many of these regulations also stipulate that programs do not function as a pathway to citizenship. However, a person could conceivably switch across multiple visas over time and become what Mares (2016) refers to as a 'permanently temporary'. Doing so would hypothetically enable a person to extend

the length of time spent in the country but would not translate into a secure legal status.

There are still ways for temporary migrant workers to seek out support, despite the ephemeral and uncertain nature of their stays. Unlike so-called 'illegal' migrants or temporary migrant workers in many other countries, all workers in Australia, regardless of citizenship status, have a legal right to report workplace wrongdoings without risking their employment. National regulatory bodies such as *Fair Work Commission* and the *Australian Human Rights Commission* are positioned to respond to labour law or human rights violations. This can be done online or via anonymous reporting hotlines, but these mechanisms are not infallible – even if temporary migrant workers are aware of these systems, they are unlikely to submit formal complaints. Campbell et al. (2019, p. 103) note that temporary workers – even working holidaymakers who are not tied to a specific employer – often express concerns about their employment or even visa status being at risk if they were to initiate a formal process to address issues in the workplace. Although such a scenario would violate Australian labour laws, the assumption that temporary migrant labour equates to tolerance of exploitation is pervasive and concerning.

In comparison, labour migration in Australia is tempered by the frameworks of regulation and control highlighted in previous discussions. That is not to suggest that instances of exploitation in Australia are any less common than they are elsewhere, or that it exists on a spectrum of more to less tolerable, but that they emerge from different circumstances. Where governmentality and marginalisation become conditions of labour, other forms of vulnerability and precarity have the space to emerge (Li & Whitworth 2016; Lever & Milbourne 2017; Underhill & Rimmer 2017). While the impact of widespread exploitation manifests in the body through workers' health (Underhill & Rimmer 2015), such impacts are generated by social policy and labour practices. Where frameworks of social security predetermine belonging, the act of being a temporary migrant worker in Australia is intertwined with a categorical otherness. Links between temporary migration and exclusion can be found in examples of racism (Li 2019; Carangio et al. 2020), gendered violence (Hibbins 2005; Boucher 2007), and indefinite uncertain legal status.

Despite systems to manage labour law violations, temporary migrant workers regularly also contend with insidious workarounds that subtly limit their organising abilities and increase dependency on employers. Questionable labour-hire practices (Argent & Tonts 2015) and wage theft (Berg & Farbenblum 2017; Clibborn & Wright 2018) are common narratives for a majority of temporary migrant workers in Australia. Migrant workers themselves also encounter long-term detachment from kin networks or a lack of sympathetic modes of support. This is most commonly experienced by Pacific Islanders taking up cyclical employment while holding sponsored work visas (see Lee & Nishitani 2017; Lever & Milbourne 2017).

Opportunities for agency

In Australia, enacting agency means navigating the rigid structures of temporary migration. Although it is contentious to suggest precarity can be a desirable trait, this may be the case for some working holidaymakers in particular. As temporary migrants who have freedom of movement underwritten into their visa conditions, many working holidaymakers described their stays as an opportunity (Yoon 2015). Travelling (Allon 2004; Clarke 2004), saving money (Jarvis & Peel 2013), and even seeking out personal growth through new experiences (Kato 2013) are presented as ways working holidaymakers find malleability in policy and labour that automatically creates conditions of uncertainty. It is worth noting, however, that these analyses of agency tend to be restricted to working holidaymakers who perform the stereotypical 'backpacker' identity in tourist spaces. As outlined in Chapter 1, the backpacker identity differs from that of working holidaymakers. While working holidaymakers are permitted to take up employment and travel as part of the Working Holiday visa, the label of 'working holidaymaker' is almost exclusively associated with short-term, casual labour.

Transience and vulnerability

Transience can then be read as an underlying factor that causes structural inequalities. A series of assumptions permeate research on place and temporariness, including the notion that a loss of community equates to a lack of possibilities for belonging, and that a sense of place is critical to belonging and security. However, these manifest differently for transient communities, including temporary migrant workers, who operate under the strictures of other forms of mobility. Examining

these ideas more critically can contribute to understanding the contexts temporary migrants and other transient people find themselves in.

Dominant assumptions about mobility and belonging

Theoretical frameworks for understanding community tend to rest on assumptions that the idea of stability and stasis are necessary for cultivating feelings of belonging to a group. Broadly defined, community can be conceptualised as a consciously bounded collective (Cohen 1985, p. 13). Bauman (2001, p. 115) and Douglas (1970) imply that a strong sense of community signifies a lack of agency, while those with fluid boundaries are better equipped to adapt to external change. Communities are typically defined by boundaries – whether these boundaries exist in physical space or in the minds of constituents – that stipulate who belongs and who does not. Cohen (1985, p. 50) argues that "the symbolic expression of community and its boundaries increases as the actual geo-social boundaries of the community are undermined, blurred, or otherwise weakened". The notion of a community as an inherently safe and inclusive social space can, in some instances, enable exclusion of those who do not meet such conditions (Sandercock 2003, p. 111). A more rigidly-defined group, for example, is capable of automatically mobilising itself to create conditions for exclusion, or reactionary responses against perceived threats (Bauman 2001, p. 100). Through these understandings of what community can do, it becomes possible to consider how a sense of belonging may work differently for transient populations. Belonging is further mediated in complex ways that are not necessarily dependent on the immediacy of cohabitation. Mobility is often assumed to be a perceived threat – somehow, in a binary of self and other, temporal stability is transformed into a moral imperative of connectedness, safety, and socioeconomic security (Malkki 1992, p. 30). To belong, both personal histories, and imagined futures, need to be deeply entrenched in the landscape. It is assumed that witnessing the repetition of history permits a place to be fully known and understood. The concept of localness further conflates belonging with place, where the length of time spent in a single location allows individuals to integrate themselves into local systems and structures (Lippard 1997). Mobility, in contrast, infers placelessness and a lack of belonging, through a perceived inability to form meaningful attachments to any particular locale (Cresswell 2006, p. 26).

In reality, a legitimate claim to localness is difficult to contrast with transient identity. In their critique of the academic impetus to create clear distinctions between fixed and mobile, local and global, Bönisch-Brednich & Trundle (2016, p. 2) suggest that people themselves do not always adhere to unmoving ideas of what constitutes such boundaries. Local boundaries coexist alongside global networks, and vice versa; these conceptualisations of belonging are muddied and malleable (Phillips & Robinson 2015, p. 410; Glick Schiller & Salazar 2013, p. 186). While temporary migrants do form connections with places (as a form of place attachment), but these may well differ from dominant renderings of place that are found in local narratives and history. In the Australian context, claims to ownership associated with landownership (cf. Bryant & Pini 2009; Butler & Ben 2020) will invariably deviate from connections made as part of the specific touristic experience sought out by working holidaymakers and creates various tensions, as this thesis continues on to demonstrate. These divergent understandings of community can, at times, have negative implications for those who are already positioned as structurally invisible (Boese 2014; Lever & Milbourne 2017), and in this sense, space and place become encoded with implicit conditions for belonging and inclusion. Working holidaymakers, whose everyday interactions are filtered through complex frameworks of uneven privilege and racialised mobility can be included in this group.

Alternative renderings of place and community

Temporary migrant workers have unique experiences of place and community that do not necessarily align with dominant understandings of place. Looking towards the experiences of people in other forms of transient community, it is possible to begin to recognise how temporary migrant workers – and working holidaymakers – construct a sense of place and navigate their surroundings.

Although transience is readily assumed to be a problem, for people who choose more mobile lifestyles or those who never settle, this may not be the case. The persistent global presence of transient communities demonstrates how mobility does not necessarily equate to placelessness or an inability to form meaningful relationships. Those whose identities fall outside such conditions for inclusion are equally in need of meaningful connections that provide solidarity and support. Nomadic pastoralists

(Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson 1980), Romani peoples (Marcu 2015), Irish travellers (Okely 1983; Gmelch 1986), have been the ongoing subjects of anthropological enquiry. Although these communities are held together by shared cultural histories, they demonstrate that strong ties are not necessarily contingent on a singular place – rather, on many places. However, there is still a sense of repetition and familiarity associated with these types of communities.

Temporary migrant workers represent another type of transient community, but their networks can also solidify in fixed places, rather than during the process of mobility. Looking towards more economically mobile populations such as itinerant labourers and fly-in/fly-out workers (McKenzie 2010) reveals the limited impact shifting membership can have on a sense of community. Communities with fluid boundaries are better equipped to respond and adapt to external change (Douglas 1970; Bauman 2001, p. 115). What these diverse constructions of community show is that belonging exists as a practiced, cultivated, and entirely relational practice (Appadurai 1995, p. 208). In these circumstances, it is more generative to categorise networks of transient people as cultivated through repeated interaction. It is this sense of relationality, rather than stability that will be carried forwards as a method of building meaningful networks between disparate, heterogenous people such as working holidaymakers. Forced transience, like that experienced by working holidaymakers in Australia, is a completely different kind of mobility and spatial pattern.

Previous discussions about the nature of temporary agricultural labour undertaken by working holidaymakers in Australia show how they are much more temporary, as periods of work or stability are interspersed with mobility. For working holidaymakers, transience does not exclusively operate as a personal choice, but functions as one of the organising conditions embedded in the Working Holiday visa, and disparate relationships of power become intertwined with spatial arrangements. When time is organised by external forces, transience becomes a forced condition that generates a particular kind of vulnerability. It is then worth questioning how working holidaymakers negotiate the vulnerability that underlies their experiences as temporary migrants and agricultural workers. For example, how

do they negotiate a lack of place or form communities, and are these necessary or useful in reducing the vulnerability they experience?

Negotiating a lack of place

If transience is a root cause of inequality, then place is another important consideration. As such, it is critical to define it and understand what place is. By defining key concepts such as space, place, and the act of placemaking, it becomes possible to question what strategies temporary migrants who are assumed to have a lack of place use as they navigate shifting locations.

Defining place

Placemaking is a way of knowing a particular location, often through time, knowledge, and relationships. Linking back to previous conversations, it is assumed that temporary and highly mobile populations do not necessarily have access to a sense of place. By defining key terms such as space and place, it becomes possible to conceptualise what temporary migrant workers experience as they move through a shifting location. Space (in one broad conceptual iteration, as the surrounding natural and human-made world) operates as a gathering mechanism, collecting human beings, material things, social structures, and so on (Low 2003, p. 12). There is also a tradition in anthropology that views space as that which is uninhabited: in this cognitivist sense, a place is a space in which some form of human meaning has been invested and maintained (Douglas 1992). Cultivated through continued engagement and interaction, constantly renegotiated, enriched, and altered by a multiplicity of influences, a place comes to be linked to specific meanings, behaviours, and local knowledges (Casey 1996, p. 46; Cresswell 2004, p. 11).

These places can be conceptualised as having a tripartite construction, containing physical aspects of the landscape, the place-specific elements of heritage and culture, and more emotional, individualised ideas (Lyon 2014, p. 1011). Places are multiple, because people are – by recognising the simultaneity and multiplicity of identity, it becomes possible to recognise the diverse interpretations of engaging with the landscape (Scheper-Hughes & Lock 1987, p. 15; Lock 1993, p. 137). However, as people converge in specific locations, a particular sense of place can come to permit or deny other interpretations. Underlying social, political, and economic restrictions

permit certain people and practices, while denying others (Bender 2002), leading to contention and conflict over the ability to know and inhabit a place.

Although places can have particular meanings, they are not necessarily fixed or still. Kabachnik (2012, p. 213) warns about characterising places as enclosed or self-maintaining, as the "relationality of place reveals that [they] are not isolated entities and are not backdrops upon which the social occurs". This is part of Douglas' (1992, p. 287) approach – that place is a "pattern of regular doings". Places can solidify, but only during brief moments (Crouch 2001, p. 62). Instead, the worlds we inhabit are always in the process of becoming, altogether unfixed and unbounded. Taking these theoretical understandings of place into account, I question how temporariness impacts the way transient populations such as migrant workers move through and inhabit locations envisioned as being comparatively still.

Place can be understood through embodied knowledge of the physical environment. As people mediate and navigate their changing surroundings, the body represents a site of constitutive, reciprocal relationships and an interface between material and social life (Asad 1997, p. 48). It is a conduit for interpreting and responding to the world (Lock 1997). In an everyday, practical sense, placemaking represents the ongoing and reciprocal relationship between the traveller and the landscape, or a negotiated practice of wayfinding (Ingold 2009, p. 33). While it is easy to see appeal in romantic narratives that depict gentle exploration of the surrounding landscape (Wylie 2005, p. 237; Instone 2015), it is possible to discern a more nuanced analysis from these experiential patterns of mobility and temporariness. In part, this is because explorations of place can be circumstantially coupled with unequal notions of uncertainty for particular groups of people (Hinkson 2017, p. 51). Space provokes certain types of human habitation, that in turn effect the limits of individual embodied experience and a sense of familiarity. Coming to know a place can be a fraught exercise, and in many local contexts, hinges on varied constructions of 'insider' and 'outsider'. These uncertain spaces are where conditions for belonging or exclusion are either solidified or become permeable. As Stead and Dominy (2018, p. 7) contend, "it is at the border that norms of hospitality, welcome, and care for the stranger are most clearly activated or refused". For people who are more temporary

or mobile, wayfinding involves contending with and responding to ephemeral, iterative or even competing traces of other senses of place.

Time functions as an additional integral part of place and placemaking. It operates as a linear progression according to marked temporal boundaries and notions of lived pasts and hopeful futures (Gell 1992, p. 151), while simultaneously being an abstract category hovering in the background, with an almost rhythmic quality (Hodges 2008, p. 400). It is a multilayered category that can be measured with regularity, while also passing with indifference to the mundane swells and undulations of human activity (Fabian 2014, pp. 22-3). The mundane reckoning of time, as per Munn (1992, p. 116), is "lived or apprehended concretely via the various meaningful connectivities among persons, objects, and space continually being made in and through the everyday world".

Without this accumulated time, temporariness acts as one level of vulnerability, where relationships and socioeconomic capital are not automatically present. However, place and time are not discontinuous or not easily able to be bundled up and bounded into discrete categorisations of self and other, or local and outsider; they are ongoing and amorphous, resisting and transcending boundedness (Ingold 1993, p. 155). Although localness is assumed to be mediated through long-term emplacement, Han (2011, p. 384) suggests that other elements are fundamental to belonging, including "localized institutional language ideologies, policies and practices", which contribute to "the process of reproducing or contesting the existing social order". By bringing their own expectations and stories with them, temporary workers simultaneously account for a lack of history and resist the use of stability as a marker of validity. New stories – and new understandings of what it means to belong – are built.

Temporary migrants mitigating assumed placelessness

A sense of place manifests differently for temporary migrant workers, as they navigate locations that are constantly shifting through the various structural inequalities that permeate their labour. While becoming part of the local community is recognised as a fundamental element of place for others, this practice is not always possible for transient populations. Short-term stays and everyday lives centred on

labour perpetuate notions of otherness. However, as this thesis continues, it is worth questioning whether temporary migrants are explicitly seeking out a sense of belonging through their relationships with others, or something else entirely. What a community may also provide is a sense of safety and security – networks of support and solidarity that contribute to meeting various everyday needs.

In asking what place looks like for working holidaymakers, this thesis explores how forms of temporary placemaking can ameliorate the effects of transience. Long-term, embedded understandings of place are unhelpful when transience contributes to vulnerability and structural inequalities. How then, if people don't have a sense of place as it is usually understood (via time, shared histories, and knowledge) do people negotiate transience and make it work for them? As such, this thesis explores how working holidaymakers, as temporary migrants and agricultural workers, negotiate the inherent vulnerabilities of temporariness via the following means: enacted or accepted mobility, embodied knowledges created through physical work and the reuse of spaces, and the creation and maintenance of fluid communities.

Chapter 3: Navigating methodological challenges

This chapter outlines the techniques used throughout fieldwork to gain insight and understanding of working holidaymakers' experience of placemaking and draws out some subsequent challenges. Developing ethnographic skills can be a confronting enterprise, particularly for an anthropologist applying their skills in-the-moment. This study presented several, sometimes unexpected, challenges. Through these accounts, I address the act of negotiating a shifting researcher positionality, as an ethnographer returning 'home', and reflect on the process of conducting research with a transient population. These methods are systematically described here as a way of recognising the generous contributions of the many people who contributed to this work. In doing so, I seek to maintain a sense of ethnographic responsibility and personal accountability via reflexivity.

Returning 'home' to a familiar place

The Lockyer Valley region represents much more than a field site. It is a place where I lived intermittently for over a decade, mostly as a teenager. It is a place that I have a complex and shifting relationship with – one defined by familial ties, rupture, and discomfort. Conducting ethnographic research 'at home' or in familiar places such as this requires a critical self-awareness of research practices and positionality (Ergun & Erdemir 2010; Zeb Mughal 2015). Robertson (2002, p. 787) warns that "incorporated into ethnographies, stories of one's own childhood are often told as a type of personal testimony, an 'I was there' stamp of authentic, if *ex post facto* and anachronistic, authoritative experience". I have included my personal narrative here to produce the opposite effect and illustrate how familiarity is not necessarily conducive to ethnographic authority.

When I was a young child, my parents purchased a forty acre bush property on the outskirts of Gatton. Covered in dense eucalyptus scrubland, on a secluded ridge, its only built structure was a dilapidated garden shed. The property was scattered with discarded, rusted machinery of unknown purpose – perhaps used in an attempt at extraction or digging up the hard clay soil. An approximately acre-sized parcel of land near the gate was quickly cleared, and a larger shed (the size of a small cottage) was built. From then on, the property served as a holiday home, or 'weekender', and

we drove fifteen minutes into town via a predominantly dirt road. At the time (twenty years ago), Gatton's residents numbered fewer than one thousand. It was a temporary escape from the sprawling suburban city of Ipswich where we lived at the time, only an hour away.

When I finished my years of primary schooling, my family relocated to the Lockyer Valley permanently, leaving the city behind. I had always known that this place would be the site of our future home, but my sense of connectedness to Ipswich was through both relatives and place; living next door to my grandfather, being surrounded by a large extended family in the city centre, and able to walk everywhere. A house was built on the bush property, to replace the shed. Now, I was a restless and displaced teenager attending the local high school. Over time I established my own connections. Gatton was still not a home I had chosen for myself, but it began to feel familiar. I wandered the streets of the small town with my teenaged friends, with a manner than can only appropriately be described as a mix of uncertainty and youthful braggadocio. Then, like so many other young people growing up in rural Australia (Farrugia et al. 2014; Argent & Tonts 2015; Dufty-Jones et al. 2016), I quickly moved away after finishing secondary school, to seek out further education and employment opportunities. I found myself in Toowoomba, only half an hour away by car, and made my home there while studying at university. Shifting to the role of anthropologist revealed unexpected challenges, which would lead to an eventual immersive return to the Lockyer Valley.

I planned to complete a doctorate at the same institution, and somewhere in the process of formulating and proposing an impactful study with local and global significance that spoke to my own intersecting interests of space and place, working holidaymakers in regional areas emerged as a viable topic. Working holidaymakers and their labour had been a focus of political discussion at the Australian Government level for much of the previous year (as indicated in Chapter 1), and it seemed timely to explore other aspects of their experiences than what was typically presented to the public. Fieldwork plans transformed from abstract thoughts to reality, but I can still recall early evasive conversations with my research supervisors, reluctant to acknowledge my connection to the area. I find my own attitude towards the place reflected in Madden's (1999, p. 261) working model of

home: "…home is ambivalence. Home is a place I felt the need to leave, and yet I also feel the need to return. It is a problematic, yet attractive domain". Ultimately, the Lockyer Valley was the ideal location to explore holidaymakers' experiences while employed in seasonal agricultural work, and returning to my teenage stomping ground became a logical decision. Not only are a significant number (18 per cent) of its residents directly employed in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries (Lockyer Valley Regional Council 2018), but the area is well known to holidaymakers seeking out seasonal farm work. The region had also been the subject of national news regarding the experiences of temporary migrants.

Responding to emergent issues

A series of unexpected challenges arose during the course of fieldwork. These related to my positionality as a researcher returning home to a familiar place, and an initial perceived inability to establish rapport with highly mobile working holidaymakers.

Navigating familiarity in the field

I interpreted my approach to fieldwork as a distinct break from 'traditional' anthropological practice, as conducting ethnographic research in familiar places occupies a contentious place in anthropology. As a discipline, there has been an enduring need to go elsewhere and base enquiry on those who are distinctly 'other' (Peirano 1998, p. 108). This normative, idealised purity of field sites and tendency to exoticise has its foundations in early iterations of ethnographic research (Gupta & Ferguson 1997, p. 13). Ethnography in familiar locations is comparatively unfashionable; "arguably still marginalised within the discipline" (Morton 1999, p. 245) and "tacitly, yet wrongly, recognised to be an impoverished version of the 'real thing'" (p. 251). However, research undertaken by researchers-at-home actively resists such limiting characterisations, via explorations of the new possibilities offered by undertaking immersive ethnographies in a familiar place (Heley 2011; Stafford 2018).

In similar ways to other researchers-at-home, when I began fieldwork, the ability to seek out initial contacts and significant places for participant observation was a direct result of pre-existing knowledge of the area (Wiederhold 2014, p. 6). Even after relocating and making my own home somewhere else, I maintained numerous connections to the region. This included relationships with people including former neighbours, employers, schoolteachers, and friends. These familiar people occupied other roles in the Lockyer Valley region, working as farmers, environmental activists, and politicians. Two former neighbours, an older couple named Gerard and Heike, were the first people I contacted when it came time to return to the area and conduct research of my own. When we last met, I was sixteen years old. I had always admired their environmental activism and academic work. Ten years later, we met at a busy café in the town centre. Winter was quickly approaching, and the weather was already beginning to cool, but Heike, Gerard, and I sat outside, taking advantage of the sun, chatting easily about their recent projects in the community, and my research. The couple passed on the names of local people who they thought would be useful contacts, including some who advocated for the employment and housing rights of working holidaymakers, a teacher from the backpacker English class, and a number of farmers they knew who employed seasonal staff.

Heike reminded me that another former neighbour, Bruce, who owned and operated a stone fruit orchard as part of his small, family-run farm, and that it was now the height of the harvesting season. Although my family's property had bordered his, we had known each other since I was a young child, and I attended secondary school with his daughters, I had never been overly familiar with Bruce's farming operation nor known that he periodically hired working holidaymakers. Within an hour after my meeting with Gerard and Heike, I called Bruce to arrange a visit to his farm the next day to discuss my research in person. I drove to Bruce's orchards the next day, with the intention of broaching the subject of his participation in the project and asking if I could assist in the harvesting process. Given holidaymakers' ongoing experiences of workplace exploitation with some farms and labour-hire contractors in the area, I anticipated Bruce might be hesitant. To my surprise, within an hour we had arranged a month of paid work at his orchards, picking and packing fruit alongside his current crew of temporary staff. I imagined that being able to organise such a valuable opportunity for participant observation was the product of luck, but

in reality, it was a direct result of my existing connections to people and the trust that had been developed over time as a former neighbour.

Although the ethnographer is imagined as an outsider, there is an increasing amount of research conducted in familiar locations (see analyses by Lederman 2006; Heley 2011; Järventie-Thesleff et al. 2016). Furthermore, other modes of 'insider-ethnography' take place within frameworks of decolonising the production of knowledge and its inherent value (such as Narayan 1993; Jacobs-Huey 2002; TallBear 2014), acting as a counter to identities formerly catalogued, rather than given voice. While I do not seek to frame this emergence of decolonial practice in relation to this project and my positionality as ethnographer, it is critical to recognise the ways that scholars who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour have their work received in ways that differ from my own privileged encounters.

Broadly, these attitudes towards ethnographic research that is conducted in familiar places speaks to the various ways in which the practice is often conceptualised within the discipline. Implicit in these ideas – and perhaps also the internalised need to counteract them – is the assumption that the ethnographer-at-home is too familiar to maintain objectivity (Tedlock 1991, p. 71). The desire to be taken seriously in academic spaces, even if the rigour and legitimacy of research is never called into question, is ever-present. When disseminating my research, I had sometimes intentionally obscured the fact that my field site and the place I spent my formative years were one and the same or overemphasised a justification of my presence there. In doing so, I inadvertently minimised the turbulent, emotive effects that being in the field can have, whether the field is at home or elsewhere (see Rosaldo 1993; Beatty 2005).

Although my initial experiences in the field were enabled by pre-existing relationships, as I spent time in the area as an ethnographer, I experienced a profound shift in my positionality. I experienced discomfort when first learning to navigate this identity of an anthropologist 'at home' and found myself feeling alienated from various spaces that I had previously been familiar with. I remember days spent walking in the town central business district, or driving around the region in my car, under the premise of orienting myself in place. Instead, these activities

were a visceral response to feelings of isolation and attempts at productivity, as I imagined that the working holidaymakers and knowledge I sought out were entirely inaccessible to me.

Over time, I came to understand the immense methodological value of this unease. Visiting a former workplace, a newsagency where I had stocked shelves and sold lottery tickets between the age of fourteen and eighteen, became a pivotal ethnographic moment of realisation. The owners, Jane and Stephen, saw themselves as adoptive parents to the teenaged staff who worked there, and this relationship did not dissipate even as their charges grew older or found employment elsewhere. During fieldwork, I often found comfort in familiar spaces, and the newsagency became my preferred place to stock up on stationery and offered a momentary respite from the frenetic 'mental gymnastics' of analysis. While I pored over pens, Jane would often update me about things happening in the area and enquire about my research from behind the counter.

One day, I told Jane that I had arranged an interview with another farmer in the region, at a small, family-run farm that produced leafy green vegetables, and hired several working holidaymakers throughout the season. Jane suggested that I should "tell them [the farmer] that you're an 'old girl' from the Lockyer Valley, they'll talk to you then. They won't talk to a stranger". I immediately recoiled internally at being called a local. I didn't see myself as an 'old girl', but as someone who had also made the decision to leave the region years earlier, and returned on my own terms, as an anthropologist. But, as Heley (2011, p. 221) suggests, "insider/outsider status should not be seen to rest on a single axis of differentiation, as social actors are characterised by multiple identities". Reflecting shortly afterwards, I understood what had been revealed in my conversation with Jane. By acknowledging I was part of a privileged network that was meaningful to herself and other long-term residents, Jane offered helpful advice. However, my conflicting sense of 'home' had prevented me from recognising its true value or understanding the shifting ways that identity can manifest in the ethnographic field.

Actively engaging in a process of reflexivity can ultimately contribute to a much more nuanced study (Davies 1999, p. 446; Sherif 2001). As Berger (2015, p. 220)

states, reflexivity is "a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of a researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome". By coming to terms with my shifting identity and recognising how concepts of 'home' and elsewhere or self and other as unstable categories, I am able to use my personal reflections as an additional analytical tool. In these circumstances, centring the self in research practices does not mean prioritising personal histories and reactions in ethnographic work, but contextualising the context in which knowledge was produced, with depth and consideration (Foley 2002, p. 477). Through ethnographic methods, it is possible to produce a more thoughtful, and considered text and contribute to scholarly pursuits in an empathetic and purposeful way.

Catching 'floating' populations

On the opposite side of being a 'local', a challenge for my fieldwork was how to establish relationships with a floating, temporary, and transient population such as working holidaymakers. Many holidaymakers only stay in an area for long enough to accumulate the 88 days' seasonal labour required for a second-year Working Holiday visa application. Throughout the course of fieldwork, I frequently made contact with working holidaymakers, only then for them to move on, or at least, move away from my immediate contact. In addition, while in the area, the often erratic employment schedules and equally unpredictable free time at non-work spaces meant that opportunities for connection were limited. Although I had some methods of maintaining contact with a small number of my research participants, including social media, email, and text message, the possibility of maintaining a connection would be difficult, if not entirely impossible. While I had anticipated these difficulties, it was still disheartening, as the pattern was repeated over and over again.

At the beginning of fieldwork, I experienced these practices of mobility as frustrating. Staying in the Lockyer Valley, while swells of holidaymakers continually arrived and departed around me meant that I felt constantly on the outset of building meaningful relationships. An outcome of not having long-term, established, and ever-deepening relationships with the same people as a researcher

might, in a conventional ethnography, was the need for emphasis on observation and generalised patterns of data. That I was constantly re-entering the field and establishing trust with new people meant being unable to develop the kind of thick description that is more typical of an ethnography with the same people over a sustained period.

Various studies (including Harada & Waitt 2013; Kochan 2016) imply that mobile methodologies are appropriate for understanding the social worlds of equally unfixed populations and determining their trajectories. Mobile methodologies refer to studies of mobility where both the researcher and participants are mobile (Büscher & Urry 2009). Researchers adopt mobile methods to elicit responses to stimuli in the environment or to understand their participants practices of mobility and transport. Implicit in these practices is the suggestion that transient populations can be 'caught' by embracing a more multi-sited ethnography where the researcher follows participants to observe their practices of mobility (Meeus 2012). Cresswell (2012, p. 647) indicates that mobile methods are the only way to connect with mobile populations and implores other researchers to "follow the thing".

However, in order to explore how transient working holidaymakers develop, maintain, and challenge senses of place and feelings of community in comparatively stable regional contexts, it is necessary to adopt a more geographically fixed approach. To follow or travel alongside a small group of people (see McKay 2006) would not allow me to understand working holidaymakers' experiences with place as they undertake seasonal agricultural labour. It was useful to stay in a single location, and 'net' people in place, rather than follow a highly mobile and dispersed population. By conceptualising a place as a site of connection, representing the brief convergence of multiples paths of movement (see Ingold 2015, p. 148), it is possible to conduct place-centric research to understand the lives of transient populations. Working holidaymakers' senses of place are built through their experiences in the interstitial spaces of travel and uncertainty, but they momentarily pause between arrivals and departures in the regional agricultural landscape. With a sense of place as a primary concern for this study, it was justifiable for research involving a transient location to focus on a single location.

Being an anthropologist

By critically reflecting on my own experiences I found myself better equipped to recognise the impact of temporariness and transience in holidaymakers' everyday lives. In this context, reflexive analysis was a tool for cultivating empathy and understanding. I came to recognise, and accept, that transience is a normal state for working holidaymakers. My deeply felt, emotional sense of loss on their departure instead speaks to the meaningful ties I had to the people who, at various times, shared their meals, homes, vulnerabilities, and friendship with me. Any personal feelings of disruption also provided some insight into what working holidaymakers might experience when they leave their peers behind. As a result of this shift in understanding, I was able to inhabit entirely new worlds that were intertwined with the one I thought I had known. When I had previously lived in the Lockyer Valley region, I had little knowledge of working holidaymakers (although, retrospectively, my regular brief encounters with accented young adults as a teenage grocery store checkout attendant now make much more sense). As a new ethnographer and more-than-resident, I moved through the town in completely new ways and alongside new people.

This study incorporates ethnographic methods of data collection, including participant observation, semi-structured interviewing, and mapping, as part of a focused inquiry into working holidaymakers' senses of place. Using these qualitative techniques as part of an iterative process contributes to a more detailed and complex understanding of social worlds, and allows significant narratives to unfold (Okely 2012, pp. 22-3). As an immersive process, ethnographic fieldwork enables increased familiarity with participants, the landscapes they inhabit, and everyday practices more broadly (Watson 1999, p. 2). Through different understandings of place and alongside working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley, I was able to share similar experiences with them (see Hammersley & Atkinson 2007, p. 3). More specifically, ethnographic methods provided an opportunity to identify how holidaymakers employed in seasonal agricultural labour encounter, disrupt, and maintain notions of place and belonging, via complex and shifting temporalities.

Participant observation

Participant observation defines and characterises ethnographic research. Typically undertaken over extended time periods, involving immersion in 'the field', this method serves to problematise everyday routines that are sometimes unable to be fully articulated (Okely 2012, p. 87). An emphasis on 'being there' (Tedlock 1991, p. 70) also enables peoples' behaviours and ideas to be understood in context and facilitates understanding informed by the seemingly mundane (Jackson 1987; Pink & Morgan 2013, p. 356). Notably, participant observation can elucidate and illuminate sensory relationships to place (Wylie 2005, p. 134; Instone 2015, p. 235), and problematise everyday life (Banerjee & Blaise 2013). Drawing on Bender's (2002, pp. 106-7) notion of 'peopling the map', which invites a more complex understanding of space through attentiveness towards the various connective threads and conditions that orient people and their practices of mobility, this study looks towards a more manifold view of spatial relationships.

To this end, I conducted participant observation in the Lockyer Valley between March and September 2016, via timed visits, or longer, intermittent periods (from 2-4 weeks at a time), focusing attention on working holidaymakers (see Appendix 1) and other local residents who engage with them on a regular basis (see Appendix 2). Maintaining an extended presence in the field contributes to a greater familiarity research participants (Gubrium & Brown 2006, p. 53; Pink 2008, p. 176). Immersion in the research area through participant observation meant that I was able to interact with working holidaymakers at greater depth. By employing a method that requires a willingness to be opportunistic and embrace flexibility, I was continually surprised by my findings. My participant observation began as a broad exercise but progressed into a more specific and targeted technique over the course of fieldwork. As patterns of behaviour began to emerge, I withdrew from engagement with the Lockyer Valley region as a whole, and focused attention on particular localities.

I regularly spent time at a weekly soup kitchen run by Seventh-Day Adventists, where holidaymakers comprise its main attendees, a weekly backpacker English class held at a Baptist church, and a monthly free 'backpacker barbeque' hosted by the regional council. Other, once-off public events in the Lockyer Valley region served as important sites of participant observation, including a community 'fun

day', an annual multicultural festival, and a local councillor election campaign speech night. I also visited private spaces, including some family-owned farms and backpacker accommodation. On several occasions I was invited to spend time at sharehouses in the residential area of Gatton, where small groups of working holidaymakers had made their temporary homes. At other times, I frequented the caravan park on the outskirts of the town, where many working holidaymakers live.

I developed an intimate spatial knowledge of these locations via walking. In a research context, walking inspires – and requires – a greater sensory attunement to changing environmental conditions (Lee & Ingold 2006). Drawing on Instone (2015, p. 134), walking represents the "interrelation between body, knowing, place, and feeling", that can unfold new knowledges through brief, sensory encounters (see also Wunderlich 2008; Yi'En 2014). Criticisms of solitary walking as a research practice warn that this sensory activity separates the self from context, in that walking becomes a romanticised, self-serving narrative that is unable to generate holistic understanding (Wylie 2005, p. 237; Merriman 2013, p. 169). However, when this method goes beyond being a performative exercise, and is transformed into an activity centred on revealing relational mobility, it can contribute to making sense of the interplay between people, place, and time (as per Edensor 2000, 2007). My own walking functioned as a mode of transport, around the central business district and residential areas of Gatton, which were not far from my fieldwork accommodation. However, it also operated as an "improvisatory moment...that is open-ended and knows no final destination" (Ingold 2010, p. 122). In this sense, navigating the area on foot was a demonstration of my willingness to be flexible as new ethnographer, through the interrelation between body and landscape. This approach permitted new knowledges to grow, as I participated in chance meetings and witnessed unexpected events.

My walking was primarily conducted during the daytime, while most holidaymakers in the region were at work. However, their presence or absence became revelatory moments. Passing through car parks, pausing momentarily at cafés offering free wireless internet, or wandering past a bus stop in the town centre demonstrated holidaymakers' patterns of mobility, the external temporalities they operate within, and their relationships with others. Outside of targeted observations, I would

specifically walk from the house I stayed at during fieldwork to a series of specific places. These included various local grocery stores, the local library and information centre, and several nearby public parks. While these locations offered practical benefit, both in terms of personal sustenance and respite, a leisurely walk allowed time for additional ethnographic reflection and the slower pace meant that I could simultaneously engage in further participant observation. At times, walking became a difficult exercise. I recall one incident when a young man close behind me stopped to look into nearby car windows. The moment felt unsafe as a woman alone, and I picked up pace. At other times, the afternoon heat was unbearable for pedestrians and I retreated to the airconditioned town library (incidentally, many working holidaymakers did the same). Another incident saw me temporarily taking care of a large Rottweiler. On our daily walks, working holidaymakers I knew who would normally stop to engage in conversation were uncertain of my companion and waved from a distance as we passed. Being cognisant of my own corporeality in these moments had bearing on the encounters I was having, whether those were positive or otherwise.

Fieldnotes

Recording fieldnotes is a central ethnographic practice, invaluable as a way of capturing observations, and as an analytical tool and ongoing reflexive exercise. Fieldnotes are fundamental to ethnographic practice, as they provide a space to record and reflect on day-to-day observations, which over time, enable any patterns or changes that occur to become visible (Wolfinger 2002, p. 91). My own fieldnotes are a record of these fieldwork experiences and encounters, including observations, descriptions of people and places, interview notes, and personal reflections. My notes are written in various styles and lengths, almost entirely dependent on the context in which they were recorded. Being so frequently immersed in public spaces involves adhering to social rules, following behaviours and mannerism that are broadly conceived as being appropriate and acceptable in certain settings. For example, at locations such as the public library, cafés, or public parks, writing in a notebook and even typing on a laptop are observable commonplace activities. The same actions would not be as routine at the busy plaza of a shopping complex and grocery store, where a broad range of people and identities congregate. In contexts such as this one, I opted to record in-the-moment jottings and observational notes on

my mobile phone (either using the note-taking application Evernote, or the built-in iPhone Notes application), as mobile phone usage is a readily observable behaviour. This unobtrusive method and practice of strategic notetaking was a valuable way of being fully 'present', during fieldwork, and focusing on observation rather than the act of recording everything possible (see Emerson et al. 2011, p. 41). While it is still possible to miss things while engrossed in a mobile phone application, making quick dot points that could be expanded on later felt as if it took less time, compared to a notebook. While these notes have since been transferred to Microsoft Word documents or fieldnote journals and no longer exist in their original form, this method offered an effective, contextually appropriate method of recording observations.

Despite the significance that fieldnotes hold for completed ethnographies, descriptions of the writing process are often absent, giving the impression that a completed study emerges fully developed, and with narrowed scope, from the outset of fieldwork (Marcus 1986, p. 2). It is possible that describing long periods of time writing fieldnotes is a decidedly unglamorous activity, or that such descriptions are not enthralling for an audience already familiar with the method (Jackson 1990; Fine 1993, p. 280).

Some broad examples of things that were written in these journals include:

i. Descriptions of places and significant events, including hand-drawn maps and observations relating to use of space and patterns of mobility.
ii. Descriptions of participants (working holidaymakers, farmers, and long-term residents encountered during fieldwork). This includes the ways they described themselves and their relationships with other people and places to me, alongside notes on behaviours and relationships that I observed them engaging in or with over time.
iii. Notes about how participants described their diverse spatial relationships with the Lockyer Valley, their feelings of belonging, and varying degrees of temporariness to me.
iv. Personal (often turbulent and emotional) reflections about the fieldwork process, and notes on my emerging methodological praxis, which contributed to a more reflexive account.

I soon discovered the emotional and physical reality of recording ethnographic accounts and extensive analytical reflections, and its significant link to time management. The writing process could take twice as long as participant observation. These notes were largely written during the day, when most working holidaymakers were on shift or otherwise unavailable. This had a significant role in recording ideas and acknowledging assumptions, and to providing a tangible basis from which to equally undertake some self-reflexive scrutiny. The process was lengthy, but invaluable. I would also scribble in my fieldnote journals long into the night after returning to my mother-in-law's house (where I stayed), sometimes falling asleep mid-entry (although perhaps this was a hazard of not having a desk). Although it is an arduous process, the 'thick' description (Geertz 1973, p. 9) it enables is necessary to interpreting ethnographic encounters in context, rather than reproducing a purely descriptive account. By aiming to produce written account of observations that are both analytical and descriptive, it becomes possible to understand events and interactions in context.

Interviews

Interviews with working holidaymakers took the form of informal and unstructured discussions. As a key technique for anthropologists in the field (Madden 2017, pp. 62-3), this approach to interviewing, like any method, can have its constraints and limitations. Time of day became a factor when seeking out extended conversations with working holidaymakers, influencing when these interviews would take place. These interactions tended to focus on settings where these transient workers would already be gathered outside of work hours for leisurely purposes, such as the backpacker English class, weekly soup kitchen, monthly council barbeque, or at their places of accommodation. This approach was so designed as to avoid causing disruptions to their work and risk working holidaymakers being already underway with more time-sensitive activities. Although opportunistic interviewing means participants have a lessened ability to cogitate and reflect on their responses, these *in situ* unstructured discussions with working holidaymakers still meant being able to focus on immediate issues related to their interests and concerns. After each interaction, or when time allowed, discussions were written down as ethnographic fieldnotes. Semi-structured interviewing provided an opportunity to speak with

significant people (see Fontein 2014, p. 78). Those who were approached for interviews tended to be people I was less immersed with on a daily basis. They tended not to be working holidaymakers but were still important to the study, and were all associated with the agriculture industry or local government in some tangential way. They included regional council staff, advocates for employment rights, farmers, accommodation providers, and the organisers of several regular local events for working holidaymakers. When used in this manner, interviews can offer a method of triangulation, acting as a way of testing and confirming ideas (Spradley 1979, p. 59). These interviews served to complement and confirm information derived from observations and interactions with working holidaymakers.

I interpreted these ethnographic traditions as an opportunity to conduct semi-structured interviews in the field, rather than in a clinical interview setting. This approach means that interview locations tended to be significant to the interviewee's daily life. Interviews with farmers took place on their properties, while interviews with members of faith-based networks were held at the churches they attended. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p. 108) advise that this approach is likely to invite disruptions and impact the types of information shared or gathered. However, I found that this method added greater depth to the interview context. Unexpected locations made for memorable moments; in the stock room of a South Asian grocery store, outside a farm machinery shed on a bitterly cold morning. Unpredictable events included the unexpected closing of a café mid-interview, customers needing to be served, staff requiring assistance, or acquaintances stopping to say hello. These locations and perceived disruptions were representative of the daily lives and networks of the person being interviewed, and a delightful, surprising part of ethnographic fieldwork.

Interviews were recorded using various methods. If the interviewee gave their permission, the interview was recorded as an audio file with the iPhone *Memo* voice recording application. To ensure a second copy was available if the first were to fail, or become corrupted, I simultaneously recorded the interview with the same application on an iPod. Afterwards, I would transcribe the interview into Microsoft Word. If the interviewee preferred the conversation not to be recorded, the interview content was written down afterwards in a fieldnote journal. Naturalistic transcription

protocols were applied as part of the process, meaning that as much spoken detail as possible was transferred to text (Bucholtz 2007). This has the benefit of retaining a sense of the original way in which information was passed on and recognising where any impactful or telling silences may have taken place. Even with a commitment to recording this extensive level of detail, the act of transcription has its limitations. As Duranti (2009, p. 309) argues, a transcript of any ethnographic encounter in itself is a partial route to knowing and understanding, only able to offer "a restricted, selected perspective—a stance, a point of view, often with an attitude, on what the world was like at a particular moment". To account for the relatively small scope of information interviews and transcriptions are able to provide, additional information relating to the interview context, including where it took place were also noted.

Mapping

Mapping methods were used to capture and give visual representation to working holidaymakers' own ideas about space and strategies for inhabiting and navigating the Lockyer Valley region. Various mapping activities conducted throughout the study also acted as a 'conversation starter' that was able to elicit information and further contextualise individual experiences (see van Holt et al. 2013). Working holidaymakers were asked to create personal maps of Gatton and the Lockyer Valley, highlighting places that were important to everyday routines, in any way they chose. These were hand-drawn 'mud maps', produced without the need for accurate scale or detail. While some followed conventions of cadastral mapping, other participants incorporated specific directions, labels, or drawings. This interpretive activity allowed holidaymakers to illustrate their experiences and understandings of place and indicate locations they considered to be significant reasons (Reynolds 2004, p. 84; Knowles 2012, p. 664).

Mapping activities were conducted towards the conclusion of fieldwork, at both the weekly backpacker English class and soup kitchen. This timing was intentional, as mapping offered an opportunity to affirm observations and unstructured interview data. Both of these events take place in the early evening. These locations and times suited many working holidaymakers, who were already gathered there in large numbers; between 15 and 30 people attended the English class each week, while 80-150 working holidaymakers attended the soup kitchen. Working holidaymakers at

both locations were invited to draw their own maps of how they saw the Lockyer Valley. Each person drawing their own personal map was provided with A4-sized paper and coloured pens; a map of the Lockyer Valley was available for reference, but most decided not to use it (see Appendix 3 for examples). At the soup kitchen, long stretches of blank wall permitted an additional collective mapping activity to be conducted. At this location, I taped a two metre length of butcher's paper to a wall and placed coloured pens on a nearby table. Working holidaymakers attending the soup on that particular evening were invited to contribute to a map of the region in whatever format they felt was most appropriate.

Analysis and interpretation

Analysis in this study began by making observations in the field. As observations were made throughout the ethnographic process, research questions were continually revisited. The observations were filtered through core concepts initially drawn from the literature review, including place, mobility, transience, temporariness, and community (as discussed in Chapter 2). The various sources of data, including fieldnotes, interview transcripts and maps produced by participants were initially analysed and organised through this initial structure. The process of transcribing, re-reading and re-ordering materials produced a form of interpretive analysis. Importantly, the ethnographic sources were compared and contrasted with material from government policies and legislation, as well as public news stories. Bringing these elements together allowed the identification of patterns and linkages between broader systemic issues and working holidaymakers' everyday experiences. In this way, it became apparent how external structures of capital and governance can organise even the prosaic elements of everyday life, such as labour and spatial arrangements (cf. Harvey & Krohn-Hansen 2018; Malkki 1992). This revealed core themes of the analysis, including precarity associated with temporary migration and the strategies working holidaymakers enact to generate agency and mitigate uncertainty.

Chapter 4: Making time

Working holidaymakers exist at the centre of a series of overlapping temporal rhythms, which collectively structure and organise their lives. What this chapter is specifically concerned with, however, is the way that time is relational and intersubjective; something wholly embodied, practiced, and lived as part of everyday life, centring all aspects of material and social worlds (Schatzki 2009, p. 39). Recurring patterns of agricultural seasonality and the conditions of the Working Holiday visa program collectively enforce mobility and temporariness. These sometimes competing and conflicting senses of time reveal both economic precarity and agency in agricultural employment contexts, and proliferate mundane spaces. One of the earliest encounters I had in the field was at a weekly soup kitchen held at the Seventh Day Adventist church hall in Gatton, which was largely attended by working holidaymakers. I had sat down with a table of European men and women, most of whom still wore comfortable, loose-fitting work clothes. They introduced themselves to me in turn, with one man saying (with a great deal of sarcasm) "I'm Daan, from the Netherlands, professional lettuce picker". Over dinner, Daan and the other working holidaymakers at the table launched into a discussion about their plans for a second-year visa, highlighting the ways time seemed to slow the closer they got to travelling elsewhere. Noting that, as Stead and Dominy (2018, p. 7) assert, emplacement and mobility are not conveniently ascribed, distinct, or fixed conditions, I am specifically concerned with the ways that these elements constrain everyday movements and create uncertain spaces. This chapter articulates the temporal tensions that arise out of working holidaymakers' varied practices of inhabiting the regional landscape, and demonstrates the ways that mobility is both embraced and resisted.

Time structures

External influences on time organise and structure working holidaymakers' spatial patterns. The intentionality of the working holiday visa does not allow time to be accumulated beyond its conditions, deliberately seeking to disrupt a sense of belonging. The seasonality and availability of work comprise the overall rhythms of the location. These factors are things that working holidaymakers cannot change.

Seasonality and availability of work

Seasonality is a distinctive, repetitive marker of time (Huss-Ashmore 1989, p. 3). In the agrarian landscape, seasonality is particularly distinct. It is recognisable through changing weather patterns and associated planting and harvesting calendars. These recurring changes in all agrarian economic landscapes, whether recurring in yearly, or monthly seasonal changes, influence population dynamics and labour mobility (Hanson & Bell 2007). In rural areas that are dependent on agricultural production, such as the Lockyer Valley, the impactful relationship between seasonality and temporary migration is particularly noticeable in the convergence of people, as working holidaymakers' internal migrations tend to centre on annual planting and harvesting windows. Variations in seasonal agricultural calendars are part of a regular cyclical spatio-temporal rhythm. Patterns are predetermined by the appropriate planting and harvesting windows for certain crops, which account for peak growth periods, temperatures, weather patterns, and the timings of commercial exportation. These changes also impact producers' annual routines and everyday farming practices (Leatherman et al. 1989, p. 9). Planting and harvesting windows also influence the subsequent labour needs of all farms and agribusinesses, regardless of scale, and the shifting relationship between employers and working holidaymakers. In the Lockyer Valley region, crops are planted and harvested year-round; an extensive range of fruit and vegetables are grown in the area, resulting in the tourist tagline of the 'national salad bowl' (Holmes 2008, p. 219).

The most significant of these changes in planting and harvesting patterns are easily discernible from the roadside, driving around the region. In the warmer months at the start of each year, corn is used as a transitional crop and method of soil management and is planted along many of the major roads on the outskirts of Gatton. As the weather grows colder, corn is replaced with other crops, including various leafy green vegetables (such as lettuce and spinach), broccoli, and cauliflower. At certain times of year, the concentrated, pungent smell of thousands of heads of broccoli, mixed with dirt and damp, infiltrates every vehicle that drives by, even if the windows have been closed. The powerful scent is an unofficial welcome to the Lockyer Valley, as this crop can be seen growing alongside the major roads leading out of Gatton towards Brisbane and Toowoomba. As the end of each year draws closer and spring and summer herald much higher temperatures, onions and potatoes

begin to be harvested. An aggregate planting and harvesting calendar, adapted from information drawn from the *Lockyer Valley Visitor Information Centre* (2015a) is included in Table 2:

Table 3: Lockyer Valley planting and harvesting calendar.

Season	Summer		Autumn			Winter		Spring			Summer	
Crop/month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beans												
Beetroot												
Broccoli												
Silverbeet												
Cabbage												
Capsicum												
Carrot												
Cauliflower												
Celery												
Chinese cabbage, Asian greens												
Garlic												
Lettuce, rocket, spinach, baby leaf varieties												
Onion												
Potato												
Pumpkin (Jarrahdale)												
Pumpkin (Jap)												
Sweet corn												
Tomato/Cherry tomato												
Sweet potato												
Watermelon												
Straight leaf onion (shallot)												

Planting window Harvesting window

Planting and harvesting calendars have a significant effect on population dynamics. Charles-Edwards and Bell (2015, p. 103) suggest that in Australia, "seasonality is more marked in peripheral destinations than in urban centres", because of the noticeable increase in population at seasonal peaks in agriculture and tourism. Their observations correlate with the annual shifts occurring in the Lockyer Valley, as agricultural seasonality structures the ongoing, predictable expansion and contraction of the transient workforce. There is a direct relationship between temporary labour migration and variable population dynamics (Mares 2005). Capitalist economies are centred on the reasoning of time as money, via repetitive action and everyday rhythms (Bear 2014a, p. 642).

Although not all of the people fulfilling seasonal labour needs in the Lockyer Valley are working holidaymakers, or even travel from outside of the region, identifiable peaks and troughs in the annual agricultural calendar can be measured according to the approximate number of holidaymakers living and working in the region at any given time of year. From late autumn and early spring there is a significant increase in working holidaymakers throughout Gatton and surrounds. I noted that the number of attendees at the weekly backpacker English class, soup kitchen, and monthly free barbeque approximately tripled as more working holidaymakers arrived in the region seeking employment. At the caravan park where many working holidaymakers stay throughout the year, I observed that there were no available beds during this peak period. At times, there are more working holidaymakers seeking out work than available employment. "It took me five days to find work! My friend, it took him about the same time to get a job, but he arrived a day before I did", a male Chilean working holidaymaker explained to me in line at the soup kitchen one May evening.

At the busiest times of year, some of the larger local agribusinesses are likely to employ hundreds of working holidaymakers, sometimes working under lights at night to meet demands of an extensive crop. Smaller family-owned operations might only require between ten and thirty additional casual staff. One small, family-owned farm where several of my participants worked hired a maximum of twenty working holidaymakers throughout the year. This small crew would take up a variety of jobs wherever needed, including harvesting various type of stone fruit, then sorting and packing produce for sale to major commercial grocery store chains. I spent some

time working at the orchard in May of 2016. Although the Lockyer Valley has a temperate climate, the weather was growing colder each day, as winter approached. Figs thrive in warmer weather, and a dwindling season resulted in decreasing amounts of fruit on the trees. Although the orchard is encased in protective netting, to reduce the impact of animals and harsh weather, including hail, frost, and heavy rain, some birds had recently found their way in and had eaten some of the figs. This meant that much of the fruit still left on the trees was unsuitable for picking. Instead, they had to be discarded and thrown onto the ground. It also meant that much less labour was required, as fewer figs were being harvested each day.

Only weeks earlier, at least ten working holidaymakers had been employed on the farm, but now, just five working holidaymakers remained. Most working holidaymakers had their employment terminated, and full-time staff who lived locally took up their roles. Inside the packing shed, the farmer's retired parents – who normally worked part-time managing paperwork – sorted produce, assisted by four working holidaymakers. In the orchards, a pared-down picking crew consisted of three male full-time staff and one male working holidaymaker. The full-time staff normally pruned the orchards or maintained irrigation systems. Two of the permanent staff were older, semi-retired men, and the third was a tall, muscular young man in his twenties, who lived close by the farm. Paul, the lone remaining working holidaymaker outside, was from Italy and had been employed at the farm for two months. He had travelled to various places around Australia prior to coming to Gatton, and described the sometimes-frustrating journey to me, which I then recorded as fieldnotes:

> *First, I went to the Barossa Valley to pick grapes, but there was no work. Then I was in Melbourne making coffee for a month, but that doesn't count for a visa. Then I went to Laidley [a nearby town] and waited a month for work, there was nothing. I wasted those days when I could have been working!*

While Paul had found consistent work, the season was already beginning to slow. Over a few weeks, work shifts became gradually and noticeably shorter. One day, I woke up at half past four, before sunrise, and drove to the farm at five thirty, ready

to begin picking figs at six o'clock. I rode with the picking crew in rattling, rusted farm utility vehicles from the packing shed, where they were stored, down to the orchard. After driving for five minutes on dirt roads carved out of hilly terrain, we arrived at the orchard due to be harvested. We worked in teams, picking side-by-side. A short morning tea break at eight o'clock felt superfluous, as the orchards were emptied of ripe fruit only an hour later. Only the day before, harvesting had finished at eleven.

I offered Paul a lift to his accommodation when our shift concluded; his co-worker and roommate (who had driven the car that day) was sorting fruit inside the sheds, and not scheduled to finish until a few hours later. We chatted along the way. "These short shifts are good for my visa, but bad for my pocket", he complained. Even a shorter shift still counted as a 'day' towards a second-year Working Holiday visa application, so long as it was approved by an employer. "I want to pick broccoli at this other farm instead. They still pay per hour, and you can even work six days per week when it's busy!" Finding work that is consistent, well-paying, and provides longer shifts is a desirable trifecta among working holidaymakers, enabling them to work towards a second-year Working Holiday visa application and save money at the same time.

Beginning around August and September of each year, the overall number of holidaymakers living and working in the Lockyer Valley region subsides, as fewer crops need harvesting and less labour is needed. Some working holidaymakers persist. Anna, a Taiwanese woman, described a sudden decrease in shifts being offered at her workplace, a large-scale agribusiness:

> *They had a lot of people doing night shift, but now they don't have night shift anymore. Maybe they hired too many people, or maybe it was so busy and now they need less of us, so people have no work and get messages [about their employment being terminated at short notice]. My friend got a text message last week saying 'you don't need to come to work tomorrow, your boots can be collected from the shed'.*

Some working holidaymakers manage to secure employment at farms that produce warmer-weather crops, such as potatoes and onions. “I would tell other backpackers to leave in summer, or get a packing job instead”, Elsie, a working holidaymaker from Hong Kong described to me. “It’s inside, so much easier. In summer, it gets so hot too, like 30, 35 degrees!” Elsie had been in Gatton for a year and had witnessed these seasonal transitions. She had experienced the gamut of crop diversity in the Lockyer Valley through her different jobs so far, including picking broccoli and onions, and packing lettuce. Others move on and seek out work elsewhere in Australia. They move to locations where harvesting seasons may still be active, or closer to popular tourist destinations (like the agricultural regions of Far North Queensland, or various coastal hinterlands), or simply seek of a change of scenery.

This annual pattern of seasonality impacts the availability of work and draws working holidaymakers to and away from the Lockyer Valley. As the promise of casual agricultural work peoples the geographical map, it creates a reliable ebb and flow in population, producing a rural area that is constantly expanding or retracting. While this pattern implies these shifts are pure choice, there is little to keep working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley without employment. This connects with discussions in Chapter 2 about belonging and place – working holidaymakers are not seeking out a sense of belonging in the rural landscape, but security, safety, and for some, a kind of ‘authentic’ touristic experience in the regional space. Changing population dynamics indicate that working holidaymakers’ needs are no longer able to be met, forcing them elsewhere.

The Working Holiday visa

It is not just seasonality that determines the amount of time working holidaymakers spend in the Lockyer Valley. The intentionality of the Working Holiday visa scheme does not allow for time to be accumulated, and deliberately seeks to disrupt a sense of belonging. The Working Holiday visa program produces a temporal structure that shapes individuals’ patterns of mobility and transience, and influences how they negotiate space, form communities, and participate in the regional economy. This manifestation of time and its implications for stability and security are embedded into the Working Holiday visa. Conditions such as a working holidaymaker’s age, the time taken to meet the requirements of a second-year visa application, and the

maximum period of employment permitted all contribute to the organisation of everyday life. If a working holidaymaker wishes to stay for a second year, they first must complete 88 days (roughly three months) of work in specific industries. At the conception of this study, working holidaymakers were permitted to work a maximum of six months with a single employer (Howe et al. 2018, pp. 200-1), although as indicated in Chapter 1, this has since been extended to an entire year with the addition of a third-year visa. Irrespective of these revisions, working holidaymakers' employment is measured in specific increments of time – three months, six months, one year, two years, and now up to three years. However, they can move more frequently as desired.

While employment in a variety of industries (ranging from plant and animal cultivation, fishing and pearling, tree felling, mining, and construction work) can be officially 'counted' towards the application for a second-year visa, seasonal agricultural labour is preferable for majority of working holidaymakers. This type of work is easy to obtain, particularly at the height of harvesting periods in agriculturally-rich regions. This practice of seeking out short-term employment in order to eventually obtain an additional year in Australia accounts for a majority, if not all temporary and transient movements into the Lockyer Valley. It is inconvenient that there is no direct availability of data on the number of working holidaymakers in any particular location – annual Working Holidaymaker visa reports do not cover this information, and likewise, census data takes place every five years and does not ask whether a person is a temporary migrant worker on some kind of visitor visa. Observational data, however, can offer some evidence as to the proliferation of working holidaymakers into the Lockyer Valley. Because short-term seasonal labour is required in the area year round, it is an ideal setting for working holidaymakers to gain employment in an effort to fulfil the requirements of a second-year Working Holiday visa application. Each year, large contingents of working holidaymakers make their way towards Gatton – their primary destination for both accommodation and accessible employment.

Casual, short-term agricultural employment can easily be classified as highly precarious – it is, at one level, unpredictable and not well aligned with economic security. In contexts such as this, precarity emerges as a persistent state of

uncertainty (Han 2018, p. 335). Stewart (2012, p. 519) describes the various modes of precarity as part of being-in-the-world, where "precarity, written as an emergent form, can raise the question of how to approach ordinary tactile composition, everyday worldings that matter in many ways beyond their status as representation or objects of moralizing". I interpret this as meaning that precarity does not emerge or develop from a singular source. Instead, it arises from a multiplicity of influences, which then inform everyday practices of mobility and spatial arrangements. Likewise, precarity should not be imagined as a state of being that is constrained and inhibitive. For labour migrants, whose existence is enabled by transience and temporariness, an equally uncertain industry can offer a sense of agency (Ball 1988), in situations that provide increased freedom of choice and flexibility. This is applicable in the Lockyer Valley, when there is an ongoing demand to fulfil short-term labour needs, and most working holidaymakers – with the exception of those who are employed by labour-hire contractors – have a high degree of choice regarding their place of work.

As the following observations show, working holidaymakers readily change employers (at least, when combined circumstances allow), if their socioeconomic needs are not being met. Although it would be remiss to suggest that this casual workforce finds genuine enjoyment in the underlying insecurity of seasonal agricultural employment, in this instance, labour precarity can inspire specific responses in order to mitigate uncertainty. This uncertainty is viable, depending on the power and agency of particular individuals and groups of working holidaymakers, who have differential ability and interest in embracing or resisting forced mobility. There is no singular working holidaymaker identity – while some were noted to spend upwards of a year in the Lockyer Valley, others only planned to stay in the region for the time it took to acquire the requisite number of days for a second-year visa application. Within these responses to prescribed transience, the differences between the various ways of being a temporary agricultural worker become apparent.

Structural time disrupts the accumulation of experience in a single location. Looking back to discussions on time and history in Chapter 2, a lack of immediate connection to the location can restrict working holidaymakers' experiences to particular

locations within the town. Seasonality is what working holidaymakers contend with, but the broader system of temporary migration transforms it into an exploitative practice. While this is an unintended consequence of the Working Holiday visa program and enforced mobility, working holidaymakers can act on time.

Malleability and fluidity of time

Rather than being a fixed category outside of working holidaymakers' control, temporariness is able to be manipulated. Returning to Chapter 2, time is difficult to control, as a fluid concept that resists and transcends boundedness (Ingold 1993, p. 155). Despite the apparent rigidity of the working holidaymaker system, working holidaymakers use time in ways that is consistent with their status and identities. These temporal modalities tend to manifest as two categories of working holidaymaker; affluent young travellers from the United Kingdom, Europe, and Canada, and young Asian workers whose social, cultural, and economic capital informs how they shape time. These working holidaymakers are equally motivated by travel, but their spatial patterns are distinct from each other.

Out of place and time as a desirable identity

For some working holidaymakers, being out of place is part of the experience and identity of being a working holidaymaker. Most of the working holidaymakers in this group I encountered were predominantly from the United Kingdom, Europe, and Canada, middle-class, university educated, or spending time overseas before enrolling. Large numbers of these working holidaymakers embrace mobility as a 'rite of passage', where it exists as an invitation to accept precarity and discomfort as an expected state of youthfulness and coming-of-age period. It is common for this group of working holidaymakers to only stay in Gatton for the time it takes to acquire the requisite number of days for a second-year visa. Working for a minimum of three months to obtain 88 days of work that can accumulate towards a second-year visa creates a schedule of internal migration into Gatton. This loosely coincides with the peak agricultural planting and harvesting season, when work is more likely to be readily available.

Working holidaymakers who only plan on staying in the Lockyer Valley for short periods of time are likely to have specified interests and patterns of mobility. These types of working holidaymakers are more likely to adopt distinctly temporary domestic practices, particularly regarding their choice of accommodation. Influxes of this group of working holidaymakers are highly visible in locations such as the caravan park, where every three to four months, working holidaymakers continue to arrive and depart, according to individual decision-making practices. There is no mass exodus, but a constant rotation of transient residents, travelling to seek out work, and leaving after it had been acquired. By mid-2016, the caravan park had swollen in population and had no available vacancies, compared to the many empty beds it usually has towards the end of the year. The caravan park managers predicted that they would have to wait until the end of the year for a comparative – but not complete – respite from the increase in working holidaymakers to their business.

This pattern of population fluctuation aligns with Cohen, Duncan and Thulemark's (2015) discussion of divergent types of mobility. They indicate that temporary migrants' patterns of movement are more greatly impacted by seasonal variation than those who see relocation as an isolated event, such as lifestyle migrants. When movement is restricted to a measurable time period, it is more likely that the end of the season will herald their departure from a place (2015, p. 160). In the caravan park, working holidaymakers quickly engage in the frantic act of collecting 'days', immersing themselves in work for what they anticipate will be a short stint, leaving them free to travel elsewhere with money saved. Although the arrivals and departures in the caravan park are loose and overlapping, they largely take place within the much longer peak planting and harvesting window in the Lockyer Valley between April and September.

Daniel, Mark, Lucas and Julien, a group travelling together, were part of the cohort of working holidaymakers who embrace mobility as a rite of passage. They had a unique approach to passing time. The four young men ranged in age from their late teens to early twenties. They had travelled to Australia from the English Midlands (Daniel and Mark) and the north of France (Lucas and Julien) via extended stopovers in Southeast Asia. Well-educated, and each taking a 'gap year', they all spoke jokingly with a boyish attitude. I encountered them in mid-August of 2016 at the

local caravan park, which was during their second stay in Gatton that year. Mark explained that they had lost some of their payslips from their previous trip. Without payslips, those days would not officially be counted towards a successful second-year visa application. Their return was a purposeful decision to re-earn their days. I asked if they could get in contact with the business to get a second copy; Mark replied "…yeah, probably…but it was only 28 days' worth of payslips anyway". To them, it did not seem worth the time, or effort. They had returned to the Lockyer Valley again, anticipating that it would be easier to find work than chase up paperwork. However, they had been unable to do so easily.

Julien and Lucas had both acquired employment at a nearby poultry farm, but found it to be unpleasant, expressing a preference for picking fruit or vegetables. Mark and Daniel, who were without jobs at the time, seemed to oscillate between wanting to seek and take up employment opportunities in the region, and wanting to leave Gatton in favour of travelling. They described a willingness to take work if it came available, but the pair weren't prepared to take on employment they saw as less desirable, like Julien and Lucas had done. Daniel suggested that the foursome might eventually decide to "fuck off the second year altogether [give up on their plans] and go somewhere in Asia again instead. We've got money for rent this week and goon [a colloquialism for boxed wine] to drink later…but that's pretty much it", indicating that what little they had saved could afford them more economic comfort and enjoyment elsewhere. Considering they had come to Australia on a whim in the first place, their reliance on the visa program was not critical. An unexpected change of plans did not seem to be much of a concern; the group's shared motto was 'pourquoi pas?', translated from French to 'why not?'. On this day, it was repeated often, and loudly.

The four friends were very comfortable with their status, which was revealed in their behaviours and interactions with others. The young working holidaymakers in question repeatedly made jokes about the mice that inhabited their caravan (who they possibly invited through personal habits), were seemingly indifferent to their repeated brushes with eviction by site managers who were unimpressed with their partying habits, and were somewhat proud that their dwindling funds would be almost exclusively dedicated to boxed wine, rather than food. They also swore a lot.

Attempts at masculine bravado can be read into their attitudes, given the highly gendered and performative aspect of their interactions with me. In an expression of their broader privilege and with the knowledge that their time in this setting would only be temporary, risking eviction and inviting rodents into their temporary home became novel, darkly humorous stories. These behaviours would be comparatively out of place, however, in a situation where they felt more vulnerable. Their attitude correlates with Frederiksen's (2017, p. 19) suggestion that there is a kind of sardonic optimism (or 'joyful pessimism', in his terms) involved in passing the time along the margins. Taking this literally, I highlight how Daniel, Julien, Lucas, and Daniel utilised aspects of their identity to adapt to any potentially waylaid plans, such as the likelihood of a premature exit from the Lockyer Valley and shortening of their stays in Australia.

This particular configuration of temporariness does much to replicate and sustain the archetypal 'backpacker' narrative of active displacement from normal life, and transformative, life-affirming experiences (O'Reilly 2006, p. 1001; Kawashima 2010, p. 274). Temporary migration is often conceived as suspension of reality; more youthful travellers in particular are likely to use this time as an attempt to seek out an autonomous sense of self (Wilson & Richards 2008). In these contexts, it is perceived as beneficial for the working holidaymaker to travel to the regional space and enter a new, uncertain existence, as Li (2018) suggests. Adding to this argument, I suggest certain working holidaymakers are capable of moving with little responsibility, if circumstances permit it and they have the money to do so. I returned to the caravan park on multiple occasions after our meetings, but did not cross paths with the foursome again. Despite only returning to Gatton just over a week prior, the young men appeared to have moved again.

Because these working holidaymakers embrace a kind of placelessness, they move readily to take advantage of the casual, ephemeral nature of seasonal agricultural work. Most are happy to move on. In late July of 2016, I observed two young, tall blond men walking along the footpath leading from the caravan park to the centre of town. They wore stuffed backpacks and wheeled oversized suitcases behind them, and appeared to be related. I was walking towards the caravan park, and as we crossed paths, I took out my headphones to initiate a conversation. They were the

third and fourth people I had seen who appeared to be leaving Gatton that morning. Given the time of year, and the high levels of harvesting that were taking place around the region, it was curious to see working holidaymakers making their exit. This apparent paradox led me to approach them and asked why they were leaving – if that was their plan. The slightly taller of the two men (Jack) replied, and explained that "there's work around, but it's just too unreliable. He had a Southern English accent, a red, slightly sunburnt face, and appeared to be in his early twenties. The other man, Ethan, added "it would probably take you five months to get your 88 days. We've given up here". Like Paul, who wanted to find more consistent and reliable work picking broccoli rather than wait out a dwindling season picking figs for three hours per day, the two working holidaymakers were making decisions about time and value. In explaining their decision, Jack told me that "at the moment here [in Gatton], you get picked up outside of the caravan park, and it's just the 'shit work'". "Yeah, always the shit work!" Ethan echoed.

Several of the more large-scale, reputable farming operations were still hiring at this time of year. Some were even requiring additional staff to be regularly rostered on for night shifts in the packing sheds, according to working holidaymakers such as Anna. However, this type of work wasn't accessible to the two men. These farms were all located beyond the outskirts of town and tended to hire employees directly, rather than mediate with labour-hire contractors or agencies. Accounting for the fact that Ethan and Jack were both shouldering overstuffed backpacks and large suitcases, and walking towards the intercity bus stop, it appeared they had no transport. Regular coach services run from Gatton to Brisbane, also stopping at other small towns *en route* to Toowoomba and further west. As neither of the two men owned a car and stayed at the caravan park, accepting the work offered by a limited pool of labour-hire contractors was their only potential source of employment. A number of labour-hire contractors have an unofficial, reciprocal arrangement with the caravan park. By providing its temporary residents with contact details for particular contractors, and hosting a daily pickup and drop-off point, working holidaymakers without transport are able to simultaneously and conveniently locate casual farm work and a place of accommodation. However, this then restricts the employment opportunities.

The picking jobs that had transpired from this relationship had been erratic and unreliable – or, as Ethan and Jack had summarised, it was the 'shit work'. At its core, this type of employment partially denotes limited outcomes, and is perceived by working holidaymakers as something to move on from, or abandon entirely, according to individual decision-making practices. The quality of work is not solely about finances, but also about time and a working holidaymakers' ability to maintain their chosen state of temporariness. I asked the pair if they were travelling to Stanthorpe, or other nearby agricultural communities; this was the action taken by other exiting working holidaymakers I had recently encountered. "Nah, we're going to Sydney for a bit!" Jack replied quickly and with excitement, as if they were both eager to move on from the region. Our conversation suggested that they had not been in Australia for long and were quite early into the first year of their Working Holiday visas. For the two young men, travelling to Gatton had initially represented a way of predetermining eligibility for an extended stay in Australia. When their aim of securing consistent employment was not fully realised, they decided to leave the town. Although the two men were highly motivated to meet their goal of securing a second-year visa, they could afford to momentarily put their search for 'days' on hold, rather than wait for sporadic and unreliable work in a location they did not enjoy. Jack and Ethan's time in Gatton had at the very least, provided them with the financial means to move elsewhere.

Temporary migrant workers rely on mobility to instigate change in everyday material conditions, because it is one of the few methods available to them (Rogaly 2009, p. 1976). Coe and Jordhus-Lier (2011, p. 216) define such proactive measures as 'reworking agency', which involves "efforts to materially improve their [migrants'] conditions of existence…challenging the system on its own terms to try and redress some of its inequalities". When the consistent and well-paying work Jack and Ethan had anticipated failed to transpire, they mobilised their lack of obligation to an employer by leaving both the caravan park and the town to seek satisfaction elsewhere. Their ability to do so suggests they have agency via freedom of movement and knowledge relating to the likelihood of more desirable employment presenting itself late in the peak of the harvesting season.

Using up time very quickly is equally attractive. Being in place can be interpreted as a sense of undesirable stuckness. For all the freedom of movement these working holidaymakers have, even momentary periods of waiting for employment can inspire a sense of unproductive stasis, and evoke feelings of frustration and resentment. In late May of 2016 at a monthly backpacker barbeque organised by the Lockyer Valley Regional Council in conjunction with the Salvation Army (a religious charity), I unexpectedly crossed paths with Ali, a working holidaymaker from London who I knew had made plans to move on from the Lockyer Valley a month prior. When we had last met, Ali had spoken animatedly about travelling to Darwin with a friend who was also in Gatton, and eventually meeting a second fellow English working holidaymaker who was already in the Northern Territory. Ali prefaced his explanation with a loud sigh. "Man, it would have just been too much messing around, trying to find new work and starting to get days again. So, we changed our minds", he said. "We're a month into it already, so hopefully it won't take too long to finish it all off."

Not wanting to retake his steps at a later date, Ali decided to stay at the caravan park and continue picking broccoli, postponing any travel plans until he had acquired his 88 days of work. I asked him what he thought about Gatton now that he had stayed, and he gave another noncommittal sigh, as if to indicate he wanted to be elsewhere. Multiple times afterwards, I ran into Ali at the McDonald's takeaway restaurant, where he regularly used the free Wi-Fi available for customers. Although living and working for extended periods in the rural space was a purposeful activity for Ali, and his primary intention was to travel. Any disruption to that plan, however ultimately beneficial it was, became an inconvenience. Although time passes at the same pace, it is experienced as idiosyncratic and variable (Bear 2014b). Bourdieu (1977, p. 105) describes this temporal unevenness as "incommensurable islands of duration, each with its own rhythm, the time that flies by or drags, depending on what one is doing". For working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley, time seemed to pass at varying speeds, according to whether it is filled with activities that are perceived as beneficial or restrictive.

Lena, in her mid-twenties from Germany, was in the midst of a similar type of unproductive stasis to Ali. However, she felt the additional pressure of time slipping out of her grasp, and an inability to rectify or alter her circumstances. Lena had recently arrived in Gatton after injuring muscles in her back limited her access to work elsewhere. She quickly made friends but did not live with them. Lena was mostly alone, and so was I; perhaps that is why we bonded so quickly, after only a few short meetings. She described running out of time to acquire the number of days for a second-year visa, as the conclusion of her first year in Australia loomed closer. Lena explained that she needed to get 40 days of work while only having 60 days remaining on her first-year visa. This situation meant that Lena risked having to return home to Germany a year earlier than intended. Without successfully tallying those days, she would not meet the requirements of a second-year Working Holiday visa application. The likelihood of doing so was slim, as her contractor was unresponsive to her needs and continually offered better, or more consistent work to other backpackers. I met Lena for the first time at the monthly free 'backpacker barbeque' hosted by the Regional Council. She described being desperate for more reliable employment, but explained that she was tied to a labour-hire contractor who didn't give her enough work. The contractor also provided her accommodation (where upholstery and bedding had bedbugs). Despite the contractor's clear exploitation, Lena stayed, because she had paid them a conditional fee in exchange for these services, and did not want to risk being left without a place to stay, or any employment at all. Without a car or a financial buffer, Lena did not have the option of seeking out alternative arrangements.

Although mobility is a commonality between various types of migrants in global contexts, it is encountered and interpreted through distinct ontological frameworks (Conlon 2011, p. 355; Sutton et al. 2011). Lena attributed a lack of autonomy to her labour-hire contractor, who only offered low-paying sporadic jobs, despite being aware of her desperation. Lena felt that the contractor had unfairly given the Swedish women staying at the same apartment better work that payed hourly, ever since they had arrived. Lena had been contracted to this person for much longer than the Swedish women had been, but as they were passive actors in this situation, her resentment was directed towards the contractor. For the moment, given the initial financial outlay, Lena was willing to continue petitioning her labour-hire contractor

for more consistent work. A few days after initially speaking with Lena, I sat with her and Winston (a Taiwanese man in his mid-twenties) at the council barbeque. I asked Winston if he knew of any available work, which might be of help to Lena. Winston, who had not met Lena before, asked if she had spoken to any other local contractors. He made a call to a friend who worked for the contractor 'Chiko', who had a good reputation among other backpackers in Gatton and gave Lena a list of phone numbers to call, if she chose to do so. She didn't have many work contacts herself, and was also without transport.

I met Lena by chance at a grocery store weeks later; her situation remained the same and she was still with the same contractor, but she had 'a good feeling' that it was going to get better and that she would be offered more work soon. If the circumstances did not change, Lena would be forced to return home prematurely. Unlike the working holidaymakers mentioned earlier, who found freedom and agency in interstitial spaces, Lena's combined obstacles of a lack of time and money prevented her from moving on and attempting to find a more receptive employer in the Lockyer Valley or elsewhere. As such, she continued her association with the labour-hire contractor in the hopes that better work would materialise out of this relationship. I look at this circumstance through the lens of Berlant's (2011) 'cruel optimism', where something that a person aspires to or desires is in actuality, unlikely to transpire and a hindrance to prosperity. Unable to leave and risk losing a precious financial outlay, Lena's economic impossibilities became intermingled with hopeful expectations. As she began to run out of time and risked becoming ineligible for a second-year visa, her initial plans appeared increasingly unlikely to materialise. As Berlant (2011, p. 16) argues, "people maintain their binding to modes of life that threaten their well-being", because to do otherwise would be a world-shifting, catalytic event, and in some cases, an unbearable loss. Despite her optimism, Lena returned home soon after our last conversation, without applying for a second-year visa. Returning to previous discussions, where the tension between temporal structures and the need for 'days' collides, it seems that mobility can serve to amplify an underlying sense of precarity, or act as a strategy to mitigate uncertainty, in different circumstances.

Being temporarily in place

In contrast with working holidaymakers who choose to embrace mobility, others engage in a pattern of seeking shared housing in residential areas and staying with employers as long as possible. These working holidaymakers tend to be from Asian countries, including Taiwan, Japan, China, and South Korea. While it is often assumed that people in this particular cohort have a responsibility to send money home, those in my study were also from affluent backgrounds. Almost all were university graduates, or, like their more mobile peers, were spending time overseas before taking up their place at university. Because my relationship with this group was much more stable, I was able to learn that they share some similarities with European working holidaymakers, such as education status and socioeconomic class.

A key marker of identity for this group of working holidaymakers is the different way they mobilise their status as temporary workers. Working holidaymakers who resist enforced transience tend to live and work in the Lockyer Valley for almost the entire length of their stay in Australia. Instead of structuring travel around peak planting and harvesting windows, they stay in rural areas for up to two years. By doing so, these working holidaymakers interpret the conditions of the Working Holiday visa in a different way, immediately travelling to agrarian landscapes after arriving in the country, seeking out employment as income. These working holidaymakers tend to work for a single employer for six months, which is the maximum time period allowed as per the conditions of a first-year visa, and then find a new job nearby, once this time limit approached or had expired. They prioritise travel to the same extent as other working holidaymakers, but have a different approach to funding leisure time. Instead of working for short, immersive stints, the Lockyer Valley serves as an identifiable 'home base', where they live and find employment, while taking regular short holidays to popular tourist destinations.

For these working holidaymakers, a feeling of being 'stuck' can be interpreted differently. For those who enact flexible and resilient strategies for navigating changing settings, the rural space is also a brief, unmoving temporary mooring. Although working holidaymakers envision this slow-moving microcosmic world, they also imagine it to be productive – permitting them to plan out immediate futures through work. When practices of labour and leisure are in competition, the rural

landscape can become contentious, as the following conversation depicts. Housemates Shin (Japan) and Elsie (Hong Kong), demonstrated differing attitudes towards everyday life in the regional space. Shin, who had lived and worked in Gatton for five months, explained that "after one month, I got sick of it!" Elsie strongly disagreed. She liked the rural lifestyle, because her everyday life was 'lazy'; Elsie felt there was little to do apart from work, which made it easy to save money. At different times Elsie had described the town in the same way when she had decreased hours at work, albeit with a very different tone of voice. On occasion she had found this laziness exciting, or entirely inhibitive. When embarking on her working holiday, Elsie had not planned to settle in Gatton for as long as she did. However, she found it more beneficial to stay in one place, rather than work and travel simultaneously.

By cultivating a more homely environment, employment opportunities oscillated around her and presented reliable financial possibilities for future travel. Notably, at this moment, Elsie was in the midst of a period of increased work. Only weeks earlier, bad weather and a lack of commercial orders had limited Elsie's access to work, and unexpected leisure time had invited feelings of claustrophobia and restlessness. Now, she lamented the fact that she had worked six days in a row, and effectively needed a holiday from her working holiday. Elsie was counting down until that holiday arrived; she had made vague plans to spend the last month of her second-year visa travelling around Australia, but now, as the date inched closer, time had radically decelerated and the world now moved in slow motion. Unplanned interruptions to their stays can contort or affirm working holidaymakers' preconceived notions of the regional landscape. An internalised rural idyll imagines an unhurried world, where things move at a languid pace and the people are easy-going (Krivokapic-Skoko & Collins 2016, p. 172; Shucksmith 2016). As Shucksmith (2016, p. 163) describes it, the rural landscape has long been presented as "simple, innocent and virtuous as part of a pastoral myth of a lost Eden". Working the land and undertaking physical labour is a seemingly righteous, moralising, and fulfilling enterprise (Lockie & Bourke 2001b).

Working holidaymakers who resist mobility have a distinct approach to work and leisure that contrasts with their more mobile counterparts. Anna (Chapter 4 p. 67), had travelled to Australia from Taiwan in early 2015, and also sought out continual work in Gatton for the length of her two-year stay. She did this by working for the allowed maximum time allowed with a single employer, and finding a new job when the end of each six month period approached. By March 2016, she had already worked at three different farms in the Lockyer Valley region and had been resident in the town for over a year, living in two different sharehouses. A similar observation is made by Nagai et al. (2018b, 2018a), who identified that a majority of working holidaymakers in Australia travelling from Asian countries demonstrate a preference for more homely accommodation options, compared to more transient backpacker enclaves. My research supports this, with small numbers of working holidaymakers in Gatton from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea opting to live in shared housing. In doing so, these working holidaymakers were not necessarily seeking higher wages or genuine cultural exchange, but experience, as they built relationships with their peers and cultivated a secure 'home base'.

In September 2016, Anna hosted a reported 'going away' dinner at a busy bar and restaurant in Gatton, with twenty other working holidaymakers in attendance. I was surprised to learn that 'going away' did not mean leaving Gatton and travelling elsewhere in this instance. Instead, Anna had finished working at a large agribusiness packing leafy green vegetables, now that the end of another six month period had arrived and she could no longer legally work for the same company. She had found new employment at a different farm in the same region, and would spend the next few months sorting and packing potatoes. As such, she would no longer see many of her current co-workers on a regular basis, and Anna had decided to host a dinner to say goodbye. While length of stay may relegate some migrants to being constantly in-between places, their everyday routines and activities are likely to be similar to more permanently emplaced populations (Allon & Anderson 2010, p. 17). As they find work, secure accommodation, and even go on short holidays, movement between these activities takes on a routine.

Working holidaymakers who live and work in a single location for longer periods of time tend to structure practices of travel differently to those who attempt to stay no longer than three months. Anna had taken a number of holidays during her two-year stay. As her employment at each farm had been relatively consistent and her accommodation in a sharehouse was inexpensive and secure, she was able to save money for several short holidays, which lasted between two days to a week, to various locations across the country. Anna had travelled to Noosa, the Whitsundays, Sydney, and Melbourne, among many other places, and made plans for additional trips prior to returning to Taiwan. A month prior to her going away dinner, Anna took a whirlwind holiday to the Great Barrier Reef, and immediately went back to work the day after her return:

> *I went scuba diving! It was so good…but I got back here [Gatton] at nine o'clock last night, my flight was delayed by three hours. I went to work this morning, but it was hard to stay awake. It was my first day back. I'm so, so, so tired.*

Holidaying is equally important to this type of working holidaymaker, but takes on different forms than their more mobile counterparts. Shin described a similar practice of oscillating between work in the Lockyer Valley and travelling to me, after an unexpected meeting at the McDonald's takeaway restaurant in the Gatton town centre. "I'm going to Sydney tomorrow, but I need to book my flight back", he said, before asking if *Tiger Air* was a good choice of domestic airline. Shin continued. "I don't want to come back on Saturday or Sunday", he explained. "There's too many people in the airport and flights are cheaper on Mondays. I need to call my boss to ask for an extra day off". Shin already had a week off, but after a phone call to his employer and some careful negotiation, he was granted an extra day off and a confirmed job to return to the following week. By seeking out and cultivating more stable everyday rhythms, these working holidaymakers reorient temporariness into a practice that better aligns with their personal aspirations. Bowles' (2016, p. 102) describes this temporal practice as 'time-tricking', or, "ways in which people modify, bend, distort and creatively explore dominant experiences of time and its reification". Although the Working Holiday visa collectively

organises working holidaymakers' temporal practices, time is able to be manipulated in a way that offers greater control over varying degrees of uncertainty and precarity.

Negotiating time, place, and belonging

The discontinuity present in the Working Holiday visa system, seasonality, and the availability of work influences the ways working holidaymakers use their time. Depending on their forms of capital and cultural lens, working holidaymakers navigate and transform the imposition of multiple external temporal frameworks to make one that fits with their own sense of identity. 'Placelessness' perhaps matters less for one group than the other, as some embrace temporariness and others resist it. These two ways of being produce different versions of domestic life (Chapter 5), influence work (Chapter 6), and relationships (Chapter 7).

Chapter 5: Domestic life and leisure

Working holidaymakers travel to the Lockyer Valley because it is widely known for agricultural production, meaning that short-term labour will be continually needed to fulfil planting and harvesting needs. While several small towns are scattered across the region, most working holidaymakers travel to Gatton because it is centrally-located, serviced by most necessary amenities, and is a convenient base from which to seek casual employment. Although agricultural work is their reason for travel into regional areas, working holidaymakers' lives extend far beyond the workplace. Settling into routines means 'figuring out' a place, learning how to meet mundane personal needs (Wunderlich 2008). As working holidaymakers navigate these unfamiliar, ever-changing environments, they are continually engaged in the act of placemaking as part of domestic life. In a binary of work and home, domestic life can incorporate private, public, and shared space.

When working holidaymakers travel to the region in search of work, they also need access to other amenities as part of their everyday lives. This chapter explores how working holidaymakers create their domestic space while living in Gatton, including accommodation, transport, food, internet, social support and friendship, in addition to other kinds of knowledge outside of work (such as English language and cultural skills). These interconnected everyday domestic needs inform how working holidaymakers create a sense of place in Gatton.

In this chapter, I consider placemaking practices within working holidaymakers' domestic lives. Variations of domestic life largely match up with working holidaymakers' patterns of mobility and temporariness outlined in the previous chapter (Chapter 4), where some embrace transience and others resist it. Working holidaymakers actively choose to take up accommodation that is more temporary, live in share housing, or use their vehicles as accommodation. More than that, however, they map onto those same divisions. Through working holidaymakers' different patterns of domestic life, they repurpose public space.

Transport

Once working holidaymakers are in Gatton, transport is critical to getting work and can influence their choice of accommodation. Gatton is well-connected to nearby urban centres, larger cities, and tourist attractions via upgraded major highways, public transport, and coach services. However, transport options in the town itself are limited. A bus service operates from five o'clock in the morning until seven o'clock at night each day, but it primarily serves to connect Gatton to other nearby towns, and only makes a few stops in the area. Transport options such as public buses may be unhelpful for working holidaymakers, who need to travel to specific locations on the outskirts of town, as they travel to and from farms. A locally-owned taxi company and other rideshare options are also available in Gatton, but these can be costly as a daily commute.

Vehicle ownership is not something all working holidaymakers are observed to prioritise equally. Those who do not own their own vehicle often choose to stay with an accommodation provider who offers transport to and from select farms, such as a labour-hire contractor (such as Lena, in Chapter 4, p. 77) or a temporary accommodation that has a reciprocal relationship with nearby employers. Alternatively, these working holidaymakers also often choose to live in share housing with co-workers who own a car, and can offer lifts as required. Some seek out other forms of transport, including carpooling with others or travelling on foot. Many working holidaymakers can be observed walking along major roads throughout Gatton.

A railway overpass leading towards the caravan park from the Coles shopping centre is one such road. Pedestrians follow it over a vehicle overpass above an intersecting railway line, until eventually arriving at the caravan park two hundred metres further down the road. The high-traffic road is busy at all times of day, used by cars, heavy vehicles, and B-Double trucks transporting local produce. The overpass is approximately 350 metres long. Although the roads before and after the bridge are wide, the overpass itself is comprised of a single lane in either direction, with vehicles travelling at sixty kilometres per hour. Narrow, metre-wide shoulders are located on the outside of each lane, flanked by rigid concrete and steel safety

barriers. The combined size and speed of vehicles makes this an unsafe space for pedestrians. Although there is no path, lane, or footbridge for pedestrians or cyclists along the overpass, and signage indicates they are prohibited, working holidaymakers could occasionally be seen returning to the caravan park via the overpass with shopping bags in hand. Temporary migration evokes and even necessitates different forms of mobility, while concurrently restricting access to normative expectations of behaviour (Robertson 2015b, p. 3). Without transport, working holidaymakers make weighted choices between convenience and safety. It is also possible that pedestrians taking this route from the centre of town to the caravan park are following directions provided by navigation applications, which are based on minimising travel time.

However, these alternative modes of transport can also present genuine physical risk of injury or death. On 9 August 2016, a nineteen year old working holidaymaker from Taiwan was accidentally killed while attempting to cross a road on the outer agricultural fringes of Gatton (Miko 2016; Osborn et al. 2016). The young woman had accidentally been killed while making her way to her farm job at five o'clock that morning. The field where she was working is located along a busy single-carriageway, where cars and trucks rush past at 100 kilometres per hour in each direction. There are no footpaths, pedestrian crossings, or safety barriers. When attempting to cross the road, she had stepped out behind a truck, unaware that a utility vehicle was following close behind. The driver did not see her, as his vision was significantly impacted by the glare of the rising sun reflecting off the road. While this is a stretch of road that is not intended for travelling on foot, limited access to transport can make risk-averse practices seem viable or even necessary.

Other working holidaymakers have their own cars, which may serve solely as a source of transportation, or act as both transport and accommodation. These working holidaymakers tend to purchase cars that are already registered and in good condition, which requires little work to be done when transferring ownership other than booking the car in for an inspection, in order to obtain a safety or Roadworthy

Certificate (RWC)[9]. Lucy, a South Korean woman, was in the process of buying a car, a month into her stay. “I have to walk half an hour from my house into town for groceries, I use a folding shopping trolley to take them home”, she explained. “I’m buying a 2002 Holden Barina next week – it’s small, cheap to run, and it belonged to my friend who is leaving”. Lucy planned to use the car for the duration of her extended stay in Gatton, driving herself and Bom (her friend, housemate, and co-worker) to work each day, instead of relying on others. Eventually, Lucy hoped to drive to North Queensland for a holiday prior to returning home to South Korea. These different approaches to vehicle ownership subsequently influence working holidaymakers’ accommodation choices. In comparison, those who have their own car can find greater freedom of choice, with a broader pool of both employers and accommodation available to them.

Accommodation

At its core, accommodation is imagined to be a space that provides comfort, safety, and privacy. Working holidaymakers seek out these desirable aspects through specific types of accommodation across the regional space. Working holidaymakers’ varied patterns of mobility are mapped out into their domestic lives, as they choose specific types of accommodation that reflect their short and long-term aspirations for the Working Holiday visa. Adding to the analysis of identities outlined in the previous chapter (Chapter 4), there is a clear division between those who choose greater stability and live in share houses, and those who embrace mobility and use temporary accommodation. Most fall into the latter category. Continuing threads of mobility and temporariness, these discussions explore how domestic life is experienced through contingent and relational modes of spatiality (Massey 1994; Appadurai 1995).

Temporary accommodation

As the primary form of accommodation, temporary accommodation fits the needs of the dominant group of working holidaymakers in Gatton. A large concentration of working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley live in the caravan park on the fringes

[9] The Roadworthy Certificate in Queensland (Queensland Government 2020) is comparable to the British ‘MOT’ certification (Government of the United Kingdom 2020) or the varied ‘Vehicle Inspection’ processes required in the United States of America.

of the Gatton town centre. The caravan park can house up to 250 people at a time, almost all of whom are working holidaymakers. It can be estimated that there are more or less equal numbers of male and female working holidaymakers living at the caravan park at any given time. Some travel in pairs or small groups, but many are solo travellers, who stay in shared caravans to reduce accommodation costs. In these circumstances, women usually stay with other women, and men live with other men.

The Gatton Caravan Park is situated 1.5 kilometres from the central business district, wedged between a vehicle overpass and a railway line. It has some distant neighbouring houses, but they are separated by the constant rattle of heavy vehicles and the occasional coal train. Situated in a largely industrial area, it is close to multiple construction and hardware businesses, a public park, and several blocks of open fields and disused land. The occasional brick house dots the landscape, but on the whole, the caravan park is relatively isolated. At the time fieldwork began, the caravan park was relatively exposed to the elements and visible from the nearby main road, but tall, bushy trees, a car park, and a demountable manager's office provided a level of privacy from passing road traffic.

Midway through fieldwork, an eight-foot-tall chain-link fence topped with razor wire was installed along the perimeter of the caravan park. After meeting with the managers of the caravan park, they explained that it was installed by them out of concern for residents' safety. There had been a lot of trouble in recent times caused by locals reportedly 'fridge surfing'. 'Fridge surfing' involves breaking into multiple refrigerators located throughout the caravan park to steal alcohol. This usually happened on a Saturday night. Some of the refrigerators in the caravan park sit outside their respective caravans, and their contents are easily accessible to an opportunistic thief. A flyer on the site manager's office front desks reads 'the safety fence: here for your protection'. Ongoing construction projects in the last year have seen the accommodation provider erect a wall around the entrance, creating a gated community invisible to passers-by. This coincides with new ownership, and as such, it is possible that some of the amenities, services, and practices have changed over the intervening period.

From the highest point on the vehicle overpass, with the train line below, the view reveals what appears to be a small city, complete with streets of caravans and a few demountable cabins able to be rented out at a weekly rate (see Figure 4). Inside, the caravan park is a functional, although distinctly tired space, with dated amenities and a 'lived in' appearance from years of constant use. The identity of the caravan park's primary occupants and their travel practices are revealed in elements of its layout and material culture. Reflecting the working holidaymakers' needs, the space is almost completely filled with caravans owned by the business. Each one is able to accommodate between two to four people. This is unlike many other caravan parks across the country, which have comparatively more empty 'powered sites' for travellers to park their own caravans or mobile homes and connect to the local electricity grid. While four empty powered sites are available for hire at the Gatton Caravan Park, they are seldom used.

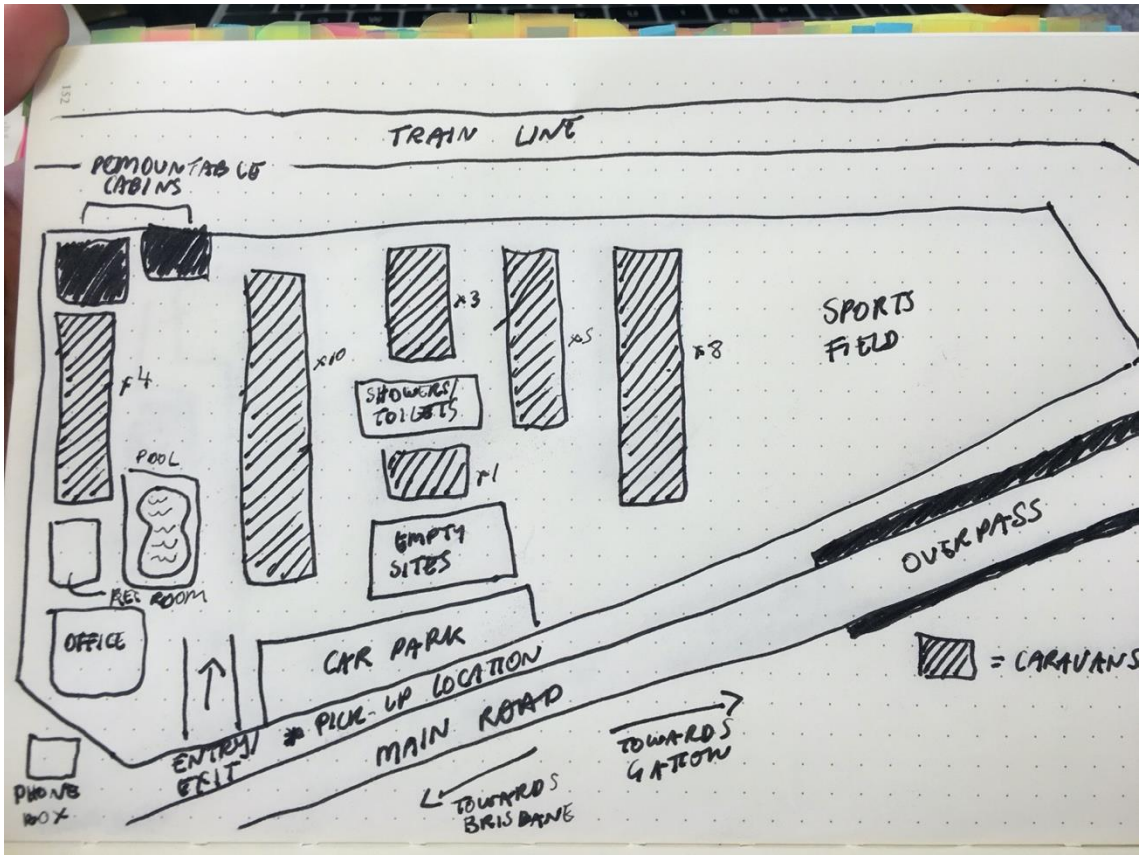


Figure 4: Mud map of the caravan park taken from fieldnotes.

There are no shared cooking facilities on the property, such as barbeques or a kitchen, which are common in most other camping grounds. However, occupants are permitted to use microwaves, portable stovetops, and tea kettles in their caravans. Shared amenities at the centre of the park comprise a laundry, and a shower and toilet block. To use the showers, residents are required to pay for tokens at the manager's office. Signs on the door of the shower block promise that any attempt to 'trick' the token machines (with a token on a string or overseas currency) will be met with severe – although unspecified – consequences. Recreation areas are scattered throughout the park, including a small building close to the entrance, containing a television, DVD player, pool table, threadbare lounge chairs, and a shelf filled with books and movies abandoned by previous guests. A small fenced swimming pool and covered seating area sit between the entertainment room and the managers' office. A large, triangle-shaped grassy area is located at the other end of the park. Working holidaymakers can regularly be seen sitting under its tall shady trees or kicking balls at steel goalposts.

For working holidaymakers who embrace transience, there are several advantages to living in the caravan park. Although mobile housing can sometimes be indicative of socioeconomic precarity, there is much to suggest that some people have a genuine preference for living in caravan parks over fixed dwellings (Newton 2014, p. 60). Working holidaymakers, who have a need for short-term accommodation, can easily be counted as fulfilling this category. Not making a home suits some working holidaymakers, as it allows them to leave easily and travel elsewhere when necessary, rejecting commitment. They are able to do this because the space is advertised as a 'working caravan park', which means that it is the temporary home to transient workers who are not expected to live there. In this sense, the caravan park is distinct from family-friendly 'tourist' parks, where temporary occupants can stay and enjoy lower-cost holidays in popular destinations (Foley & Hayllar 2009) or residential communities designed for mobile homes (including the class-maligned socioeconomic connotations of the American 'trailer park') (Salamon & MacTavish 2017). The manager, Keith, explained that it is rare for tourists or 'grey nomads' – classed as relatively well-off retirees who travel Australia in mobile homes (Onyx & Leonard 2005) – to pass through the caravan park:

> *Oh, sometimes you'll have the odd one trickle in on holiday, but it's mostly backpackers here. Even around Christmas and New Year's Eve, we might have around fifty to one hundred of them still staying here.*

The accommodation available at the caravan park is in high demand, because it is specifically tailored to working holidaymakers' needs. It is a relatively short walking distance from the centre of town and various local services. The caravan park managers also act as *de facto* information providers. Inside their demountable office, the walls and benchtops are covered with wall-to-wall posters and flyers of events taking place throughout the town, including the backpacker English class, and free meals at the monthly council barbeque and weekly soup kitchen. Noticeboards are filled with advertisements listing available agricultural work and the contact phone numbers of several labour-hire contractors, which is another advantage of the caravan park.

The site operates as a pick-up point for several labour-hire contractors. Every weekday at sunrise, white transport vans wait outside the caravan park entrance or across the road to collect workers. They return later in the afternoon, and working holidaymakers spill back into the caravan park. Because of this arrangement, caravan park life appears to be an attractive, all-inclusive package tailored towards securing employment. However, a disadvantage of this space is a limited choice of employers for working holidaymakers who do not have their own vehicle. Jack and Ethan (in Chapter 4, p. 69), relied on the caravan park to provide them with connections to work, but the contractor who employed them only had short, infrequent shifts available. As a result, they opted to leave Gatton rather than wait for more consistent opportunities. The ability to do so affirms and supports the identities outlined in the previous chapter and the status of some working holidaymakers as embracing temporariness and liminality.

Dwellings rented out by labour-hire contractors claim to be similar in nature, with the advantage of offering both accommodation and work. This type of accommodation can usually be identified throughout the residential areas of Gatton by the multiple white transport vans that can be seen parked outside, and the large numbers of people constantly coming and going. Like the caravan park, contractor-

owned accommodation can appear ideal and convenient, as it promises links to employment and often transport. However, there can be additional associated costs and conditions. Some labour-hire contractors offering accommodation may require a substantial bond to be paid in advance, or charge a nominal fee for transport to and from work each day. Disadvantages arise in circumstances where the working holidaymaker is unsatisfied with the services provided to them. If they wish to find alternative accommodation or employment, they risk losing an initial financial outlay, reminiscent of Lena's experience (Chapter 4, p. 77). While initially seeming convenient, these reciprocal relationships offer working holidaymakers minimal opportunity to seek out alternative work with another employer. As these labour-hire contractors control both work and accommodation, it makes working holidaymakers in such situations more vulnerable.

Share housing

Share housing is the preferred accommodation for working holidaymakers who resist temporariness and seek greater stability. Compared to traditional 'backpacker' accommodation, such as caravan parks or hostels, these dwellings are not regulated as accommodation providers or businesses and tend to be rented privately. The size and quality of these homes are variable, ranging from small apartments to large houses that are either well-maintained or worn. In some houses, the rooms are shared or stacked with beds, while others have one occupant per room. Codified building standards and safety regulations are still applicable to private dwellings, stipulating that all houses should have fire safety measures, adequate plumbing and drainage, and other basic household necessities (Australian Building Codes Board 2019; Queensland Building and Construction Commission 2019). Houses that working holidaymakers live in are provided by a broad cross-section of people; private investors, local homeowners, or rental subletting of rooms. This provides additional income for investors and homeowners, and makes housing affordable for occupants. Advantages to this style of accommodation for working holidaymakers include the ability to capitalise on other working holidaymakers' local knowledge when looking for a place to stay. Vacancies are advertised on community noticeboards located throughout the town centre, online via social media platforms and backpacker websites, or by word-of-mouth. When one working holidaymaker vacates their

accommodation to travel, or another room becomes available, they often recommend a friend to fill the space.

These sharehouses take various forms, including spaces that are solely inhabited by working holidaymakers, and dwellings where the owner or primary occupant also lives at the property. In dwellings that are exclusively occupied by transient agricultural workers, the investor or homeowner is likely to live elsewhere in Gatton. Although the owners do not reside in the house, they maintain direct contact with occupants. Contact occurs through collecting rent, responding to maintenance requests, providing additional material needs (such as blankets in winter, or pedestal fans in summer). In other situations, homeowners or leaseholders act as a live-in landlord or roommate. At one such rented apartment, young couple Kevin and his partner Sunny sublet their spare bedroom to working holidaymakers. Kevin had joined his immediate family in migrating to Australia several years previously from Indonesia, and he met Sunny, an international student from South Korea, while she studied in Gatton. Most of Kevin's family also lived in the area, and took up similar practices, renting empty rooms to seasonal farmworkers. Kevin and Sunny worked at a farm outside of Gatton, harvesting and packing leafy green vegetables (Chapter 6). They often secured jobs for the working holidaymakers who stayed with them at the same farm. As a result, the pair enjoyed a positive reciprocal relationship with their employer, who inadvertently relied on them to source new employees. Kevin and Sunny benefitted from the additional income provided by their subtenants' rent and utilities payments.

Kota and Mei, a Japanese working holidaymaker couple in their early twenties, stayed with Kevin and Sunny for six months in 2016. The couples had met at a social event for working holidaymakers and migrants at the Baptist church in town. At the time, Kota and Mei were staying in temporary accommodation, and the spare room in Kevin and Sunny's apartment had been conveniently vacated that week. The working holidaymaker pair quickly moved in. There are many benefits to this style of accommodation for working holidaymakers who prefer greater stability. Kota and Mei gained immediate access to their live-in landlords' networks, including connections to a reputable employer offering relatively stable work**.** The couple were not alone in their accommodation preferences, as many other Asian working

holidaymakers living and working in the Lockyer Valley chose to stay in sharehouses throughout Gatton, including other attendees at the weekly backpacker English class (who had travelled from China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan). This pattern supports recent research findings by Nagai et al. (2018b, p. 66), who suggest that a majority of Asian working holidaymakers avoid typical 'backpacker' accommodation, such as hostels or caravan parks, "for reasons such as concerns about cleanliness and safety, cultural and language barriers, and unfamiliarity with the style of accommodation". Renting rooms in private accommodation offers a more comfortable and homely option for working holidaymakers. Privacy allows routines, relationships, and aspirations to grow in these spaces that become familiar and comfortable (Butcher 2010, pp. 24-5).

However, a disadvantage to this style of accommodation for those who live with the leaseholder or homeowner can include increased surveillance and a feeling of needing to retreat from communal spaces. I was invited to a dinner at the apartment shared by Kevin, Sunny, Kota, and Mei one evening. Sunny greeted me at the door of the Kevin's second floor apartment, speaking excitedly about the Korean hot pot dish she was cooking for the evening. After taking off my shoes, I was directed to the sparsely-furnished communal area. The 'living room' contained a dining table, futon, and television on a stand. A small desk in one corner served as Kevin's office. In the kitchen, a printed piece of paper stuck to the refrigerator with a magnet listed the house rules: pay rent on time, clean up after yourself, and so on, with Kevin's name and phone number included at the bottom. I had arrived early – only Kevin and Sunny seemed to be present. Kota and Mei soon emerged from their small sublet bedroom soon after, both dressed casually in trackpants, hoodies, and house slippers. They left the door open, which revealed a tightly-packed room. Compared to the rest of the apartment, the bedroom appeared to be their own private sanctuary, away from people who were both their co-workers and landlords. A double bed took up most of the space, while the rest was filled with their recently-unpacked belongings – the pair had returned from a trip to the Whitsundays earlier that week (taking up similar practices to Anna, Chapter 4, p. 67).

In some ways, this living situation is anomalous, because it disrupts normative understandings of how workers relate to each other. The cultural affinity shared between the household served to affirm Kota and Mei's identity and preference for relative stability over temporariness. This type of accommodation permits working holidaymakers to treat the places they stay as a 'home base', and take short holidays to nearby tourist hotspots while ensuring that their belongings are kept secure and that work is waiting for them on returning.

Vehicles as accommodation

Some working holidaymakers use their cars as accommodation. This practice can represent an active decision to travel freely, be a result of an inability to access more traditional modes of housing, or a weigh-up between vehicle ownership and a fixed home base. Some of these vehicles are intended to be lived in, creating a roving base that is an economic way for working holidaymakers to create a hybrid of home and transport. For others, living in a car is merely reflective of short-term necessity or can be a manifestation of vulnerability. As noted in Chapter 4, the peak of the planting and harvesting season (between April and September) sees an influx of working holidaymakers travelling to Gatton area. Accommodation can be difficult to secure straight away. Many new arrivals make the caravan park on the fringes of town their first point-of-call; it is located on the major road leading from the highway into Gatton and highly visible. While there are not always vacancies, this does not necessarily inconvenience working holidaymakers who own a vehicle.

When possible, the caravan park manager Keith would attempt to provide working holidaymakers in vehicles with a temporary space for them to stay overnight, allowing them to source more permanent accommodation the following day. When we spoke in early August of 2016, most of the caravans were fully occupied, making this a regular occurrence:

> *We're usually pretty full at this time of year, but I mean, we don't want to turn anyone away. We don't want them to stay at the lake or in another car park. If we turn anyone away, where are they going to go? We let them stay in our secure car park and sleep in their car or put a tent up if they've got one...but just for one night, because that's the rules. In the morning, we tell*

them 'okay, now pack up for the day and come back again tonight [to see if a caravan has become vacant].

The lake that the manager referred to is located in the local parklands adjacent to the Lockyer Valley Cultural Centre. The parklands contain an artificial lake, a water bird habitat, a picnic area, and a walking track around the lake. It is not unusual for working holidaymakers to sleep in their vehicles at the parklands. Actively utilising these spaces is referred to as 'freedom camping', a practice that assumes the occupant has a caravan, mobile home, or tent (Caldicott et al. 2014; Collins et al. 2018). Under Australian laws, sleeping at public parks or along roadsides is illegal, unless the area is a designated rest stop. At these roadside stopovers, people are permitted to camp – usually for 24 hours or three days – but are expected to move on. The lakeside parklands in Gatton are not a designated stopover location and as such, freedom camping is technically illegal. A standard response from authorities after becoming aware of people utilising public spaces for unintended purposes would be to encourage campers to leave the area and even issue a fine.

Some working holidaymakers anticipate having to stay in these kinds of settings and purchase vehicles deliberately intended to be used as accommodation. These tend to be larger, more spacious vehicles, such as station wagons, four-wheel-drives, or vans. Advertisements directed towards working holidaymakers can easily be found online or even taped to electrical poles throughout Gatton (see Figure 5). While some of these vehicles are unequipped, others have beds and custom-built shelving. Most are already registered, which means that a roadworthy certificate needs to be issued, ownership needs to be transferred, and the car is ready to be driven anywhere in the country. Usually, this type of vehicle is purchased by working holidaymakers who also intend to travel more remotely to places not conveniently accessible by public or borrowed transport when not working.

Early one morning in mid-2016, I walked through the Gatton central business district, and noted one such vehicle. It was a white van in the car park of a McDonald's restaurant. The van had Western Australian numberplate – a reliable indicator that it is being used by travellers. Much later in the day, I went past the McDonald's again and the vehicle was still there. The side door of the van was now

open; a woman was visible inside a spacious back section, lying on a raised mattress on her belly, with legs in the air. There were also a series of shelves inside the van near the bed – this was someone's living space. An advantage of using vehicles as accommodation is having stable transport and living quarters. These working holidaymakers tend to be more transient, but are also more agentic and enjoy a different sense of autonomy. Again, this variation of domesticity coincides with mobility – these working holidaymakers embrace transience, and in most circumstances, seek to complete their three months' worth of work in as short a time period as possible.

Figure 5: A printed vehicle advertisement stuck to an electrical pole in Gatton.

In comparison, working holidaymakers who unintentionally find themselves living in their car do so out of short-term necessity. These vehicles are not usually equipped to serve as accommodation. Shin (Chapter 4, p. 80), the Japanese working holidaymaker who attended the backpacker English class had also lived in his car for

a short period, after he found himself unexpectedly without accommodation. Within days, however, he was able to fill a vacant room that became available at a house where a friend and fellow working holidaymaker lived. Not all working holidaymakers have access to these valuable networks. Faith and Ivan, the organisers of the weekly soup kitchen held at the Seventh-Day Adventist Church shared an encounter with a male working holidaymaker who had been using his car as both temporary roadside accommodation and makeshift kitchen:

> *This fellow had not gotten any work, so he'd been in Gatton for a couple of weeks and had no money. He was sleeping in the back of his car. This was in the summer when it was really hot. He told us that he would place his bottle of water on the dashboard of his car in the morning, so the water would heat up over time. He'd use that to cook his noodles.*

It is worth noting that the young man's car was a standard sedan; small, cramped and not intended to be used as a mobile dwelling. This situation is reminiscent of Keith's concerns about working holidaymakers without adequate accommodation – when accommodation and employment are so intertwined, some of these travellers repurpose public space out of necessity. As the visible intersection of private life, social practices, and political and economic conditions, public space is a revealing domain (Noble & Poynting 2010, p. 491). The resulting convergence of diverse identities can result in either "playful encounters" or reveal difference and disadvantage (Cover 2014; Radford 2016). Like the moral economy that distinguishes between the privileged 'freedom camping' and homelessness, the different ways of living in a vehicle reveals the subtle differences between vulnerability and agency. The visual disjuncture of a mobile entity (the van-turned mobile home) in a fixed, public location (the McDonald's car park) reveals a dominant public space that working holidaymakers do not necessarily have access to, or, not least, in the way it is expected to be used.

Repurposing public space

Much of working holidaymakers' everyday lives takes place in public settings. As a population of temporary migrant workers their everyday needs are different to Australian residents. This means that public space – which I broadly consider as ranging from municipal buildings and parks, commercial settings, and religious organisations – is also used differently. How these spaces are intended to be used is often in conflict with how working holidaymakers are actually interpreting them and using them. In Gatton, there are key locations in public space that become central to meeting working holidaymakers' everyday needs, including access to food, internet, and social support (many of which were detailed in the results of the mapping activities discussed in Chapter 3, and included in Appendix 3).

Commercial settings as entertainment and connection

Working holidaymakers have a need to visit shopping complexes in Gatton to purchase food, drinks, and other groceries. I highlight shopping complexes here, because they are a functional, prosaic fixture of all places where sizable populations of people live and work, including regional towns. There are two shopping complexes in Gatton (located at either end of the CBD). Each contains a supermarket, a liquor store, a newsagent, and several takeaway restaurants, in addition to a small number of specialty stores. Most working holidaymakers appear to have a preference for the Gatton Plaza shopping complex, which is within walking distance of the caravan park where a large concentration of these seasonal workers live. It is a semi-outdoor space akin to an open mall. The Gatton Plaza complex comprised of a Coles (a nationwide supermarket chain), a bottle shop, a discount goods store, and multiple takeaway restaurants**.** The Coles supermarket functions as a significant site in the shopping complex. It is open from seven o'clock in the morning, to nine o'clock at night, and is busy throughout the day. On weekdays, it experiences increased waves of activity from three o'clock in the afternoon, when nearby primary and secondary schools let students out. It becomes busier again from five o'clock, when a majority of workers finish for the day. Although shifts of seasonal agricultural work are variable in length and there is no 'typical' shift, holidaymakers tend to conduct their grocery shopping in later afternoon, alongside families and children, elderly residents, and students from a nearby agricultural

college. At this time of day, it can be difficult to jostle through the aisles, as these different groups of people navigate the store with overloaded shopping trolleys and baskets.

While such sites are symbolic of capitalist economic frameworks, they can also take on unexpected and surprising meanings. This use of commercial settings highlight the multiplicity and fluidity of a place (Gieryn 2000), as some working holidaymakers use the grocery store in an entirely different way. I look at this phenomenon as an example of the subtle inferences between 'my place' and 'your place' (Cresswell 2004, pp. 1-2). It becomes possible to recognise how alternate senses of place can be contained in the same location, revealing where usages overlap, fissures emerge, and meanings conflict. For many working holidaymakers, Coles is more than just a grocery store, but a space of recreation. Sophia and Elouise, two French women who stayed at the caravan park while picking cherry tomatoes travelled to work each day using transport provided by their labour-hire contractor. Both wanted to obtain their second-year visa as quickly as possible before holidaying around Australia, therefore they rarely travelled outside the area. Sophia explained that neither of them owned a vehicle, so anywhere they travelled in Gatton had to be accessible to pedestrians. On occasion, they carpooled with others to visit popular nearby tourist attractions, but their everyday activities were largely limited by access to transport:

> *Sometimes we go to the beach [at least 200 kilometres away], but usually we go to Coles or we relax and smoke cigarettes outside of our caravan. We don't have a car, so there is nowhere to go and it is a good way to save money.*

With few desirable alternatives for entertainment in reach, a trip to the grocery store became a regular diversion for the two women. Commercial settings, such as shopping centres and grocery stores are critical to working holidaymakers' everyday routines in the regional space. In a study on working tourists' spending habits while living and working in regional Victoria, Jarvis and Peel (2013, p. 119) noted that a large percentage of respondents' weekly wages (approximately 15.9 per cent) was spent on food and drinks at supermarkets and liquor stores. The supermarket is not

typically imagined as a being so eventful – instead, it is a mundane site of consumption and transactional exchange, representative of supermodernity and waste (Miller 2005). For most consumers, the Coles supermarket does operate as a functional, transactional space, with the singular purpose of purchasing fruit, vegetables, and other grocery items.

The grocery store is also a place where working holidaymakers negotiate their newfound identities as temporary labour migrants and adjust to the realities of life in the agrarian landscape. For Emma and Irina, two Italian women who had been living in the caravan park and working at a large farm for a month, the grocery store was a spatial extension of their employment. "We spend all our money at Coles", Emma explained. Irina added that "whenever we go shopping, we always look at the vegetables and say things like 'this is from our farm', or 'I probably picked this'". Objects imbued with meaning are one of the foundational elements of what constitutes a place (Gieryn 2000, p. 466). Seeing produce they had personally harvested now for sale on supermarket shelves connected them, in their minds, to the region, where residents would quite literally purchase the fruits of their labour. The two young women also noted that Australians would look at them critically in public places such as the grocery store. Irina and Emma both attributed this seemingly unwelcoming gesture to their distinctly Italian style of communication. Perhaps embracing a stereotype as a way to connect with their country of origin – arguably part of the process that Clarke (2005, p. 311) refers to as 'dwelling-in-travelling', Irina admitted they were "very loud, and always waving our hands around". The pair consciously saw themselves as standing out in contrast to local residents, even in these crowded commercial settings, but these gestures and accents also permitted them to be recognised by other working holidaymakers. Shopping in groups provides working holidaymakers with the opportunity to navigate unfamiliarity and uncertainty safely, as other pre-existing understandings of place intersect with their own.

The nearby McDonald's takeaway restaurant is similarly repurposed and used in different ways than anticipated, by functioning as an internet café and social hub. Although the proliferation of wireless technologies has likely contributed to the redundancy of internet cafés, fast-food outlets can take on similar properties. Internet

cafés, pseudo or otherwise, are spaces where patrons are able to connect with people, including family and friends who are further away or simply pass the time without interruption (O'Regan 2008, p. 116). At McDonald's restaurants, patrons can connect to free, albeit speed-limited wireless internet on the premises. While making a purchase is an implicit condition of accessing this resource, visitors are not obligated to do so. At the Gatton location, those who opt to use the internet without buying food or drinks are unlikely to be reprimanded or even approached by seemingly indifferent casual staff, who are usually teenagers. Working holidaymakers spent hours at a time at the McDonalds, whether sitting in the crowded, noisy indoor area, the alfresco dining courtyard, or even in their vehicles in the car park (as I realised in my own fieldwork search for connectivity, the wireless internet range extends to the car spaces immediately outside the restaurant entryway). Several working holidaymakers described how they would use the McDonalds as a space to message or video chat with friends and family, research future travel ideas, and even book plane and bus tickets.

Proselyting as aid

Christian proselyting is also reinterpreted by working holidaymakers as a form of aid. Extended sojourns such as backpacking are often imagined as transformative or even religious experiences, resulting in profound internal change (Noy 2004). It is comparatively less established how travellers are enveloped into religious networks when staying in a single location for longer periods of time. A number of religious networks are active in Gatton, reflecting the cultural diversity of its residents (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). Religious buildings scattered throughout the town include churches of several Christian denominations, a *musallah* (or prayer space) for Islamic residents and a small Baha'i centre. Working holidaymakers are often enveloped into some of these organisations, not through their own religions, but by service and resource provision, as some of the Christian churches host free events specifically intended to attract them. A Baptist church in the Gatton town centre organises regular events for people who speak a Language other than English (LOTE). Iris, the retired schoolteacher who coordinates these events, explained to me that the lessons began after the church relocated to building in the CBD, which was initially a squash court, before being renovated into offices:

> *…when we bought that building, it was all set up for computers. TAFE [a vocational college] gave us some old computers as well, so we first set up as an internet café. Backpackers began to come in, and one of them requested we run an English class.*

These weekly events include two concurrent English classes (divided by proficiency) and a bible study group. Once a month, the church also hosts a 'drug and alcohol-free' social event. Activities at this event vary, but have previously involved a board game night, a potluck dinner, an indoor sports session, a 'bush dance', and day trips to nearby tourist hotspots. However, the English classes are the most well-attended of these events. The higher-proficiency English class is primarily attended by working holidaymakers, while the lower-proficiency class consists of humanitarian migrants. Approximately 15-30 people attend the higher-proficiency class and social evenings, with far fewer participating in the bible study group each week. Most participants appeared to be working holidaymakers from China, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan, although some from Chile, France, Germany, and Italy attended on occasion. Each Wednesday, volunteers from the church teach conversational language skills by introducing subjects they feel may be useful or of interest to attendees and facilitating relevant activities. Lesson content in the higher-proficiency class varies; attendees are introduced to Australian geography, history, and folklore; taught about employment rights and minimum wage requirements; or given practical advice on vehicle ownership and driving in Australia. Lessons focusing on tourism and employment are specifically chosen as they are relevant to working holidaymakers' interests. However, close to major Christian holidays, lesson content focuses on religious narratives.

It is common for migrants to access religious networks for various reasons other than language learning, such as networking (Han 2011, 2014). Many of those who participate in the backpacker English class already have proficient conversational English skills and do not openly express Christian religious beliefs. Instead, they find value in making connections with their peers. Opportunities for social support and friendship are particularly important, as the process of building relationships with other working holidaymakers enables access to a source of critical local knowledge (discussed further in Chapter 7). Attendees of the higher-proficiency

English class unofficially learn from other working holidaymakers about opportunities for employment, available accommodation, and other potentially useful types of information. Kota and Mei found both a place to stay and consistent work after attending the class for a period of time. While the events may be valuable for some working holidaymakers, they are possibly alienating to others. The religious space, drug and alcohol-free policies, and focus on language learning means that large numbers of working holidaymakers are likely to be discouraged from participating.

Larger numbers of working holidaymakers find similar benefit in a weekly soup kitchen held at the Seventh-Day Adventist church located a block away. The event hosts between 80 and 150 people each week. Normally the church hall is filled with wooden church pews, but each Monday night, they are put aside and replaced with folding trestle tables and plastic chairs. There are several reminders present that the hall is a repurposed church building. A shelf along the walkway leading to the spacious hall is filled with religious flyers, and a cross is attached to the wall at the back of the room. The event is organised by church members Faith and Ivan and supported by ten other volunteers. Faith explained that the soup kitchen began operating in late 2014 as a concerted response to assist those in the region who may be experiencing poverty or homelessness:

> *Backpackers didn't even cross our mind. I did put one flyer up in the caravan park though, because it's a place where you often have people on the fringes, needing a bit of extra care. On the first day…a couple of church members had given a lift to two hitchhiking Irish backpackers and invited them to come along. The backpackers brought a few more people with them, so the first night had four people. They must have told a lot of others, because the next week we had 36, then it went up to 50, and so on…*

By mid-2016, a majority of these attendees were working holidaymakers, but an elderly couple and a young family also made regular visits. The event's appeal may be partially attributed to a less explicitly proselyting approach. While lesson content at the backpacker English class often contains biblical narratives, the soup kitchen has minimal religious content beyond the material culture of the hall and a prayer

preceding the dinner service. The event follows a similar routine each week, beginning with a welcome message from Faith. She always reminds attendees of any temporary closures to the soup kitchen and finishes with the short prayer. Although it is a pre-meal convention, the prayer has an additional practical purpose. It indicates that dinner will be served shortly and ensures that all attendees are seated by the time meal preparation has concluded. This avoids congestion when attendees are invited to form a line for dinner and that a room full of hungry working holidaymakers have equitable access to food. Coupled with the prayer, commensality at the soup kitchen invites working holidaymakers to engage in religious practices, at the cost of a free meal. Bloch (1999, p. 146) argues that commensality can function as a way "…to find out how far the other is willing to engage in greater intimacies". However, just as the weekly bible study at the Baptist church has fewer attendees than the English class, few working holidaymakers at the soup kitchen were observed to participate to such an extent. While some attendees close their eyes, or even bow their heads, most simply sit in silence.

After the prayer, Faith invites attendees to line up at the kitchen serving window. Working holidaymakers quickly form lines that extend to the back of the hall, but the process is relatively calm, with people chatting as they wait. The meals are cooked by volunteers from the church, whose main interactions with attendees are at the serving window. The dinners are always vegetarian, because this is cost-effective when cooking in bulk and the organisers predominantly rely on donated produce. Volunteers are also happy to accommodate allergies when possible. This menu ensures all attendees can receive a meal, regardless of dietary preference. Dessert usually consists of a slice of cake, served with jelly and custard. There are almost always leftovers, which attendees are encouraged to take away. However, there is much more to this weekly event. Eating alongside others renders new forms of solidarity by drawing people together under collective circumstances (Wise 2012, p. 106). Throughout the evening, the hall is filled with conversation as working holidaymakers share their experiences with others, offering advice and suggestions. As the soup kitchen is transformed into a church hall for another week, a number of working holidaymakers pause to thank and say goodbye to volunteers and organisers as they leave. Few of these working holidaymakers described engaging with church

services outside of this event, suggesting that it is primarily understood as an opportunity for a hot meal.

A similar practice of proselyting interpreted as aid can be observed at a monthly event organised by the regional council in conjunction with the Salvation Army, a religious non-government organisation. A free barbeque dinner for working holidaymakers is held in a manicured park behind the regional council offices in the town centre, on the final Thursday of every month. The event was first held in early 2016, following a series of negative reports in local and national news about the exploitation of working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley (see Chapter 1). By better engaging with seasonal agricultural workers, positive regional tourist narratives could persist. Although the bulk of these reports have since subsided, the barbecue continues to be the primary opportunity working holidaymakers have to seek authoritative advice about living and working in the region. This is one of the key benefits of 'pop up' spaces, which momentarily reconfigure underutilised locations, creating new manifestations of place and allowing marginalised populations to become visible (Maxwell et al. 2013).

At the barbeque each month, attendees are provided with a simple warm meal, dessert, and soft drink or juice. During cold weather, people sit at tables in the hall foyer, and in warmer months, they eat outside in an adjacent well-lit outdoor area or sit on a grassy slope. On its busiest night in 2016, the organisers reported that 180 people were served meals. Working holidaymakers typically sit with people they are already familiar with, but the seating arrangements invite socialisation across these groups. Council staff, police officers (including one speaking Mandarin), and representatives of the Fair Work Ombudsman, an Australian Government agency providing information about workplace relations were observed to attend. Salvation Army volunteers would occasionally distribute various items to working holidaymakers, including blankets, pillows, menstrual products (tampons, pads), and travel-sized shower gels and shampoos. One evening, an evangelical church band from Toowoomba played contemporary religious music, and members sat with attendees between songs to make casual conversation. Few working holidaymakers seemed to engage with their subtle religious questions and instead preferred to discuss the items they had just been given by Salvation Army volunteers moments

before. Although the musicians' intention was to proselytise, working holidaymakers were more interested in material aid and reducing personal living costs.

Everyday contestations of meaning

As working holidaymakers negotiate various modes of domestic life according to their patterns of spatiality and mobility, they transform all aspects of regional space. Normative expectations of how domestic life should be arranged relegate actions such as sleeping, relaxing, and cooking meals to private spaces. In comparison, public or shared settings – especially car parks, council buildings, and takeaway restaurants that working holidaymakers are likely to inhabit in the Gatton town centre – are imagined as more functional and public. These are the locations that Augé (1995, p. 64) categorises as neutral, in-between, or even empty of meaning. In practice, navigating these locations is the articulation of spatial ordering, revealing the various conditions an individual is impacted by as they move through the world (de Certeau 1984, p. 99). The concept of public space as neutral requires asking questions about who the intended consumers of public spaces are – which specific publics inhabit these open, visible settings, and what form do their movements take? Working holidaymakers use these locations in different ways than other, less transient residents, and do not adhere to these subtle spatial rules. These divergent interpretations of the landscape reveal an unevenness between spaces of belonging versus spaces of negotiation that is particularly noticeable in more public settings. Reminiscent of foundational theories of space and place (Casey 1996), these locations are not apolitical settings for mundane life to be passively practiced, but symbolic of how everyday worlds are ordered or challenged.

Public space is a domain that is ripe for reinvention (Mitchell 2003). This is because it is entangled with the more-abstract public sphere, and "offers a spatial location for conflict, cross-class associations and social change" (Low 2017, p. 156). In these everyday contestations of ordered life, working holidaymakers attempt to map out unfamiliar settings that do not always consider the needs of a transient population. While the systemic impacts of temporary migration mean that working holidaymakers are unable to participate in the governance of everyday life (Chapter 4), they are capable of transforming these settings into something that better meets their needs. These placemaking processes are also not restricted to domestic life, as

Chapter 6 contends. Working holidaymakers also have unique approaches to mobilising a rigid visa program and the knowledge required to make these systems work for them.

Chapter 6: Working the system

Working holidaymakers' everyday lives involve a rapid accumulation of knowledge, about the region, labour, and relationships. In one sense, the entirety of this study revolves around the ways different types of skills are gathered and utilised; it is inclusive of the strategies used to mitigate various challenges as they emerge, from navigating temporary migration roles to seeking out and undertaking work. For working holidaymakers, the accumulation of skills relating to seasonal agricultural labour is central to their ability to stay in the Lockyer Valley and other areas of employment in Australia. An ability to effectively perform short-term agricultural labour is heavily contingent on the acquisition of skills specific to each individual place of work. This chapter places agricultural labour practices in context and dissects the notion of working holidaymakers as an economic resource. The ways working holidaymakers are both renumerated for their labour and the costs they pay to perform this work reveal a complex interrelationship between skill and agency. It is an underlying expectation of the temporary labour migration system that workers are able-bodied and have the capacity to work, however, the way working holidaymakers choose to undertake this work is varied.

The bulk of observations and analyses outlined in this chapter are taken from time spent at two family-owned farms in the Lockyer Valley. The first is a stonefruit orchard on the outskirts of Gatton. It is situated on a block of cleared eucalyptus scrubland, with topography varying between flat ground and sloping hills. It is owned by my former neighbour, Bruce (see Chapter 3, p. 44). Through this connection, I was able to observe everyday operations including several working holidaymakers, who harvested and sorted persimmons and figs. The second family-owned farm produces extensive varieties of leafy green vegetables for commercial sale through major national supermarket chains. It is located approximately 15 kilometres outside of Gatton, close to the highway leading towards Brisbane. Both farms hire working holidaymakers throughout the year, and my observations and interviews of working holidaymakers at these sites demonstrates how they accumulate skills and knowledge.

The working body

The enactment of seasonal agricultural labour is experienced through the body. Sensory engagement and aesthetic judgements permeate all aspects of this work, including the way working holidaymakers develop proficiency in their newfound roles. To interrogate what seasonal agricultural labour looks and feels like to undertake as part of working holidaymakers' broader relationship with the regional space, it is necessary to also explore the systematic nature of the harvesting and sorting process.

Rhythmic labours

The rhythmic patterns of labour were particularly noticeable at the family-owned stonefruit orchard. During this time, a crew mostly comprised of working holidaymakers picked the last of a dwindling fig harvest while also harvesting and sorting a sizable persimmon crop. Persimmons are a round, orange-coloured fruit that can be eaten raw, or used in cooking. Some astringent varieties only become sweet and edible when their texture is especially soft and the flesh inside has become jelly-like. If eaten beforehand, the taste will be bitter and unpleasant. Most varieties that are sold commercially, including those grown at the family-owned orchard, have a much longer shelf-life and are able to be eaten when still crisp. I observed the persimmon harvest being sorted and packed in an airplane-hangar sized shed (see Figure 6 below for a depiction of the layout).

Each day, five or six people, including me, moved about the sorting and packing shed. The packing shed supervisor (Kylie, a diminutive but assertive woman in her mid-thirties) oversaw the entire operation, including three working holidaymakers. The farmer's seventy-year-old mother (referred to by all as 'Mother') assisted on occasion, to cut down on labour costs. I spent the majority of the time alongside the three working holidaymakers: a French couple, Cecile and Armand, and Autumn, a South Korean woman. Cecile and Armand were in the process of completing their 88 days' worth of employment for a second-year Working Holiday visa application, while Autumn was due to return home after a two-year stay the following week and planned to work until she left. They had all been employed by the farm for at least a

month, sorting and packing the persimmon harvest that continued to roll into the shed in giant plastic trays.

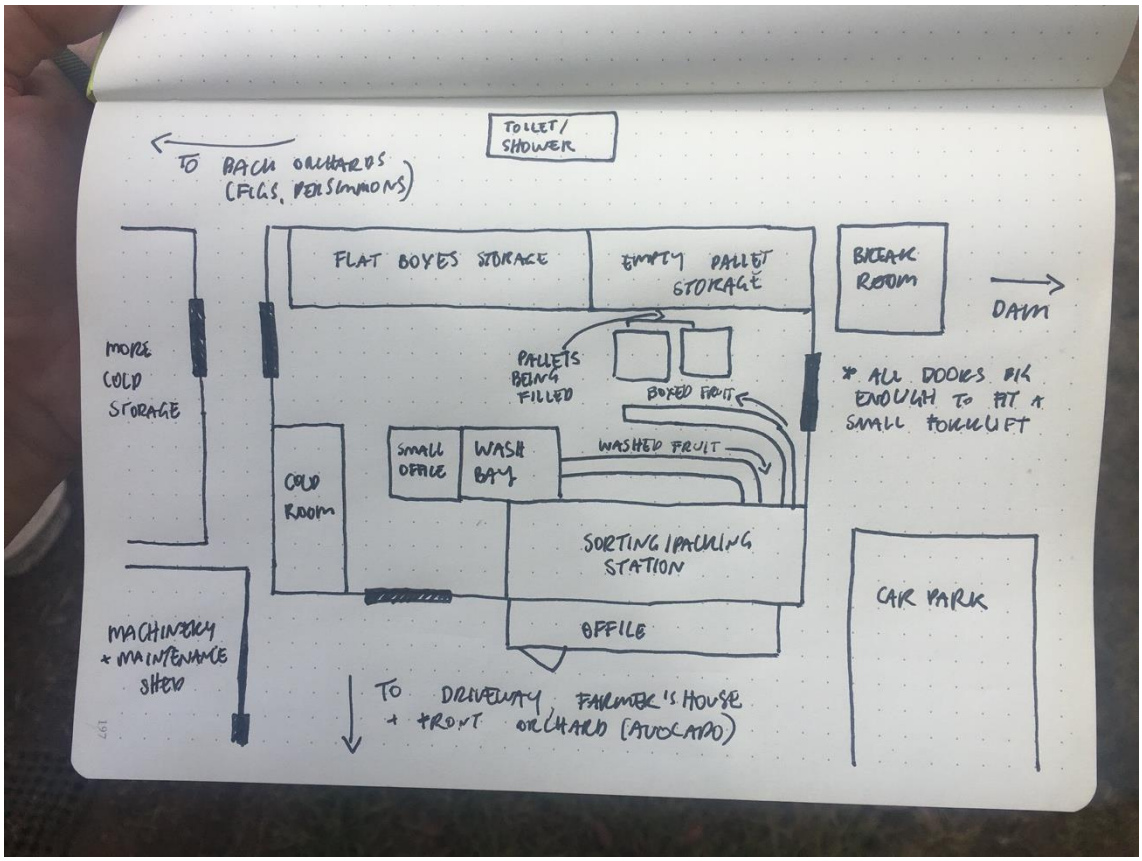


Figure 6: Map of the orchard packing and sorting shed taken from fieldnotes.

At the orchard, harvesting and sorting produce operates as a highly controlled production line. The freshly-picked persimmons are first brought to the packing shed in large plastic crates by the ‘outside crew’, who are almost always working holidaymakers. The fruit is then stored inside a large refrigeration room, adjacent to the packing shed. From these stacked crates, produce moves from one stage of processing to the next via a combination of automated machinery and human labour. Prior to being sorted, the persimmons are transferred from the crates to an industrial produce washing bay to be cleaned of any insects or pesticides. The washing bay is comprised of a deep, metal tub that sits a metre off the ground. The tub is approximately three metres long, a metre wide, and a metre deep. Water is drained and refilled at the end of the tub closest to the refrigeration room, while a rolling conveyer belt is connected to the other end. Although much of the washing process is automated, it still requires human intervention. The area is overseen by a single

operator, in this case working holidaymaker Armand, who controls the machinery and folds cardboard boxes when fruit is not being washed. When the tub is completely filled with water, the persimmons float on the surface and gently tumble around, so as not to damage the fruit. This lasts for several minutes and runs according to a timer. After it stops, the fruit is automatically pushed towards the connected conveyor belt by a control arm. Water drips off the fruit and onto the concrete flooring below, but the operator stands on a raised platform, and can stay dry.

After being washed, a loud rattle of machinery signals that persimmons will soon roll towards the packing station, where workers stand to sort, grade, and pack fruit into cardboard trays. The packing station comprises a row of three constantly rotating waist-height metal bins in a row, above which a series of shelves holding empty trays are waiting to be filled with fruit. One worker stands in front of each bin on rubber anti-fatigue mats, waiting for fruit to pass in front of them for sorting. When new working holidaymakers first begin sorting and packing fruit at the orchard, they are given a brief overview of how to do this by the packing shed supervisor. The temporal disruptions of the Working Holiday visa (see Chapter 4) also impact their employers, who employ staff at irregular intervals. As some leave, others arrive, making opportunities for group training challenging for managerial staff. Instead, working holidaymakers are taught the intricacies of the role *in situ*, in a fast-paced environment.

The ability to distinguish quality is usually the first knowledge new employees need to learn. Sight is the initial method of assessment. Anything that is too marked or too brightly orange, and would subsequently deteriorate by the time it is sold, is placed into a separate crate or bucket. Sorting means initially determining whether the fruit is suitable for commercial sale, needs to be sold at a discounted rate at local markets, or discarded entirely. Fruit with marks that are ‘bigger than a fingernail, or just not pretty’, according to the packing shed supervisor, are placed in ‘seconds’ boxes. These marks might be indicative of minor bruising or cosmetic spotting that has no effect on taste, just aesthetics. Supermarket chain distribution centres will return pallets of fruit if even a few pieces are not seen as suitable for commercial sale – in grocery stores, harsh fluorescent lighting reveals even the smallest mark. Skilful

workers move very quickly and appear to grab fruit without looking at it. Because most workers do not look down at the fruit as they grab it, it is not uncommon for them to occasionally grab a persimmon from the bin with their left hand, only to have it squish, jelly-like between their fingers, even though the fruit itself seems round and solid on the outside.

This occurrence is quickly followed by the audible 'splat!' of an overripe fruit slamming into a plastic bucket on the floor, into a lumpy orange-coloured soup. Here, levels of palatability are readily articulated by the fruit itself when it meets a worker's hands. It is for this reason that agricultural production necessitates human labour – these perceptible differences between overripe and ripe fruit require sensory judgement. The physical sensitivities of the body become a tool for determining whether produce is able to be consumed (Butler 2018, p. 82). Despite these noticeable visceral reactions to the occasional soft and slimy fruit between their fingers, workers' rhythms are not significantly disrupted. The systematic and refined series of movements continues smoothly.

Each piece of fruit needs to be graded for quality and sorted correctly according to their size, for the entire operation to be successful. For this to occur, workers first 'test' the quality with a quick glance and grade the size of each persimmon with their hands, once the fruit begins to gently roll into the metal bins in front of them. The size determines the ultimate wholesale value of the produce; larger-sized fruit is worth more, while smaller pieces are much cheaper. Differently-sized fruit is referred to as twelves, fourteens, sixteens, eighteens, and twenties; this naming system indicates the number of persimmons that can fit into the plastic box inserts, according to size; twelves are the largest, fourteens are slightly smaller, and so on (see Figure 7). Size fourteen and sixteen are the most common. Two cardboard trays sit on a shelf above the rotating metal bins, directly in front of each worker. These trays are assigned to a particular size of fruit and contain corresponding plastic inserts. If a worker picks up a piece of fruit from the metal bin at their waist and they decide it is either too small, or too large for the boxes in front of them, they place it in a bin either to their left or right. Their co-worker then sorts the fruit further. Through this system, the right-most worker should end up with the largest pieces of

fruit, while the worker at the left sorts the smallest. At the end of this process, no pieces of fruit remain in the metal bins.

There is a need for control and timeliness as part of these repetitive actions. All working holidaymakers need to size fruit consistently – if large produce is placed into a smaller tray, this equates to 'giving it away' and risks the farm ultimately losing money. If small fruit is placed in oversized plastic inserts, this over-values the produce and risks consumer and wholesaler dissatisfaction. While the farmer and packing shed supervisor will return boxes for re-sorting if they are not appropriately graded, this is an inconvenience. Having to pause the fast-paced sorting and packing assembly line is an inconvenient disruption to everyday operations and can impact labour costs. At the height of the season in particular, the nearby refrigerated storage room is normally completely full of plastic crates of persimmons, waiting to be sorted and sent away within days.

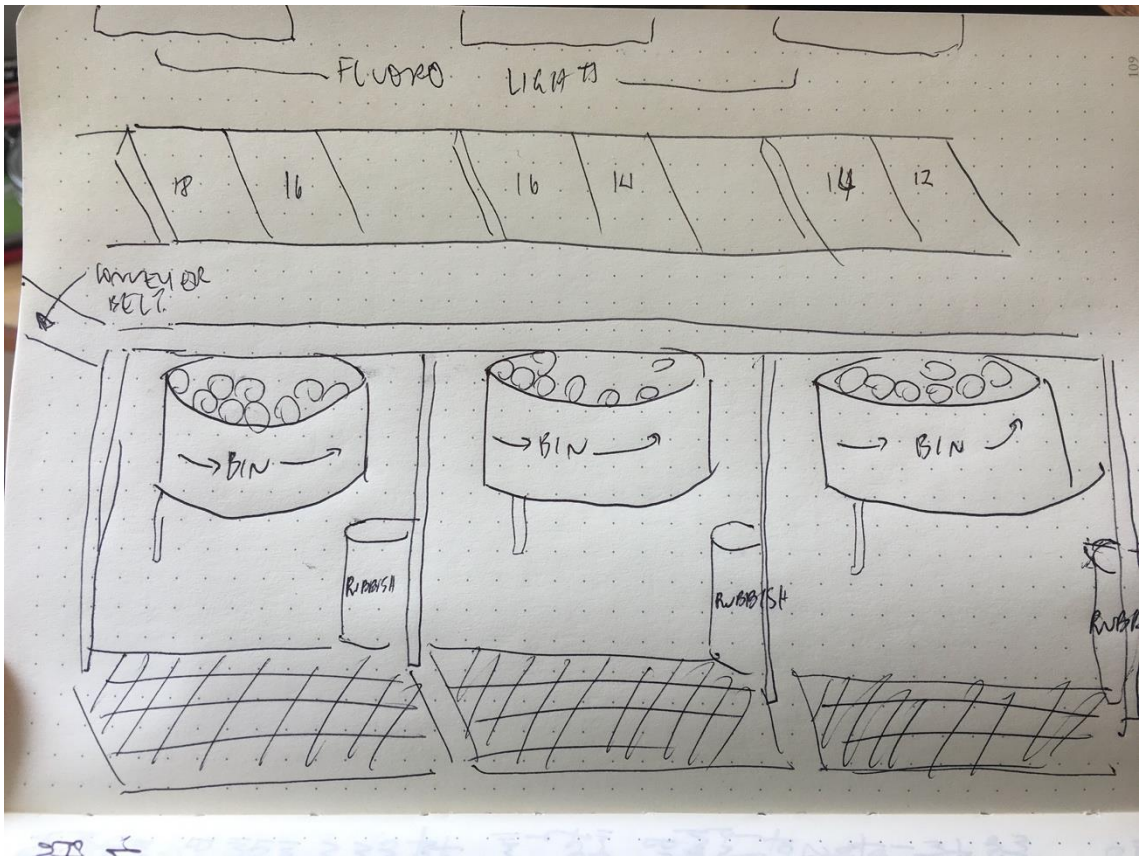


Figure 7: Sketch taken from fieldnotes of the persimmon-sorting setup.

On one particular day, Kylie, the packing shed supervisor returned several packed trays to the sorting bins, because they were too big for the plastic inserts. She recommended the 'twist and crunch' method, where persimmons are gently twisted into the plastic insert until an audible 'crunch' can be heard. Occasionally a tray was returned to be sorted a second time, but after workers were given several reminders of how to sort the persimmons correctly, less fruit was returned for re-sorting than before. Although permanent farm employees, including the farmer and packing shed supervisor do offer ongoing guidance regarding how to accurately sort and pack fruit, it is expected that working holidaymakers should not need additional clarification or correction after a few days of employment. The packing shed supervisor often vented to me about the working holidaymakers' mistakes. I had in fact made the exact same errors in judgement while learning the intricacies of sorting (only days earlier), and occasionally continued to do so. I suspect that my mistakes were met with much more patience, given my participatory role was determined by research interests, rather than economic need. I noted that less criticism was meted out to me by the supervisor, indicating that my 'insider' status (see Chapter 3) afforded certain symbolic capital. Still, having only begun sorting fruit that week and just beginning to comprehend the process, I empathised with the working holidaymakers' struggles and the limited patience afforded to their own process of skill development.

As assigning quality to produce is a matter of aesthetic judgement, consensus is problematic to achieve (Spackman & Lahne 2019, p. 144). The subjective, individual process of understanding and applying markers of quality, including the skills that are part of sorting persimmons, are impacted by several variables. Although coherent systems – such as size as a regulated marker of sorting – make the grading process more consistent, working holidaymakers are often hired at irregular intervals, making proficiency an uneven, staggered process. It is also worth reiterating that new working holidaymakers are unlikely to have undertaken agricultural employment before and even those who may have already completed some days may not have encountered specific types of produce.

Grading fruit by size was an essential skill that was particularly difficult for both the farmer and packing shed supervisor to impart to working holidaymakers and challenging for most new employees to understand quickly. This type of information can be categorised as a form of tacit knowledge – information that is known, but not necessarily able to be taught in convenient ways (Elyachar 2012, p. 83). Tsoukas (2011) defines tacit knowledge as information that is understood through informal mechanisms; it resists easy, explicable definition and is difficult to pass on. The process of sorting fruit is one such skill, where complex hand movements and aesthetic judgement is more easily able to be felt and practiced, rather than explained.

Immersion in the agriculture industry via personal economic and emotional investment is inevitable between farmers, whose livelihoods are tied to productivity. In this instance, farmers and other permanent staff are likely to be more familiar with the specificities of harvesting. At the family-owned orchard, the farmer, packing shed supervisor, and other members of his family were considerably more skilled at accurately sorting fruit, having practiced such methods year after year. Their skills had become second-nature through repetitive action. In comparison, working holidaymakers who are only employed for a few short months do not always have the time to develop the same level of knowledge and competency. It can be difficult to recognise almost imperceptible size differences between classes of persimmons. Nevertheless, all employees are expected to learn these actions and become competent almost immediately after starting work in the packing shed – hence the term ‘unskilled’. Developing a skill means initial uncertainty, while recognising that all practitioners have the ability to become skilled (Ingold 2018, p. 161). The less-experienced workers at the family-owned orchard inevitably had less familiarity with the range of ways conditions can imperceptibly shift during the sorting process. Regardless of initial ability, over time, working holidaymakers’ clunky and disjointed movements transcend into something more reminiscent of a whirlwind.

Embodied knowledge

Watching the beginnings of a harvesting production chain reveals a process in which the boundaries between workers’ bodies and produce are slowly blurred, becoming indistinguishable from one another. It is critical to consider the role of the body

when discussing labour, as Ahmed (2014, p. 106) argues. This is particularly relevant to working holidaymakers and seasonal agricultural labour, where workers' identity eventually becomes indivisible from the self and their individual bodily capacity for labour. Here, I explore how the body comes to know a skill, seeking to identify whether working holidaymakers' movements change when they become familiar with the tasks at hand.

The practice of sorting persimmons requires an acute awareness of other workers, in addition to swift, learned hand movements and manual ambidexterity. Within a narrow corridor inside the packing shed, three people work in unison. To begin sorting, each worker picks up a piece of fruit from the rotating metal bin in front of them, with their left hand. They then shift the persimmon to their right hand and pick up a second piece of fruit with their left hand, while simultaneously sorting the piece of fruit in their right hand, placing it in the appropriate tray or placing it in a neighbour's bin. Altogether, this movement takes seconds, and must be learned and successfully implemented quickly in order to maximise labour efficiency. All workers are also cognisant of their neighbours taking up space beside them**.** When the working holidaymakers standing at the rotating bins are not in their designated places – stacking cardboard boxes nearby, reaching for new trays or plastic inserts – they whirl around each other, bodies avoiding collision.

There is a dullness in the overall repetition, to be sure, but something else also emerges. There is something satisfying about bearing witness to these fast-paced labours, which can be aesthetically pleasing, rhythmic, and revelatory (Montero 2006, p. 233; Edensor 2010, p. 69). There is a similar pleasure that can be found in watching the sorting process, with its repetitive actions. Foundational knowledges associated with any skill (which in relation to sorting persimmons means control, timeliness, and consistent aesthetic judgement) become routine and habitual, as accumulated knowledge shifts from being 'cognitive to corporeal' (O'Connor 2005). As O'Connor (2005, p. 189) writes, "our awareness of a practice shifts into focal awareness, so too does that practice take on a *lived* character, a graceful extended movement, an arc of embodied techniques". In the packing shed, any initial awkwardness soon disappears, and is replaced by an almost mesmerising, fluid pattern of movement; the act of sorting and packing fruit looks more like a silent

trance. When developing a skill, repetition allows the body to become more visibly attuned to the 'feel' of things (Krzywoszynska 2016).

Tsing's (2015) lively description of matsutake mushroom sorting can easily be envisioned in relation to the practice of grading all other types of produce, including fruit and vegetables. She writes "and what an art sorting is! Sorting is an eye-catching, rapid-fire dance of the arms with the legs held still" (2015, p. 81). The mushroom sorters she refers to are independent buyers, who, like persimmon sorters, use these movements to exercise aesthetic judgement, 'feeling' fungi to decide its commercial value. Working holidaymakers' rapid hand movements are eventually similarly precise and impressive to witness. When I observed newly-hired working holidaymakers begin sorting fruit at the packing shed, their movements were always clunky, disjointed, awkward and slow. Over time – and for some, this shift can occur after only a few days of work – their hand movements became more flowing. This transition from new employee to proficient worker is marked by changing bodily styles, and more intentional movements.

It is easy to sentimentalise this sort of manual labour, especially when skilful movements at high speed can be so mesmerising. Wacquant's (2014) accounts of boxing take such a path, in their tendency to romanticise physical challenges without deeper interrogation of underlying structure. Although it is common practice to distinguish between the physical and mindful body via social processes, behaviours and performances, as Douglas (2004, p. 72) does, the embodied self can be equally viewed as holistic, indivisible entity. Although mesmerising to watch, hands alone do not do the work of picking and sorting produce. Ingold (2018, p. 159) warns of not reducing the accumulation of specific knowledges to the fact of simply having a body and moving throughout the world:

> *The assumption here is that skill is all about having a feel for things, which is nevertheless impossible to put into words. It has become almost a cliché in the social sciences to say of such feeling that it is embodied, as though it belonged to the hand rather than the mind.*

Embodiment is not enough to explain the process of developing proficiency in the packing shed, and the quick transition from 'new employee' to 'capable worker' – these specific labours need to be evaluated in context. To give too much credit to somatosensory processes in relation to becoming knowledgeable, limits the significance of the skilfulness hidden in menial tasks and obscures the challenges faced by various agricultural workers. Through Tsing's mushroom buyers, for example, it becomes possible to see how context influences the skilfulness of embodied labour. The mushroom buyers' dance-like sorting is derived from decades of experience in some cases, described as "a public performance of prowess" that differentiates them from competitors (Tsing 2015, p. 81). Working holidaymakers' labour is distinct, because their skill development is reflective of the system in which they are part of. All forms of agricultural work are skilled, although in different forms; this information is a truthful reality for anyone who has spent time on farms.

The process of knowledge transference between working holidaymakers and their employers can reveal the powerful disparities between workers and the overarching systems under which their employment is made possible. The organising structures of temporary migration and seasonal agricultural labour (Chapter 4), implicitly dictate that an ability to quickly develop proficiency is expected of all working holidaymakers. For casual, waged labourers especially, ability determines the amount of work offered to each individual – this relationship is amplified when a need for control and timeliness directly feed into the economic interests of a farm. As such, working holidaymakers need to develop proficiency over a period of days, rather than years. Their movements are less about the kind of performance Tsing idealises, but more about the system that organises and controls their labour.

While working holidaymakers' skills do not become a performance as such, other shifts in behaviour emerge after they become more closely attuned to the intricacies of the sorting process. Reconfigurations of the body and movement is variable. Some working holidaymakers began their employment physically fit, while others were not. Those who were not described the initial debilitating muscle soreness felt after beginning work at the orchard, then over time, their newfound strength. Others felt so comfortable in their ability to complete the work, that they found space to inject personality and humour into their shifts. Agricultural labour is not only embedded

into the conditions of temporary visa schemes and structures everyday patterns of movement and uses of space, but it alters workers' physiology (Holmes 2007). When she was first employed, Cecile was hesitant in her movements, and spoke very little to other people in the packing shed. After a few weeks of employment, Cecile began to engage more with her fellow working holidaymakers, including me. Instead of falling behind in her work and continuing to sort persimmons while others took momentary breaks, Cecile joined us in conversation, sharing details about life in France and future Australian travel plans. She was able to do so because the movements required for sorting became familiar and less concentration was required. Meanwhile, Kylie, the packing shed supervisor, also shared with me that the previous season they had hired a Japanese working holidaymaker who came to be affectionately known as 'Speedy', because he was particularly efficient. Not only did Speedy undertake his work with the required precision and control, but he also found time to do silly dances in quiet moments, endearing himself to managerial staff.

Linking back to previous discussions on embodied knowledge (see Chapter 2), the body is used to mediate between social worlds. The body is multiple and simultaneous; it is the way that people feel and comprehend their surroundings (Merleau-Ponty 2002, p. 206). This sensory perception can account for why proficiency comes to be read through the body – witnessing how working holidaymakers change their behaviours and become more social as they eventually feel more comfortable with the work.

The costs of labour

Participation in the agricultural supply chain as a casual worker or employer involves significant costs. The most notable of these costs includes the cost of labour itself and method of remuneration, and the other associated costs workers' pay to undertake this labour. In the Australian contexts, regulatory bodies are in place to ensure working holidaymakers are adequately renumerated for their contributions, or that they have access to pathways for remit should these standards be violated. However, working holidaymakers can have substantially divergent notions of the value of work, which can result in tensions between workers and employers.

Workers being paid

There is substantial variation within the field of casual agricultural labour as to how workers are compensated for their labour. There are two distinct forms of remuneration for workers' labour in the Australian agricultural context – through piecework and hourly rates (Campbell 2019, p. 71). Even within the geographical confines of the Lockyer Valley, there is no consistent or preferred type of payment across all farming operations, and both are used. Piecework is dependent on individual efficacy, while hourly rates are standardised. There are often specific reasons for adopting one method or the other, and this choice is at an employers' discretion. Piecework incentivises skilfulness, and hourly rates offer equitable payment despite variations in ability. However, the macro-level of farm labour reveals that pieceworkers' skill levels are highly variable, and likewise necessitates questions about what incentives are there for workers to develop their abilities when paid by the hour.

In reality, the assumption that piecework wages equate to the minimum award rate directly conflicts with the *Horticulture Award 2010* (Fair Work Commission 2020), which covers workplace agreements and rates of pay in the Australian agricultural sector (Underhill & Rimmer 2017, p. 39). Notably, Clause 16.9 of the Award states that "nothing in this award guarantees an employee on a piecework rate will earn at least the minimum ordinary time weekly or hourly wage in this award for the type of employment and the classification level of the employee, as the employee's earnings are contingent on their productivity" (Fair Work Commission 2020, p. 21). Issues can also arise in attempting to develop a consistent definition of proficiency that can be applied across all farming operations. Piecework refers to a wage total that is dependent on the quantity of produce picked by a specific person. This system claims that an 'average competent worker' can earn at least an equivalent of the minimum hourly wage (Fair Work Commission 2020). Those who are particularly efficient are capable of earning substantial amounts of money each week (Underhill & Rimmer 2015, p. 29). Generally piecework is used to incentivise workers, by offering the opportunity to earn more money, if they are a skilful worker, where greater amounts of produce harvested equates to larger take-home wages.

At a small farm located near the highway leading towards Gatton, Tim (a third-generation farmer) and his family employ several casual staff per year to assist in producing various types of leafy green vegetables for commercial sale. These casual staff are employed to fulfil multiple roles at the farm, including harvesting, weeding fields, sorting produce, and planting new crops. In their payment system, harvesting is paid by piece, while other farm duties are paid per hour. New employees, or those who are inexperienced and unable to quickly adjust to the requirements of such labour risk earning a reduced wage, taking home earnings that amount to less than the average award rate. Shin (introduced in Chapter 4, p. 80), had recently acquired a position at Tim's farm after hours were reduced at his previous job. Shin was happy to now be working alongside his friend and housemate Seojun (a South Korean holidaymaker around the same age), but was dismayed at the prospect of having to acquaint himself with a new style of harvesting produce:

> *I got another job at Seojun's farm, straight away…but it's contract piecework, so I have to work faster, faster, faster! Now I'm getting less than the hourly rate. I already did this type of work somewhere else, picking parsley and coriander, but I think the style of picking is different at my new job.*

Shin planned on staying in Gatton for the following six months and would have the opportunity to develop his skills and subsequently also increase his earnings. However, while he was learning the precise actions required at Tim's farm and was not yet familiar enough with the harvesting process to easily work at a faster pace, the issue was a source of personal irritation. In comparison, Kevin and Sunny, who had worked at Tim's farm for much longer took home weekly average wages that considerably outstripped many of their co-workers. The couple were used as exemplars, because of their ability to cut and stack produce quickly. However, these workers were newly-settled migrants who had been employed by the farm for over a year; their co-workers were predominantly working holidaymakers who had been employed for only a few months. These higher-earning employees had developed a reputation as productive and reliable staff, which in turn enabled some of their other family members, and the working holidaymakers they sublet rooms to also secure work with Tim. As Underhill et al. (2018, p. 682) note, "individual farmers often

overestimate what the 'average competent worker' can do". Competency is varied across workers, and further to this point, is contingent on individual motivations and circumstances.

While a combination of skill and piecework pay could conceivably permit workers to become indispensable, the higher wages and the mutually beneficial relationship Kevin and Sunny enjoyed at the farm were contingent on their extended period of skill development. Working holidaymakers are legally unable to work for a single employer for more than six months during their first, second, or third-year Working Holiday visa (Department of Home Affairs 2019b). As discussed in previous chapters, some working holidaymakers only aspire to acquire the requisite number of days for an additional visa application, before moving elsewhere. Ultimately, developing skills to the extent that can produce higher piecework wages is difficult to achieve, however, working holidaymakers whose patterns of mobility see them living in one location for most of their stay may find it a useful strategy.

Casual agricultural labour that is paid per hour, instead of per piece, is also covered by the *Horticulture Award 2010* (Fair Work Commission 2020), but the systems that govern this type of work are structured slightly differently. This award rate – and by extension, the national minimum wage – are subject to annual review. These reviews and any potential increases to rates of pay are influenced by variables such as national economic circumstances[10]. Most employers adhere to these regulations; some pay workers above the minimum hourly wage, but this is unusual. In public discourse, stories of incidents where employers undercut workers' wages are more familiar. The wage theft experienced by various types of migrant workers in Australia is interrogated in several nationwide studies (Berg & Farbenblum 2017; Clibborn & Wright 2018) and was the subject of a State Government enquiry in Queensland (Queensland Parliament 2018; Grace 2019).

[10] In July of 2020, the hourly award rate was subject to a 1.75 per cent increase. According to peak industry body AUSVEG, the COVID-19 global pandemic and directives for overseas visitors to return to their countries of origin resulted in a broadscale inability to guarantee working holidaymakers to take up seasonal agricultural labour. Additional concerns over a reported lack of local interest in this work necessitated the change (AUSVEG 2020).

In the Lockyer Valley, many working holidaymakers are well-versed in the correct minimum hourly wage rates, or at least become more familiar with them after a time. In part, this is because of informal public pedagogies shared on this topic between working holidaymakers, as they engage in knowledge sharing about available work, specific employers, and labour-hire contractors. However, this knowledge relating to wages and remuneration can also be attributed to a concerted effort on behalf of local council community engagement officers and unofficial advocates for working holidaymakers' rights. They regularly distribute this information at events specifically targeting working holidaymakers. It is not uncommon to see pamphlets containing information on the correct rates of pay or phone numbers for the national Fair Work Ombudsman (sometimes in various languages) being given out to attendees of the monthly council barbeque or weekly backpacker English class. Flyers can also be viewed on noticeboards at places such as the caravan park. Some become aware of wage theft in retrospect. Anna, the young Taiwanese working holidaymaker I met at the backpacker English class, became aware of being underpaid by a few cents per hour after receiving one such pamphlet. After attempting to contact an independent labour law hotline, Anna decided not to continue with the complaints process, after realising her name could not be kept completely anonymous. "I don't know if I will try to complain again, because the farm will know it was me", she said. This is reflective of many working holidaymakers' experiences, as other studies also suggest that workers are hesitant to voice complaints because they are concerned doing so will risk their job (Campbell et al. 2019).

Different degrees of uncertainty are present in all types of agricultural labour. A standardised hourly wage is an attractive prospect, because it offers working holidaymakers a greater sense of control. When the different styles of remuneration repeatedly came up in conversation during fieldwork, most (if not all) working holidaymakers expressed a preference for work paid per hour, instead of by piece. This method is perceived as being more equitable, because there is no differentiation between newer, less proficient workers and those who are more familiar with the intricacies of labour at a particular farm. For working holidaymakers seeking to acquire the days for an additional visa, the possibility of short-term employment with consistent wages is highly desirable. This method of payment is an incentive for

working holidaymakers who embrace mobility and offers stability for those who resist it. However, receiving hourly wages does not necessarily guarantee a greater investment in undertaking the repetitive actions of farmwork.

What workers pay

While working holidaymakers receive direct remuneration for their labour, they pay other costs. The laborious nature of seasonal agricultural work is an under-recognised toll that arises from a lack of understanding between employers and workers. Working holidaymakers and managerial staff have different levels of responsibility and commitment, and cognitive dissonance emerges over tensions between the competing notions of 'work' and 'holiday'.

In conversation, Tim shared his recurring difficulties in hiring new staff who would 'last the season'. At the small, family-owned farm, harvesting and sorting needs to be finalised as quickly as possible, and a sudden glut of produce requires additional staff. Tim's need for produce to be picked, sorted, and packed quickly in the midst of a busy season often came into conflict with working holidaymakers' own ideas about labour, and caused regular disruptions to everyday operations. I visited the farm in the middle of the season, when Tim had already gone through this process of losing workers, and now had what he viewed as a 'solid, committed crew' of casual staff.

On one particular day, a group of eight workers, mostly working holidaymakers, started harvesting spinach at the same spot in a large field. Shuffling forwards on their knees, with knives in hand, workers cut a bunch from the ground at its roots, tag each piece with their individualised number (to quantify the number of pieces harvested), and place it in a large plastic tray. Some workers shuffled forwards faster than others, and after half an hour had passed, a few, including Kevin and Sunny, were several metres ahead of their less-proficient co-workers. Some had adjusted to the repetitive, rhythmic pattern of cut-tag-place, while others fell behind. In the coming months, however, they would soon catch up. A few working holidaymakers each year chose to quit without notice, instead of waiting to become skilled, as Tim explained:

> *All new staff have to go through an induction before they're even allowed on the farm, that none of us managerial staff even have time to deliver to them. Last year, we had a few people finish their induction and do twenty minutes' work, then walk off without notice and not come back the next day.*

In circumstances such as this, at the height of the regional planting and harvesting calendar, the working holidaymakers who left the farm abruptly would easily find seasonal agricultural work elsewhere in the Lockyer Valley region. While Tim was equally able to find replacement staff to fill these unexpected vacancies, and quickly did so each year, the time taken to train and develop working holidaymakers caused considerable inconvenience. The time needed to train new staff in workplace health and safety measures, harvesting processes, and complete any requisite paperwork took Tim away from actual everyday farming operations. Normally, he would spend his days moving between his small demountable office, overseeing machinery maintenance, greeting truck drivers who would arrive to collect produce and deliver it to a national grocery distribution centre, and dictating when workers would move from one task to another. Hiring and training replacement workers detracted from other operational needs at the farm.

From a working holidaymakers' perspective, the tensions between worker and employer manifest differently. Ali, the twenty-year-old man from England (Chapter 4, p. 76-7), only planned to stay in Gatton for a short period of time, before travelling to the Northern Territory as a tourist. Ali had consistent employment picking broccoli, a job paid per hour. Regardless of the total amount of broccoli he cut during each shift, he earned the same hourly wage. Picking broccoli is a desirable position for working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley, as the harvesting season is long, crops are prolific, and farms hire a substantial number of casual workers. Ali gave the impression in conversation that he was regularly chastised by a frustrated farmer for a seemingly apathetic approach to the labour-intensive work. He explained the circumstances while at the weekly soup kitchen one Monday night, after he had spent an especially long day outside harvesting:

> *We're picking broccoli…and the farmer, well, I don't know what his problem is. He thinks I'm not interested and that my friend is too slow. Does he think that I'm here to further my broccoli cutting career?*

Broccoli picking requires working holidaymakers to bend down for hours at a time. In fact, harvesting most leafy green vegetables necessitates sitting down, and working holidaymakers shuffling slowly forwards on their shins up rows of clodded dirt, cutting each plant with a knife at a specific point near the roots. Ali was intent on staying in Australia and travelling, so being paid per hour suited his immediate needs. Developing his skills in quickly and effectively cutting broccoli was less of a priority than saving money and collecting days for a second-year visa. Much of this divergence between concepts of 'work' and 'holiday' stems from competing ideas about the value of labour. Daniel, the British backpacker from the caravan park (Chapter 4, p. 72), described how he envisioned the divide: "in real life, you can get a promotion or something, but not with this kind of work". "We do it for the fun and the people", he said. For working holidaymakers, seasonal agricultural work represents a strategy, whether that is to obtain an additional visa, to save money or fund future travel. Many of these temporary migrants may be more appropriately described as what Uriely (2001, pp. 3-4) refers to as 'working tourists', who solely take up work as a method of sustaining an extended stay elsewhere. To their employers, however, this work is part of their livelihoods. Although no working holidaymakers travel to the Lockyer Valley for leisure, the setting is envisioned as a temporary dwelling – even if that sense of temporariness extends across multiple years.

Work-related knowledge

Recognising and accumulating the skills necessary to conduct seasonal agricultural labour represents one form of work-related knowledge. Other types of knowledge emerge, as working holidaymakers attempt to exercise agency and counter the impact of rigid systems of casual labour and temporary migration. People come to embrace or resist seasonal agricultural labour, exercising some level of agency in a rigid working environment.

Work time, own time

Specific circumstances enable and encourage different types of people to effectively 'work the system' to make it suit them. As discussed above, these subtle machinations range from resistance towards developing a skill, and thus costing an employer higher wages or showing a lack of care and respect for the investment an employee has made into training. This can be read as an example of de Certeau's (1984, p. 25) concept of '*la perruque'*, or "a worker's own work disguised as work for his employer". In this context, the concept can be utilised to account for the various ways by which working holidaymakers reorient systems of labour and the manual work of picking, sorting, and harvesting towards their own aims. Like many European working holidaymakers, Cecile and Armand were, by their own admission, more focused on acquiring the required number of days for a second-year visa and saving money than the work itself. Cecile described the couple's shared motivations for taking up work at the orchard:

> *I finished university but did not want to get a job right away. So I travelled here with Armand! So far, we've been to Tasmania, Victoria, up to North Queensland, and then to Gatton. I've saved about 4000 euros working here! It will help for when we visit cities, everything is more expensive and money goes quick.*

After a week spent in the packing shed, it became clear that the managers were not fond of the young couple, whom they saw as inefficient. This dislike was attributed to stereotypes about their country of origin, used as a convenient explanation for their slow pace of skill development. "I swore we'd never hire French people again", the farmer (Bruce) said, shaking his head. He described Cecile and Armand as being 'a lot slower than they should be'. However, his response to the French couple was only partially related to their speed at work. Years earlier, the orchard had hired another French couple, who reportedly took extended lunch breaks and failed to demonstrate that they listened to any workplace requests. Bruce explained how "we usually only hire people like Autumn now – Taiwanese, Japanese. We have a lady in town who organises workers for us, we tell her to send her best English speakers". This illustrates several pervasive cultural stereotypes, working holidaymakers'

individual reasonings for embracing or resisting seasonal agricultural labour are not able to be cleanly divided by ethnicity.

The idea that particular nationalities are assumed to be physically better at certain tasks can be linked to the wider politics of representation and viewed as an attempt to produce workers who are more responsive and nonthreatening (Mannon 2012, p. 98). These myths regarding the ability to conduct farm labour indirectly contribute to the further marginalisation of certain groups of people. While working holidaymakers' employers view them through these pervasive stereotypes, whether an individual is a productive worker or not can be attributed to other factors. Working holidaymakers find other types of value in their labour, aside from monetary remuneration. The various benefits workers glean from their employment can be formally recognised or entirely unofficial (Mars 2019). Their apparent inability to develop a skill did not threaten their employment status, given the difficulties involved in training replacement staff in the middle of a harvesting season. Autumn planned to continue working in the packing shed until her visa expiration date forced a return home. She received a fond farewell from Bruce at the conclusion of her final shift for her effort, but in truth, her motivation was not due to any kind of dedication to the farm. All three working holidaymakers were more interested in saving money, and taking up work in the packing shed permitted them to do that. Each of these working holidaymakers had their own aspirations and borrowed their employers' time to ensure their needs were met, reworking expectations of their labour.

Transformative labours

As they undertake work, working holidaymakers' identities are transformed in multiple ways. They become an interchangeable worker contributing to the agricultural supply chain, but simultaneously resist this role by seeking out connections with others in similar circumstances. Despite the various ways that harvesting involves negotiating skills, the lived heterogeneity of the broader working holidaymaker population becomes flattened. As they seek out and perform casual agricultural work, working holidaymakers become part of a bigger system, akin to a factory production line. Sharp (2000, p. 391) argues that waged labour creates the conditions of alienation between people and their bodies. Although that does not

mean an inherent reduction in personal power and agency, workers are regulated at such an intimate scale, down to their ability to sense and feel produce. Operating within the conditions of a temporary migration structures that benefit from workers' collective, rather than individual value (Dauvergne & Marsden 2014, p. 526), each person becomes reduced to their capacity for labour. However, this categorisation is not so straightforward, as working holidaymakers also make meaning of their labour and derive more from it than an existential reduction of being.

Although working holidaymakers are solely understood through an economic lens, they also become something else entirely – part of a fluid collective of people sharing similar experiences. At one point towards the end of my fieldwork, I invited participants at the weekly soup kitchen to contribute to a collaborative 'map' (Chapter 3, p. 50). Directing them towards a three metre-long length of butcher's paper taped to a wall, and coloured pens on a nearby table, they were asked to draw places in the Lockyer Valley that were important to them. By the end of the evening, it was filled with colour. A few working holidaymakers were still scribbling on it when I returned to end the exercise. It wasn't a map in a traditional sense, but filled with scribbles and small interconnected drawings of significant people, places, and objects (see Figure 8). Work-related imagery featured extensively on the length of paper. One scene depicted a backpacker harvesting produce, while a 'fat cat' farmer looked on. Other stick figure working holidaymakers were bent over, picking vegetables, or throwing produce into a plastic bin attached to farm machinery; a thick arrow and a label reading 'PAIN' was pointed towards them. One person had written 'SLAVE LABOUR, BUT WITH FRIENDS' nearby.

One soup kitchen attendee stood writing while I scanned the sheet so far, adding an enthusiastic 'YES!!' to the previous proclamation. Mike (who had written the 'yes') introduced himself to me as a 19-year-old Canadian who had been living and working in Gatton for the last two months. Speaking slowly with a laidback drawl, Mike had recently moved out of the local caravan park, to a house he shared with some fellow working holidaymaker friends in suburban Gatton. This move followed a troubling encounter with a labour-hire contractor, who had underpaid him. This bad experience still rankled, but Mike seemed keen to move on, and instead began talking candidly about the things he did outside of work; where he went, who he

spent time with, and what he enjoyed doing. “This is the good place, there’s toga parties there”, he explained to me, writing down an address, which was presumably his. Mike’s enthusiastic fervour about his newfound friendships and sense of place stuck with me long after I left the soup kitchen that night.

Figure 8: Extracts from mapping exercise.

The scene on the collaborative map featuring the farmer, machinery, workers, and caption appeared to be a succinct description of how some working holidaymakers envision seasonal agricultural labour. Perhaps this collaborative image was only intended to be an offhand scribble, but it is also revelatory. Part comedy, part serious reference to the arduousness of farmwork, the core of the joke is that working holidaymakers are a small, but critical element of a larger chain of production, but are indentured by a rigid visa scheme that renders their labour exploitative. Nevertheless, by recognising that system they operate inside is malleable, and that they work alongside friends, the circumstances become tolerable.

Chapter 7: Cultivating relationships

As working holidaymakers navigate uncertain economic environments and contend with unfamiliar places, the relationships they cultivate with other transient, seasonal workers become vital sources of support. Working holidaymakers' unique practices of forming and maintaining meaningful connections are inseparable from regional economies and temporary migration schemes. In regional areas, what constitutes a sense of community is readily conflated with pervasive rural narratives of stability and permanence. Many of these ideas are contained within the construction of the 'local', which loosely dictates conditions for belonging, and suggests that temporariness results in an inability to form genuine attachments to other people, places, or communities. Where notions of rootedness in place are imagined as being a social imperative for inclusion, groups of people such as recently-settled migrants, refugees, and transient workers are inherently distanced from dominant social systems (Malkki 1992, p. 31).

Working holidaymakers living in the Lockyer Valley tend to have different patterns of mobility, practices of domestic life and labour that set them apart from the notion of a coherent local community. These dichotomies of 'local' and 'newcomer' are further complicated by the diverse ways that working holidaymakers interpret or circumvent how their time is organised (including the definitive patterns of staying for three months and leaving or finding new employment every six months). As I argue in this chapter, working holidaymakers' practices of forming and maintaining meaningful relationships contrasts with pervasive assumptions that predetermine social life and conflate transience with a lack of meaningful attachment to people and places.

'Locals' and 'newcomers'

Within the broader rural imaginary, belonging and inclusion in regional areas are typically associated with the concept of localness. Although definitions of what it means to be a 'local' are subjective and varied, some underlying commonalities include living in a single location over many years or even multiple generations, in addition to participating in local economies, education systems, and public life (Lippard 1997). In regional Australia, occupying the land and claiming legitimate

ownership is also tied to the ongoing impact of colonial histories, making a dominant and normative whiteness difficult to separate from notions of spatial belonging (Anderson & Taylor 2005, p. 461). Several long-term residents (who had all moved to the Lockyer Valley decades earlier) affirmed the weight still given to these characteristics, sharing slightly different iterations of localness with me as meaning 'both sets of your grandparents are buried in the town cemetery…and you're white'.

However, people residing in the rural landscape are not easily confined to discrete categorisations of community. In addition, boundaries that distinguish between 'local' and 'newcomer', in conjunction with absolutist perceptions of mobility and sedentary life, are rarely reflective of reality (Stead & Dominy 2018, p. 6). Working holidaymakers are one such group of people who muddy and disrupt seemingly fixed notions of localness in regional settings. As working holidaymakers go about their everyday lives in the Lockyer Valley, the distinction between long-term resident and temporary migrant becomes increasingly blurred and unhelpful. A series of specific visual markers of identity code working holidaymakers as a discrete population of transient workers in the Lockyer Valley, rather than 'local' residents. Markers of identity are reified and resisted in complex ways, helping working holidaymakers to establish social relationships and maintain boundaries.

How to spot a backpacker on the street

A series of visual and audible signifiers are used to identify working holidaymakers as a distinct population of transient migrants in the regional space. These classifications are largely predetermined by the conditions of the Working Holiday visa, which set out that applicants must be of a certain age group (18-30) and be residents of select countries (Reilly 2015, p. 481). Many of these aspects of identity represent assumptions that are held about working holidaymakers' domestic lives or patterns of mobility. During the course of working holidaymakers' everyday lives in work-based locations like the Lockyer Valley, these markers of identity are mobilised by different people for distinct purposes – often facilitating advocacy efforts or subtly determining eligibility for peer groups. In one sense, these assumptions about identity help unofficial local advocates or government workers direct their efforts. Iris, the backpacker English class teacher at the Baptist church, suggested that working holidaymakers in a state of transit could be identified in

public space if they had luggage with them. Iris had, in fact, recently pulled her car to the side of a road one evening, to assist two working holidaymakers who had arrived in Gatton hours earlier. The pair were inadvertently stranded without transport or accommodation. However, transience is unable to be explicitly read from someone not actively travelling, and this strategy can only assist in identifying working holidaymakers in the act of arriving or departing from the region.

Other regional advocates used similar observations to determine whether a previously unknown person occupying public space was a working holidaymaker. Emily (a woman in her late forties who has lived in the Lockyer Valley since childhood) was employed by the regional council. In her role, she worked closely with refugees and migrants, but in recent years, this had expanded to engage with working holidaymakers and promoting the monthly council barbeque. This work required Emily to be able to recognise working holidaymakers in Gatton, even without prior contact with specific individuals, in order to share relevant information. Over time, Emily had developed a mental list of attributes she saw as shared by working holidaymakers in Gatton:

> *There's three things that would help me to spot a backpacker on the street. First, by the way they dress; they tend to look like they've done a hard day's work outside and are tanned and dirty. Second, when they open their mouths, you can tell from the way they speak that they're not from here. Third, they're young.*

These generalisations ultimately suited Emily in her role, used to open lines of communication between the regional council and seasonal workers and disseminate relevant information. However, some of these markers, particularly style of dress, assume a person is already working and may result in a newcomer being overlooked.

Age is a particularly significant marker of identity in this instance, as it correlates with the well-documented outmigration of regional youth throughout Australia (Abbott-Chapman et al. 2014). Many young people move away from their hometowns, in search of further education and employment opportunities that are only available elsewhere (Alston 2004; Davies 2008). Information drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) affirms this pattern, showing that the median

population age in the Lockyer Valley is 39 years old. This lack of younger residents led Mark (Chapter 4, p. 72, one of the British working holidaymakers living at the caravan park, to exclaim "if I see a young person around Gatton, I usually just assumed they're a backpacker". Emily explained that some working holidaymakers were often confused by the lack of young people living in the area on a more permanent basis:

> *Kids on a working holiday always say to us [council staff], 'where are all of your young people?' All of our young people have moved away, or, if they didn't, they're definitely not doing a hard day's work outside. We don't have that age group here, and the generations that are left are very much…what's the phrase? They're stuck in their ways. For younger people, the world is a lot smaller, but until we have that next generation come up, attitudes will stay the same.*

Emily considered that a sense of rural parochialism can be largely attributed to an aging population, and that local politicking excludes working holidaymakers from being viewed as part of the regional community. The perceived fragmentation of a seemingly cohesive community can somewhat account for the reactionary solidification of categories such as 'us' and 'them'. However, as Tomaney (2013, p. 4) suggests, conflating rootedness with belonging risks maintaining the assumption that "local particularisms and attachments are inherently exclusionary". When placed in a broader socioeconomic context, a lack of social interaction between these groups of people becomes clearer. Excluding those who engage with working holidaymakers on a daily basis (such as council workers, advocates, employers, and accommodation providers), there is little incentive for seemingly disparate groups of people to cross paths. The act of being 'local' is a relational and subjective exercise (Appadurai 1996, p. 178). Accounting for this diminished likelihood of meaningful interaction, I suggest the 'attitudes' Emily referred to implies an underlying sense of prejudice and conservatism, rather than direct refusal to envelop working holidaymakers into local narratives.

These gestures of silence can nevertheless contribute to moments that lead some working holidaymakers to feel uncomfortable and alienated as they navigate public space. Working holidaymakers tend to encounter such marginalisation via specific markers of identity that set them apart from other people in the regional space. Paul (Chapter 4, p. 66), a working holidaymaker from Italy, had anticipated that he would be intermittently living in small, rural towns across Australia when planning his working holiday. While he was eager to sightsee, Paul viewed farm work in seemingly isolated communities as a necessity of his newfound life and short-term aspirations (saving money and acquiring days for a second-year Working Holiday visa). However, Paul did not anticipate being subjected to what he interpreted as subtle forms of social ostracism during his stay, explaining that "when I go shopping in the main street for groceries, people who live there look at me funny, like I am an alien or an immigrant…but I'm here to work". Irina, a young Italian woman in her early twenties, had similar experiences of feeling visible in public space. Perhaps embracing cultural stereotypes while overseas, Irina (Chapter 5, p. 100) lamented how she imagined her group of Italian friends were seen by other people while shopping for groceries:

> *Us Italians are very loud; we mostly speak Italian instead of English and use our hands to talk. We're not being rude, that's just how we talk to each other. It's how all Italians are. I think some people at the supermarket in Gatton are frustrated by this. They get annoyed.*

Although Irina experienced these reactions in the supermarket as a slight, the incident demonstrates how markers of identity that differentiate long-term residents from temporary migrants are multi-directional and purposeful. Instead of indicating exclusion for those who exist outside of specific parameters, boundaries draw similar people together, fulfilling an aspirational need for connection. As Bauman (2001, p. 3) suggests, community "stands in for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us – but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to repossess". Instead of signalling difference, for working holidaymakers these aspects of identity such as age, nationality, language, or accent indicate shared backgrounds or interests. In part, this can lead to a kind of fragmentation among backpacker cohorts. Many young travellers tend to perform cultural stereotypes as a way of

maintaining links to familiar places, combating homesickness, and establishing themselves in a new location (Clarke 2005). Asserting identity or connecting with similar people through shared interests can work to counter the feeling of an otherwise absent sense of 'home' (Li 2018, p. 323).

Communities contingent on shared interests

Working holidaymakers' own networks are a vibrant social space. Working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley are not a homogenous population, but a diverse group of people with varied cultural backgrounds, personal narratives, and intentions for their respective Working Holiday visas. As Gabriele (Chapter 1, p. 3) described to me, "when you come to Gatton, you can meet the whole world":

> *There are Swedish, Finnish, lots of Italians! There's even people from South America. I think Chile has an agreement with Australia now because I just met some of them. Then, there's people from Japan, and obviously, people from Taiwan…lots of Taiwanese people.*

However, there are limits to the depth of connection among this community of strangers, and working holidaymakers' relationships still tend to affirm specific parameters for belonging and exclusion (Saarinen 2017). Working holidaymakers mobilise the same markers of identity that distinguish them from local residents, to seek out relationships with people who have a similar background, shared interests, or patterns of mobility. Irina had previously noted that at places like the weekly soup kitchen and the monthly council barbeque, "there's the French table, the English table, the Irish table, the Italian table…maybe next week we will sit at a different table for dinner and meet some new people".

It is both unsurprising and illuminating that working holidaymakers from Asian countries did not factor into Irina's deconstruction of social life in Gatton. Her friend Emma added that "I've never been to any other place where everyone just sticks together like that". This is supported by the fact that fellow Italians comprised the bulk of Irina's social relationships in the area. She had travelled to Gatton with her friend Emma; the pair lived in a caravan together and had secured work at the same farm. They also tended to sit and eat with other Italians at both the weekly soup

kitchen and monthly barbeque. This creates a sense of atomisation within the broader backpacker identity. As working holidaymakers have a limited need to develop social relationships with more long-term residents, they place a higher value on cultivating networks with their peers, distinguishing themselves as a separate population to country folk.

The next week at the soup kitchen, Emma and Irina sat with a group of other Italians again. Even among a diverse, highly fluid population, meshed together through shared circumstances, belonging readily centres on real or imagined boundaries. While a community can be an open, vibrant, and inclusive space for some, it can also contain clearly delineated boundaries (Cohen 1985, p. 14; Douglas 2004, p. 54). Although working holidaymakers intermingle at a variety of social events, including the weekly soup kitchen and monthly council barbeque, subtle boundaries form as those with similar cultural backgrounds mostly socialise within exclusive social groups. Cohen (1985, p. 12) argues that boundaries are not necessarily designed to exclude; at times, the lived, everyday practice of defining communities indicates commonalities between those who seek to belong. Such markers can serve to strengthen the connections between transient individuals (Lobo 2015, 2016). Working holidaymakers' subtle practices of boundary-making and maintenance can be an incidental, or even aspirational act.

People-on-the-move

Working holidaymakers who embrace mobility tend to congregate in unofficially zoned housing, such as caravan parks. These working holidaymakers occupy these locations as a means to condense their stays in the regional space and meet the requirements of an additional Working Holiday visa as quickly as possible. Despite their explicitly individualistic motivations, relationships with similarly-minded working holidaymakers provides significant emotional and material support. The networks that form inside these spaces represent momentary sites of connection, but yet, an ethos of collective solidarity is sustained over time. The practice of sharing or donating material goods or food to other residents presents as one example of how a disparate group can maintain a coherent localised network inside the confines of the caravan park.

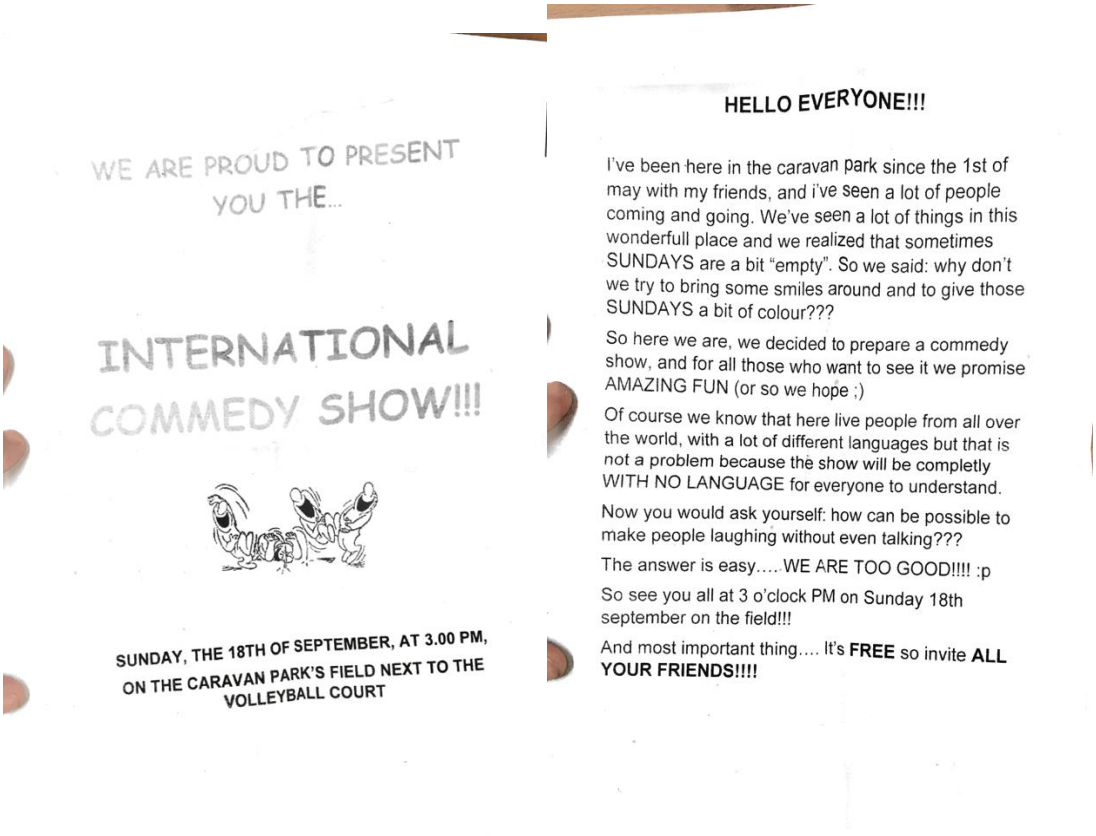
Enclaves as momentary sites of connection

The working caravan park on the outskirts of Gatton can be understood as an intensive convergence of transient people who share similar motivations, everyday routines, and material needs. As a location almost exclusively home to working holidaymakers, this setting aligns with Schmid's (2008, p. 105) description of an 'enclavic' space, where tourist sociality is unofficially confined to a limited geographical area, separate from local life. Most residents in the caravan park take up short-term accommodation with the intention of acquiring a second-year Working Holiday visa as quickly as possible. Although this can be difficult to achieve (see Chapter 4), whether successful or not working holidaymakers are always on the move and their departures are constant.

Relationships between working holidaymakers are condensed into fleeting interactions between contemporaneous residents. One such brief moment presented itself at the weekly soup kitchen, which is attended by large numbers of working holidaymakers who stay at the caravan park (as described in Chapter 5). On this particular evening in early September, I sat with a group of Italian working holidaymakers at a central table. An animated young man with short, cropped hair approached as he slowly made his way down the table speaking to others. He introduced himself as Gabriele and took up an empty chair next to me. I explained what I was doing. He asked whether I was a Boasian spy (making reference to anthropologist Franz Boas), so I assured him I was not. It was a memorable moment, filled with laughter – but not for that reason alone.

Gabriele was promoting his self-organised comedy show to be held at the caravan park sports fields the following Sunday. He had printed a sizable pile of flyers (see Figure 9) advertising the event to distribute at the soup kitchen. The comedy show was to be performed without language, in complete silence, so that everyone in attendance could understand it. After talking further, I learned that Gabriele had been a comedian for over ten years. He had lived in Gatton for the past four months, and wanted to inject some life into Sundays, a day that was a bit "empty and lonely" for people living at the caravan park. Not many holidaymakers worked on Sundays, but the town was quieter than usual, with few people to be seen wandering the streets or shops open. During announcements preceding the meal, Faith, an organiser, invited

Gabriele up to the lectern to say a few words about the upcoming event. When he finished speaking, he was met with loud cheers, whoops, and claps from everyone else in the hall, pausing to give out flyers from the thick stack to various people as he moved to sit down.



WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT YOU THE...

INTERNATIONAL COMMEDY SHOW!!!

SUNDAY, THE 18TH OF SEPTEMBER, AT 3.00 PM, ON THE CARAVAN PARK'S FIELD NEXT TO THE VOLLEYBALL COURT

HELLO EVERYONE!!!

I've been here in the caravan park since the 1st of may with my friends, and i've seen a lot of people coming and going. We've seen a lot of things in this wonderfull place and we realized that sometimes SUNDAYS are a bit "empty". So we said: why don't we try to bring some smiles around and to give those SUNDAYS a bit of colour???

So here we are, we decided to prepare a commedy show, and for all those who want to see it we promise AMAZING FUN (or so we hope ;)

Of course we know that here live people from all over the world, with a lot of different languages but that is not a problem because the show will be completly WITH NO LANGUAGE for everyone to understand.

Now you would ask yourself: how can be possible to make people laughing without even talking???

The answer is easy.... WE ARE TOO GOOD!!!! :p

So see you all at 3 o'clock PM on Sunday 18th september on the field!!!

And most important thing.... It's **FREE** so invite **ALL YOUR FRIENDS!!!!**

Figure 9: Flyers distributed by Gabriele for the comedy show.

While not all soup kitchen attendees live at the caravan park, a large number of working holidaymakers do call it their temporary home. Purposeful gatherings such as this one have parallels with interactions inside more residential caravan parks, where the people living there act as substitutes for absent or unstable familial relationships, creating new kinship networks (Newton 2015). The comedy show had to be rescheduled multiple times due to heavy rain, but the event was received warmly by other working holidaymakers who were seeking entertainment on a quiet day. Gabriele, however, was motivated by a desire to encourage interpersonal connection and a sense of community among the entire working holidaymaker cohort, rather than just between those who share similar backgrounds or speak the same language, as is usually the case. Transience does not supersede a sense of

community (Kabachnik 2012, p. 211). Instead, working holidaymakers' specific practices of mobility means that connections are formed with even greater rapidity.

Collective solidarity through revolving objects

The speed and intensity at which these relationships form can be partially attributed to an ethos of collective solidarity already present in zoned housing. The act of sharing goods, including household items, clothing, and food enables working holidaymakers to fulfil unmet material needs while they are resident in accommodation such as the Gatton caravan park. Redistribution takes place both face-to-face and anonymously, through donations, requests, and pooled resources. Specific mechanisms for sharing ensure that this practice is ongoing and is not dependent on the strength of individual relationships or the fluctuating membership of transient spaces.

In early September of 2016, I witnessed a young Irish couple prepare to check out of what had been their home for three months. Having successfully completed the requisite 88 days' worth of employment in seasonal agricultural labour, Róisín and Jamie vacated their caravan moments before and prepared to travel elsewhere in Australia. While waiting in the site manager's office, I learned that they had recently reached a significant milestone and both were eligible to apply for a second-year Working Holiday visa. With overstuffed suitcases and backpacks waiting in the corner of the small demountable building, they exchanged emotional goodbyes and hugs with the site managers; a middle-aged white Australian couple in the caravan park uniform. Turning to me, Róisín explained that they had formed strong connections with many of the other working holidaymakers at the caravan park during their visit:

> *It's a real community here. We ended up staying near a whole heap of other Irish people. If you don't have something you need, you can just say to someone 'oh, do you have any sugar?' and they might reply 'no, I don't have any sugar, but I do have some tea'. You help each other out.*

While their peers were not always able to respond in kind, food and sundries could be pooled to create an invisible functioning communal pantry. Utilitarian concepts of equivalency allow for such free exchange (Molm et al. 2007). This invisible communal pantry is regularly restocked (so to speak) by working holidaymakers who are given unsaleable produce by their employers. Produce that is below or above recommended size requirements, or has minor cosmetic bruising or spotting fails to meet commercial standards but is still edible. At times, these gifted fruit and vegetables are surplus to working holidaymakers' own needs.

Late one afternoon, I was seated at an undercover picnic table in the caravan park communal space. A transport van drove in through the entrance, and working holidaymakers began to file out. As they returned to their respective caravans, after a day of farm work, a young Irish man wearing a backpack approached me. He was carrying a cardboard box filled with oversized sweet potatoes; each was bigger than a human head. The tubers were too big to sell and exceeded the size limits set by the national grocery store chain the farm was contracted to. The man explained that he had been picking them all day. After the sorting process had been completed, he was instructed by his employer to take a box full back to the caravan park to give away, so they weren't wasted. He did so, and then continued to walk around the entire caravan park, approaching anyone he saw outdoors until the box was emptied. The following week, I found myself sitting at the same table, at the same time, when the same Irish working holidaymaker approached me carrying a box filled with sweet potatoes.

Concealed in this practice of sharing objects and items, is the recognition of mutual circumstances. Carrington and Marshall (2008, p. 118) suggest that sharing represents one method of strategic collective action, where people "seek to cooperate with each other because they lack the resources to pursue strategies individually". However, the act of sharing goods is not limited to familiar or proximal individuals. In fact, physical locations dedicated to anonymously donating unwanted items are one of the first things visitors notice when approaching the site manager's office, which is located at the entrance to the caravan park. Outside the office door under a small concreted verandah, sits a large, open plastic container. Two chalkboard signs on either sign of the container instruct residents to anonymously deposit unwanted

items, and in turn, take what they need or may find useful. ‘Free! Please help yourself!’ and ‘if you have extra vegetables, please put them in the free bin and share!’ they read with seeming enthusiasm (see Figure 10). Working holidaymakers staying at the caravan park would frequently leave various items in the plastic container, either when checking out, or during their residency. At various times, I noted a half-used packet of sugar, an empty glass jar and lid, and a pair of shoes waiting to be claimed. Fruit and vegetables were also placed in the container.

Figure 10: Giveaway items in a plastic container outside the caravan park office.

Material repayment has a somewhat diminished role in this localised practice of exchange – sharing or abandoning objects or food is not always done entirely altruistically. The donation systems offer numerous benefits for caravan park residents. Working holidaymakers in need of certain items have the opportunity to source them, free of charge, in the plastic bins, instead of spending money. Those who prefer to travel light have the opportunity to give things away that only have use in specific contexts – such as an agricultural workplace or a semi-permanent place to stay, like the caravan park – and reacquire them at subsequent rest stops. Finally,

working holidaymakers could pass on material goods they no longer needed or wanted, without holding onto items until a new claimant could be found.

These revolving objects have lives that extend far beyond the initial purchaser, to others who take up similar roles. The ways that they are shared represent a form of reciprocity that is without instantaneous or obvious forms of repayment. In all of the above circumstances, those who share food or objects do not 'take stock' and systematically account for everything they have passed on or wait for an immediate equivalent exchange. If working holidaymakers do choose to take something from the donation box, they also have no responsibility to replace it, and it is acceptable for a considerable amount of time to pass before doing so, if at all.
Working holidaymakers also offer unsolicited emotional support to their peers, in addition to material goods. Daniel, an English working holidaymaker who travelled with three other friends (see Chapter 4, p. 72), relayed an incident to me that he prefaced as 'that time we were cheering up the Irish':

> *There was this one afternoon, when the Irish blokes all got back from work. They were sitting outside their caravan, with their heads in their hands. It looked like they were upset from something that had happened at work that day. Seeing this, we [Daniel and his friends Mark, Lucas, and Julien] drove off to the bottle shop, then came back into the caravan park, with Irish music blaring out of the car speakers and throwing cans of Guinness at them! It was Saint Patrick's Day. We said 'here ya go, lads!' and that perked them right up. Then they told us, 'oi fellas, you don't know how much this means to us!'*

Julien interjected, as if to stress the enormity of the gesture, and explained that "the cartons of Guinness were fifty dollars each…and we ended up getting two of them". The four friends left the caravan park shortly afterwards to travel elsewhere. Although they would eventually return to Gatton, it did not coincide with the Irish working holidaymakers who were left unable to reciprocate. The lack of an immediate method of repayment for gift-giving can inspire feelings of indebtedness (Strathern 2012, p. 398). Even in a transient enclave like the caravan park, this sense of obligation towards other working holidaymakers is not left unfulfilled. The refusal

to let acts of material or emotional support be unreciprocated and instead be generous to others is inspired by the recognition of shared circumstances, and a need for collective solidarity.

This practice might be understood as an example of the delayed reciprocity suggested by Malinowski (2002, p. 143), where contemporaneous, equivalent exchange between giftees and recipients is substituted with deferred payment. However, enacting deferred payment necessitates an enduring relationship between stable groups or individuals. Highly mobile working holidaymakers who attempt to limit their time in the rural landscape are not equivalent. Because working holidaymakers are often unable to reciprocate acts of emotional or material support offered to them, instead of paying back, they pay forwards. It is common for young independent overseas travellers to pass down advice, or accumulated local knowledge (Murphy 2001, p. 65). I suggest that collective solidarity is inherited through similar means, as a result of working holidaymakers' sharing material goods, food, or emotional support.

This transference of reciprocity eventually becomes normalised and becomes a central characteristic of the working holidaymaker identity in the caravan park setting. Acts of delayed exchange give structure to an otherwise amorphous population, "in which free relationships between individuals become converted into norm-governed relationships between social personae" (Turner 1967, p. 132). Over time, the act of sharing resources acts as a symbol of performative belonging for those engaged in this space, governing social relationships. Because the need for collective solidarity is already embedded in these transient enclaves, close relationships are able to be established at a rapid rate. As Róisín suggested, the people who live in the caravan park become something more like a family than a collective of strangers. The manager of the caravan park explained that working holidaymakers in Gatton come to feel a great sense of attachment towards each other:

> *There's a saying we hear a lot around the place. It goes 'when you come to Gatton, you cry twice; once when you get here, and another time when you leave'.*

This suggests that working holidaymakers' stay at the caravan park can be marked by distinct stages of progression, influenced by social relationships. On arrival, they experience shock relating to the labour-intensive work (or difficulty in seeking it out) and relative disconnectedness of the rural space. A period of adjustment then follows, where relationships are formed among working holidaymakers who become part of transient networks. In the rural landscape, working holidaymakers adopt new strategies for belonging that can be a source of emotional and material support, as they are enveloped into micro-communities that do not appear to be significantly affected by mobility. All journeys, however, involve a departure. This sense of belonging and inclusion is so pervasive that leaving is eventually tempered with feelings of deep loss.

People who stay in place

People who resist the strictures of the Working Holiday visa by staying in the regional area for extended periods of time prioritise different modes of social and domestic life (Chapters 4 and 5). As many of these working holidaymakers are resident in the Lockyer Valley for a year or more, their social lives extend beyond their own enclaves and proliferate within the broader regional community. Through divergent ways of developing and sustaining relationships, they cultivate enduring networks.

Venturing out into the region

Working holidaymakers who resist mobility usually begin their life in Gatton in a sharehouse, with those of similar backgrounds. In turn, however, they are likely to expand their social lives beyond networks of their peers. Several working holidaymakers in this cohort were noted to have participated or contributed to various community events in the Lockyer Valley, including the annual multicultural festival. This popular event is intended to be representation of cultural diversity in the region, seeing hundreds of residents and visitors come together in a day-long celebration. The festival location shifts most years, but in 2016 it was held at a hall in the Gatton CBD, the same building as the monthly council backpacker barbeque; it is also in close proximity to the Seventh-Day Adventist and Baptist churches. It began early on a Saturday morning – the hall was already crowded, as people slowly

wandered through makeshift partitioned corridors lined with stalls selling food, drinks, and knickknacks. Non-government organisations, local museums, local multicultural organisations, and the regional council were all represented. A tightly-packed schedule featured cooking demonstrations and a variety of musical, dance, and poetry performances. Although a total of 18 countries were represented at the event, the festival is one of a limited number of opportunities for culturally-diverse residents to openly share their histories, practices, and values publicly.

As discussed in Chapter 2, such performances of multiculturalism often entail being given permission by governing bodies to share material aspects of culture and contribute to the image of an inclusive local narrative (Duffy & Waitt 2011, p. 47; Moran 2011, p. 2160). Hage (1998, p. 87) refers to this relationship as one of tolerance, rather than acceptance, which presupposes the existence of intolerance and reveals persistent hegemonic political power structures. The manner in which several working holidaymakers contributed to the festival is illustrative of how performative social cohesion dictates what aspects of identity are permissible in certain contexts. Kota and Mei, a young Japanese couple (introduced in Chapter 5, p. 93), ran the Japanese stall for most of the day. The pair helped attendees write their names in kanji script on decorative paper with a brush-tip pen and demonstrated how to use traditional wooden children's toys that were strewn across the trestle table. "Come, come, come!" Mei called out when she saw me walk into the hall, "come write your name!". Kota showed off his efforts, boasting "this is mine, it means 'muscle'". He flexed his arms as he did so. I laughed, knowing Kota used a public outdoor gym in one of the local parks each night. Later in the afternoon, some of their friends – also Japanese working holidaymakers – spent time at the stall.

By this point in time, Mei and Kota had long taken up employment at various nearby farms, while subletting a room in a shared apartment. They attended the English class and soup kitchen, visited local parks and landmarks in their leisure time, and could often be found at grocery stores in Gatton, stocking up on lunches for their farm jobs. While the couple took frequent short holidays across Australia, the Lockyer Valley was their social and economic base. At the festival, however, Kota and Mei chose to draw attention to a single aspect of their identities – their country of origin. The pair acted as unofficial cultural attachés, instead of working

holidaymakers who had been resident in the region for over a year. In Australian contexts, outwardly celebratory multicultural events allow specific representations of identity to be given space and be rendered nonthreatening (Duffy 2005, p. 681). This is reflected in community sociality for working holidaymakers in Gatton, where they are permitted to contribute to local agricultural economies, but not social spaces.

Specific contexts such as the multicultural festival replace one form of tolerance with another, where working holidaymakers can become part of local narratives by emphasising some aspects of identity and diminishing others. As such, these events serve to sustain pre-existing notions of belonging and exclusion (Collins 2013). For Kota and Mei, participating in the multicultural festival highlighted their identity as Japanese citizens, rather than working holidaymakers, operating as a contextualised positioning of both roles. Performing their cultural identity acted to circumvent the invisibility of working holidaymakers in shared social space. In contrast, stalls displaying German and Dutch histories, folklore, and food were managed by women in their late sixties who had lived in the region for many years. They also served as volunteers at *Das Neumann Haus*, the restored residence of an early German migrant to the nearby town of Laidley, which had been repurposed as a museum and café. Kilpatrick et al. (2011, p. 182) suggest that most seasonal workers are unmotivated to participate in the broader community, because their needs are already met in enclavic spaces.

While this is partly true of working holidaymakers from Europe, Canada, and the United Kingdom, it does not account for the entire broader backpacker identity in the Australian context. Working holidaymakers in Australia are a heterogenous population with few cogent overlapping interests or aspects of identity. I would suggest that a lack of interest in local communities is contingent on a sense of who already belongs, where whiteness means that other working holidaymakers do not need to perform or justify difference. There are many South Asian residents in Gatton, but they tend to be recently settled humanitarian migrants, international students at a nearby agricultural university, or working holidaymakers. The normative whiteness that permeates notions of localness in rural settings (Lockie & Bourke 2001a) means that working holidaymakers who are ‘not from here’, as Emily

described, can feel a greater need to assert their presence and proliferate existing social networks beyond their own peers.

Other working holidaymakers in this cohort had similar motivations for participating in the festival. Lucy (introduced in Chapter 5, p. 87) and Bom, two South Korean women in their early twenties, volunteered at the event. The two friends had travelled to Australia together and lived at the same sharehouse since mid-2015. Bom and Lucy had regular work at a large-scale farming operation sorting and packing salad greens but had also made trips to Sydney and Melbourne during this time. They attended the backpacker English class each week. Iris – the English class teacher – was involved in organising the multicultural festival and promoted it to class attendees during the weeks prior. She encouraged class attendees to help prepare the hall on the day before the event. She explained that volunteers would be given a certificate of appreciation from the Lockyer Valley Regional Council afterwards. Lucy and Bom were quick to put their names forward. The day before the event was due to take place, a group of people including council workers, newly-settled migrants, Bom, Lucy, and I worked together to set up the hall. Over three hours, we set up temporary partitions for stalls, moved folding trestle tables and plastic chairs around the room, and taped bunting made up of national flags on the walls.

The following day, it transpired that Lucy and Bom had also volunteered to assist the organisers during the event, along with a number of young men on temporary (or bridging) visas[11], who had been encouraged to participate by a local branch of a national refugee resettlement non-government organisation. Volunteers were kept busy throughout the day and took up odd jobs whenever they arose. Volunteering can be seen as a method of acquiring social capital, for those with more permanent aspirations (Jackson et al. 2012). For the young men, volunteering was conceived as an opportunity to practice English language skills and expand their social circles,

[11] A Bridging Visa is a classification granted to people currently in Australia while they wait (for an unspecified period of time) for a decision to be made on a more substantive visa applications and in many cases, hopeful pathways to a permanent migration status (Department of Home Affairs 2020). While some people on a Bridging Visa have the right to work, this condition is selectively applied (Marcus & Taylor 2006). The men who volunteered at the multicultural festival were not permitted to access paid employment.

while the subsequent certificate of appreciation would benefit any future employment, if their applications for a permanent visa status were successful. As working holidaymakers with an impending visa expiry date, Bom and Lucy had different reasons for contributing their time. They planned to travel Australia with another South Korean friend, before returning home in a month. I met with them the night before their departure from the Lockyer Valley, at a backpacker English class social evening. Lucy explained that while working at a farm in Gatton, she and Bom had been repeatedly humiliated by their employer regarding their competency and skill levels. "Our farmwork was very stressful", Bom explained. She continued, explaining that "they [the farm managers] always blamed backpackers like us when things went wrong, telling us 'you're new and not very good!'"

While shifts continued to be offered to the pair, they were hesitant to unnecessarily change jobs. Seeking out connectedness through community events and other activities (such as the backpacker English class) provided an emotional counterweight to the ongoing stressors of seasonal work with a difficult employer. Participation in organised social groups and community events acted as conduit for social interaction and an opportunity for Bom and Lucy to cultivate webs of emotional and social support. Bom, who identified as a Christian prior to travelling to Australia, tapped her fingers on the table where we sat and gestured to the working holidaymakers around her, who sat chatting, laughing, and eating pizza. Pausing, she said "I will miss this place, I will miss this church". By immersing themselves in rural life and local networks, Bom and Lucy found connections that transformed an uncertain economic landscape into a much more familiar, comforting setting.

Persistent relationships and individual connections

These comparatively emplaced interpretations of the Working Holiday visa involve new modes of sociality. Working holidaymakers who use rural areas as an economic base, remain resident for extended periods, and take up more secure accommodation in sharehouses have unique methods of cultivating and maintaining relationships. Living in sharehouses dispersed throughout regional suburbia, these working holidaymakers are better able to seek out a sense of comfort and homeliness but have differential access to emotional and material support from their peers. Without the

inherent collective solidarity of enclaves such as the caravan park, working holidaymakers who stay in place have a need to develop their own specific strategies for developing meaningful relationships. They cultivate a sense of community through the strength of individual connections. Social groupings tend to centre on specific people, who draw their co-workers, housemates, friends from home, and even acquaintances met by chance into their orbit and broader networks.

The weekly backpacker English class formed the backdrop to where I initially observed this occurring. The first lesson I attended was held in a small room within the church hall. It had quickly filled up – at least fifteen people sat at a series of low tables. I took up one of the few remaining spare seats, and fortuitously met a group of people – all in their late teens and early twenties – who would come to be integral to my fieldwork and understandings of working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley. Anna (Chapter 4, p. 67) was the first to introduce herself to me. The others did the same, and so I also met Seojun (from South Korea), Shin (from Japan), and Winston (from Taiwan), in addition to Kota and Mei. They had met at the English class during the preceding months. While these friendships were well-established, I was quickly enveloped into an extended network comprised of working holidaymakers from Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, China, and Hong Kong. Many of these people worked together or lived in the same sharehouse, at different times. We met multiple times over the next six months, at the weekly backpacker English class, the soup kitchen, and various community events and private social gatherings, and even at a farm where some were employed.

Anna was a central figure in this expansive group, active in organising social gatherings or day trips for others. While Anna easily made new friends with other working holidaymakers throughout the Lockyer Valley, she also recontextualised several relationships with people she had known prior to embarking on her travels. Ray, a Taiwanese man had attended secondary school with Anna, and immediately caught a bus to Gatton after disembarking at the Brisbane International Airport at the start of his working holiday. Meanwhile Elsie (Chapter 4, p. 67), a woman born in Hong Kong was Anna's former university classmate-turned-fellow working holidaymaker, but they met again when Elsie decided to come to Gatton with another friend (Ginny). In both instances, the friends had discussed meeting up in the

town prior to travelling. These repeated instances can be interpreted as a form of staggered or 'chain' migration, where the presence of familiar people encourages subsequent arrivals (Brettell & Hollifield 2013, p. 107). Such patterns are common in regional areas subject to new waves of migration, as pre-existing connections present opportunities for resource sharing (Missingham et al. 2006, p. 136). However, the combination of rural resettlement and staggered migration is more commonly applied to family groups, rather than individuals permitted to travel under temporary labour schemes. Familiarity with working holidaymakers who have been resident for long enough to accumulate relevant local knowledge benefits newly-arrived working holidaymakers.

Through their pre-existing friendships with Anna, Ray and Elsie quickly found employment and accommodation, either alongside her, or at a farm or sharehouse she suggested. Without these relationships, securing fundamental needs can be a protracted process, or result in connections with undesirable employers and accommodation providers (such as Lena's encounter with a labour-hire contractor in Chapter 4, p. 77). Bunnell and Kathiravelu (2016, p. 211) argue that friendships between labour migrants in urban environments counter aspects of low-wage labour that reduce the individual to their status as a worker, leading to the creation of 'self-managing' support systems. Such systems are equally important in regional settings, where agricultural labour shortages are fulfilled by temporary visa schemes that create a population of transient workers. Friendships are often consolidated out of shared circumstances, able to be harnessed as affective coping mechanism (Bunnell et al. 2012, p. 499). While the combined effects of casual employment, agricultural seasonality, and conditional temporariness generate uncertainty for working holidaymakers, they also serve as a connective thread between disparate people mostly travelling alone.

Although this pattern of longer stays infers a stable social life, membership in this cohort was constantly fluctuating, supporting the notion that relationships between transient migrants is constantly in-process (Ralph & Staeheli 2011, p. 519). It is expected that working holidaymakers will eventually move on, as many people in this cohort did towards the end of the year. Elsie and Ginny took a holiday around Australia before returning to Hong Kong, and Shin moved to Brisbane in September,

to participate in an intensive English language course. “Maybe I will come back here each week, to see everyone”, Shin said optimistically, “because it’s only an hour away”. In some circumstances, the unsettled relationality of movement can also inhibit belonging (Massey 1994, p. 149). Working holidaymakers with plans to travel elsewhere can come to feel disheartened at the prospect of departure from their close-knit social group. Winston, who knew Anna through the backpacker English class, had lived and worked in Gatton for close to a year. Two months after our initial introduction, Winston disclosed that he was considering whether to move to regional Victoria, after being offered a more permanent job at a large meatworks facility under a sponsored visa. He questioned whether taking up the role was the correct choice:

> *I flew to Melbourne last week so I could interview for a permanent job. I would work from nine to five o’clock, Monday to Friday. If I stay here in Gatton doing farm work, I’ll earn less money. If I accept the job and go to Melbourne, I might lose all of my friends here. If I go though, I can’t have any regrets, because I would have spent my money on processing the different visa. That’s a lot of money for me.*

Robertson (2018, p. 177) highlights how this concern is common for migrants transitioning across different visa categories, where even though “contingency afforded…the imagination of different kinds of future possibilities, there was also often a sense of anxiety they could be left ‘fallen behind’”. Even though practicality and financial stability is at the core of these decision-making practices, disruption to social life represents a genuine risk of disconnection. Despite his hesitation, Winston eventually chose to take up the position and successfully obtained a sponsored visa, which permitted him to work in Australia for an additional two years. Accepting the job and preparing to relocate interstate offered a more secure life than a temporary visa, but Winston had nevertheless agonised over the decision. Each person from this cohort who left the Lockyer Valley – whether to travel, return home, or in Winston’s particular circumstance, take up sponsored work – had a farewell event held in their honour before they left. Before Winston moved to rural Victoria, Anna organised a farewell dinner for him at a Turkish restaurant in Toowoomba, 36 kilometres away.

The evening passed quickly; everyone drank cups of sweet Turkish apple tea, watched performances by in-house belly dancers, and posed for photographs holding their fingers together in tiny love heart gestures, a reportedly South Korean trend (similar to the ‘peace’ sign) that Seojun introduced. Everyone laughed at Shin, who insisted on wearing his new discount-price house slippers to dinner. At the event, Anna, who had a polaroid-style camera, took a series of group photographs for Winston to take with him, one of which is depicted below in Figure 11:

Figure 11: A Polaroid taken at Winston's farewell dinner.

Still, a slight tinge of sadness seemed to hang in the air. When Winston began his tenure at the regional Victorian meatworks facility, he kept in touch via social media, sharing birthday messages, polite queries, and occasional chats with the holidaymakers he had met, worked, and lived with in Gatton. While the urgency and intensity of these formative relationships changed for Winston, particularly as he gained full-time employment and a more secure visa status, he actively worked to maintain these connections from a distance. Although leaving people behind or remaining in place while others move on can be difficult for transient migrants, the landscape retains memories of paths crossed (Meeus 2012, p. 1781).

Winston was not forgotten – friends who remained in the Lockyer Valley continued to mention him in conversation, especially in the context of how enjoyable the farewell dinner had been. This ongoing act of remembering took place at the same time as other working holidaymakers were enveloped into the loosely connected social group, but it only lasts as long as more than one person stays together or in touch. Writing on Romani travellers in Britain, Okely (1983, p. 129) suggests that "travelling and movement demand the qualities of versatility and flexibility". Working holidaymakers' extended stays in Australia are conditionally ephemeral, which in quotidian terms, requires an opportunistic approach to not only employment and accommodation, but also relationships. As such, this group of working holidaymakers continued to function as a source of comfort and support, despite a revolving door of arrivals and departures.

The ability to withstand shifts in membership is an unconscious adaptive strategy that can be observed in working holidaymakers' interactions with each other. Previous discussions on domestic life (see Chapter 5) highlight how mobility does not diminish the weight or significance of working holidaymakers' attachments. Similarly, I contend that mobility encourages working holidaymakers to reflect on and even explicitly demonstrate their appreciation for individual friendships, with the knowledge that the proximal component of these relationships has a time limit. Anna's combined birthday and 'farewell' dinner (Chapter 4) is also representative of this phenomenon. Anna invited her former co-workers to attend the dinner, even though she was not leaving Gatton – perhaps recognising that even though she was only changing jobs, the workplace is a site of constantly fluctuating networks. She even gave me a gift, because we shared a birthday.

Although working holidaymakers who embrace mobility and those who resist it form relationships through different means, they arrive at similar outcomes. Across disparate patterns of mobility, domestic life, and employment, working holidaymakers' interactions with each other have a profound effect on their sense of belonging. The resulting relationships can provide support in times of crisis, acting to counter financial instability, meet various material needs, facilitate knowledge-sharing, and offer a sense of community where it is not otherwise present.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Working holidaymakers' everyday lives are filled with vibrancy and richness, and a greater heterogeneity of identity and aspirations than is depicted by the broad categorisations of temporary migrant workers in Australian political discourse. A sense of conviviality and resilience is visible through their routine negotiations with seasonal agricultural labour, adaptive spatial arrangements and patterns of mobility, and practices of maintaining relationships that ensure solidarity and security, despite the difficulties placed on them by the structural constraints of the temporary migration system. Drawing main themes together, this chapter addresses how the structural constraints of the visa system create difficult and unpredictable circumstances for working holidaymakers. To navigate these challenges, this transient, heterogenous population develops a multiplicity of fluid and adaptive strategies to mitigate uncertainty and exercise agency. Working holidaymakers become a distinct population. It also seems critical to make note of several national policy changes and local developments that have taken place during the research. Most significantly, continual revisions to the Working Holiday program over recent years have involved an expansion to the list of countries and potential pool of applicants, in addition to an extended period of time in which visa-holders can live and work in Australia. At a local level, recent developments in the Lockyer Valley such as a newly-built accommodation facility and the launch of an online support service act as a response to regional economic needs and support agricultural chains of production.

If commensality can be characterised as the intimacies and solidarities that arise from sharing a meal with others (Bloch 1999, p. 133), it is no surprise that the sustained closeness of this ethnographic work has resulted in an altered sense of self. When sharing a meal can produce such closeness, then spending time alongside people who have contributed to harvesting raw ingredients accentuates and strengthens the likelihood of an irrevocable personal transformation. It is for this reason that this analysis and these conclusions seek to be attentive towards the needs of those who, in retrospect, contributed to a period of time I consider to be especially formative. Further to this point, ethnographic responsibility dictates that stories should have a mediator to interpret them in context, generating purposeful

knowledge (Wolf 1992, p. 5). Still, a research participants' worth extends far beyond an anthropologist's brief incursion into their lives, and this study primarily serves to underscore the vibrancy and complexity of working holidaymakers' everyday encounters in the regional Australian agricultural space.

Key findings

The strictures of the temporary visa system result in different manifestations of agency and desired outcomes for distinct groups of working holidaymakers. These groups are comprised of those who embrace mobility and are ostensibly unwilling to spend more time in regional areas than is necessary, and those who resist mobility and spend most of their stay in a single location. These distinct patterns are significant, given the assumptions readily made about working holidaymakers as a homogenous population sharing similar practices of mobility. A significant number of working holidaymakers embrace transience and temporariness as a 'rite of passage'. This practice involves tolerance of economic precarity and material discomfort, which are almost anticipated elements of youthfulness, liminality, and coming-of-age. By pre-empting precarity and discomfort, these working holidaymakers are able to prepare or steel themselves for inevitable moments when their plans are disrupted by the challenges associated with agricultural seasonality and temporary migration. Other working holidaymakers actively try to create a sense of stability, slowly and carefully learning to be part of a new life and a new place. Continuously working is perceived as incongruous with the expectations and assumptions relating to the Working Holiday visa but is permitted via its conditions.

Regional areas are subject to everyday contestations of ordered life, in public, private, and shared space. As they navigate settings that are not tailored to a transient population with few resources, working holidaymakers transform these settings into something that better meets their needs at a more intimate scale. Considering spaces of belonging versus spaces of negotiation, variations of domestic life arise from a lack of access to normative uses of space. Diffracted through specific conditions of identity, these practices establish the multiplicity of everyday life in the regional landscape and affirm the ways that working holidaymakers organise themselves into two distinct groups. The ways working holidaymakers navigate unfamiliar spaces is

implicitly determined by their choice of accommodation – enclave-like settings condense working holidaymakers into marginal settings. While some working holidaymakers seek out home-like spaces, others find these transient dwellings to be better suited to their needs and aspirations. Others prefer a temporary 'home base' in share housing, from which they can depart of their own accord, choosing when to embrace temporariness or to return to a more consistent and localised everyday patterns of mobility.

The employment sphere is equally subject to everyday negotiations. Working holidaymakers have various levels of commitment to building the skills required of them, and this can cause tensions between employer and employee. This is especially the case when workers only view farm labour as means to an end, wanting to acquire a second-year visa in as short a timeframe as possible, as demonstrated in Chapter 6. Working holidaymakers who embrace mobility have little issue with moving elsewhere, while those who plan on developing a more fixed identity and remaining in one place may have a greater interest in becoming proficient, especially when that is tied to alternative methods of payment such as 'piece work'. Productivity becomes tied to perceived value – with such a huge population of workers on hand, individuals become interchangeable. Working holidaymakers find ways to maintain autonomy, despite their identities being flattened by the underlying conditions of temporary migration and seasonal agricultural labour. The work that they take up shifts in meaning, from undervalued, manual tasks, as they effectively rework the visa program and their labour into something that meets their needs instead of others.

This transformation also means that working holidaymakers' relationships transform an incidentally exploitative system and intensive manual labour into something more tolerable. Working holidaymakers' unique practices of maintaining relationships, problematising discrete dichotomies such as 'local' or traveller and belonging or exclusion. Even though initial assessments of 'localness' and conditional belonging appear to exclude transient residents, such as working holidaymakers, it can be seen that high levels of mobility and temporariness do not necessarily undermine working holidaymakers' ability to form communities. Although some working holidaymakers were observed to find solace in the support offered by local advocates for human

rights or chose to participate extensively in local events and community networks, they account for a small number of people.

Most working holidaymakers develop deep, although fleeting connections with those who have similar experiences and eventual aspirations. These fluid, transient, and even 'revolving' networks assist working holidaymakers in meeting various material needs and offer emotional and physical support. The speed and intensity at which relationships form between working holidaymakers who embrace mobility can be partially attributed to an ethos of collective solidarity already present in temporary accommodation. These networks are somewhat cautious and are not significantly impacted by continual arrivals and departures. In one sense, they guarantee that highly mobile working holidaymakers will be able to seek out relevant local knowledges and develop supportive relationships, even when arriving in a seemingly isolated and unfamiliar area. In comparison, working holidaymakers who resist mobility cultivate their own networks beyond self-contained enclaves, via the strength of their individual connections. These working holidaymakers tend to expand their social lives beyond networks comprised solely of other working holidaymakers, by participating in community events and making use of local services.

Local and national changes

Working holidaymakers find themselves at the centre of continually shifting political and economic discourse. Recently revised conditions attached to the Working Holiday visa, which ultimately trickle down and impact regional agricultural communities, demonstrate the inherently unsettled nature of casual labour and how working holidaymakers are viewed in a national and local context.

National policy revisions

The Working Holiday visa has been under constant revision since its inception in 1975. The program is subject to continual amendment because it is designed to be fundamentally reactive, as a response to perceived labour shortages. Campbell (2019) is critical of how genuine these labour shortages are, arguing that temporary labour migrations schemes form a self-perpetuating cycle where working

holidaymakers outnumber and out-compete local residents for agricultural employment. However, it remains that these labour shortages account for the primary justification of expansions to Working Holiday visa. It is difficult to capture the full extent of changes made to national policy relating to temporary migration and agricultural work since the relative conclusion of this study, but the following information is correct at the time of writing.

There has been a slow rise in regulation surrounding temporary visa schemes in recent years, following the impactful release of the 'Slaving Away' on the *Four Corners* program by the ABC (Meldrum-Hanna & Russell 2015). Between 2015 and 2017, the South Australian, Victorian, and Queensland State Governments all independently initiated public enquiries relating to the labour-hire industry (Parliament of South Australia 2016; Queensland Parliament 2016a; Victorian Government 2016). The submissions to these enquiries revealed the widespread proliferation of insecure work and exploitation. In each state, the enquiry resulted in a requirement for all labour-hire contractors to be registered as per variations of a licensing act (Queensland Government 2017; Government of South Australia 2020). Additional measures in Victoria saw the implementation of an independent regulatory body to oversee licensing practices (Labour Hire Licensing Authority 2020). These changes contributed to much-needed regulation of a previously overlooked and underserved industry.

Other changes include amendments to the Working Holiday visa itself, as previously discussed in Chapter 1. In late 2019, the Australian Government announced that working holidaymakers would be able to live and work in Australia for a third year. These changes remain contingent on completing periods of employment across specific industries in regional areas. Working holidaymakers are required to work for three months in order to apply for a second year visa and six months for an eventual third. Instead of working for a maximum of six months with a single employer, they will be permitted to work for an extended twelve months (Department of Home Affairs 2019b). At face value, such revisions appear beneficial for those working holidaymakers who already live and work in a single location for almost the entire duration of their stay, such as Anna, Shin, Seojun, and others in similar networks (see Chapter 7). For a small, but not insignificant minority of working

holidaymakers, the visa is sometimes imagined as a secure pathway to income over a two-year period (Kato 2010; Kawashima 2010; Nagai et al. 2018a). It is likely that many working holidaymakers will continue to envision the extended stay as offering greater possibilities for saving money, whether for travelling within Australia, or as a method of circumventing a lack of employment opportunities in their home countries (see Chapter 4). However, a 'permanently temporary' status, to use Mares' (2016, pp. 96-127) phrasing of the phenomenon, risks amplifying the already liminal circumstances attached to the Working Holiday visa, which creates conditional residents with limited access to the benefits and security associated with citizenship.

In late 2019, other changes were in discussion at an Australian Government level but have not yet been ratified. At the time, these proposed amendments involved permitting applicants from a much broader range of countries to travel, work, and live in Australia as part of the visa program[12]. Although discussions with political leaders of other countries to develop reciprocal working holiday visa agreements were in-process, the moves were met with criticisms from both the Australian Government opposition party and peak union bodies (Stayner 2019). The new plan to attract workers (although seemingly stifled at present) acts as a recruitment drive for a wider pool of temporary, transient, short-term, casual employees. It is accompanied by a sleek new overseas advertising campaign emphasises the role of employment, claiming to seek those who "don't mind working remotely and are "high flyers" (Gothe-Snape 2019). Set against a backdrop of several dramatic Australian locations, including mountain peaks, blue lagoons, remote wilderness and central deserts, the video is admittedly enticing; it suggests that by applying for a Working Holiday visa, you will exclusively live and work in these places. Reality is much different.

[12] Discussions to initiate reciprocal working holidaymaker agreements were in place between 13 countries, including Andorra, Brazil, Croatia, Fiji, India, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Switzerland (Bolger, R 2019, Expansion of Australia's working holiday visa scheme faces Senate hurdle, SBS News, Australia, viewed 6 August, https://www.sbs.com.au/news/expansion-of-australia-s-working-holiday-visa-scheme-faces-senate-hurdle).

New developments in the regional landscape

In previous years, the self-proclaimed 'national salad bowl' has served as the constant backdrop for social and political discourse about working holidaymakers, following the advent of several high-profile incidents reported in local and national news media (Chapter 1). In response to these occurrences of exploitation, the Lockyer Valley regional council began an unofficial campaign to connect with working holidaymakers living and working in the area more effectively, in order to rebuild a tattered reputation and assuage any concerns. Some of these measures included overseeing a monthly backpacker barbeque in conjunction with the Salvation Army religious charity and assigning community engagement officers to be more closely involved with these transient residents. In the time following my fieldwork, some significant changes have taken place in the Lockyer Valley region. The most significant of these changes is the launch of an online employment hub, which is intended to provide information and support for working holidaymakers, other job seekers, and farmers. Another notable initiative is the development of a backpacker accommodation complex. These changes appear to address two of the issues identified through my research, being work and accommodation. While it is anticipated that these recently-launched projects will contribute to reducing some of the challenges faced by working holidaymakers in the Lockyer Valley region, they can also be seen to fail wholly to read the underlying issues that have been identified through my research.

Online employment hub

Some attempts to provide support services can be found in online settings. *FarmReady Hub*, launched in 2017, professes to be a 'one-stop-shop' for seasonal workers and their employers in the Lockyer Valley region (FarmReady Hub 2018). The online network has recently been developed by a Janne Dipple, a local farmer and agriculture industry representative, who previously expressed concern at a state enquiry into the practices of the labour-hire industry that working holidaymakers have no way of accessing verifiable employment information, lest they be "waylaid straight off the bus" (Queensland Parliament 2016b). The online hub seeks to address these concerns, to a degree: its website offers ongoing support for working holidaymakers prior to them travelling to Australia and throughout their stay in the Lockyer Valley region. Farmers, as well as accommodation and transport providers,

are encouraged to list their services on the website. Access to the online hub is available for a fee. At a cost of $49, working holidaymakers can sign up for three years of membership. Membership provides them assistance with employment or visa applications and seeking out employment, as well as information about the Australian agricultural industry and health and safety regulations. Working holidaymakers are also offered ongoing support during their travels in Australia and have the opportunity to complete training for a 'FarmReady Card' – a training program teaching basic farm skills and expectations of agricultural work that is overseen by the FarmReady Hub.

With its connection to peak agricultural bodies and its organiser's history of transparency regarding employment practices as both an industry representative and local farm owner, the online hub is a comforting new development. However, it may be inaccessible or not seen as valuable to some. Literacy and cost are potential barriers to accessing an otherwise beneficial service. For some, even a small membership fee may be an unrealistic expense. For those who envision the Working Holiday visa as a temporary measure, and seasonal agricultural labour as a necessary task, it is likely that attainment of any kind of certification is not perceived as particularly useful. Here, I am reminded of Ali, the twenty-year-old English working holidaymaker who criticised his employer, explaining to me that he had little interest in picking broccoli for a living (Chapter 4, p. 71). However, this program may be of more interest to farmers. Although there may be some differences between the interests of farmers and working holidaymakers, and how they envision the online hub and certification program, they are a valuable addition to the rural landscape. Privatised solutions are limited in their ability to mitigate issues effecting working holidaymakers at an institutional level but are a significant improvement when taking into account the small range of available local services. Altogether, this new development has the potential to formalise support for working holidaymakers beyond their own networks, and also recognise the complexities of so-called 'unskilled' labour in the agricultural landscape.

Backpacker accommodation complex

In April 2017, the local newspaper revealed that the regional council had approved construction of a backpacker accommodation complex (McIvor 2017). It was announced that the complex, funded by a prominent state businessman, would be built in Grantham, a small town a short distance away from the Gatton town centre. News of the complex was announced at a public signing at the development site, involving the developer and the mayor, who indicated that it would provide working holidaymakers and other seasonal workers with better quality and safer accommodation options that those available in the region at the time. At the event, the project was framed as primarily offering benefit to farmers (employee retention) and the local economy (including construction jobs, and housing for seasonal workers required by regional growers) (Fowles 2017).

At a total cost of $20 million, the completed development will house close to 600 people at a time when the second phase of construction is completed (Elsome 2018). Planning documents (previously available on the Lockyer Valley Regional Council website for public review) show that the site comprises a range of guest amenities, including a shared commercial kitchen, laundromat, and a café that will be open to the public. The complex advertises itself as catering to travellers on a range of budgets and offering accommodation options varying from shared dormitory-style rooms, private rooms with shared bathroom and shower facilities, to more expensive private cabins with ensuites. With combined housing, amenities, and recreation facilities, the backpacker accommodation complex shows what appears to be an all-inclusive village, giving guests little need to travel elsewhere during their stay. However, Grantham is approximately 10 kilometres from Gatton (or 10 minutes by car), situated between Gatton and the major regional city of Toowoomba. With 634 total residents (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017), Grantham has a considerably smaller population than its neighbouring town, and a corresponding level of business and services located in the area. At present, it contains a petrol station, a minimally stocked corner store, a café, a primary school, and several other industrial businesses. Most residents travel to Gatton to purchase groceries and meet other everyday needs.

Not all working holidaymakers have access to their own transport (see Chapter 5). Instead, they seek out lifts with others, use infrequent and sometimes costly public transport, or walk for any necessary travel outside of employment. When seeking out seasonal agricultural work, a lack of available transport can limit working holidaymakers' choice of employer to farms or labour-hire contractors who provide transport (sometimes for a small daily fee). Employers providing transport pick up and drop off working holidaymakers at unofficially designated locations throughout Gatton, including the roadside opposite the caravan park, and the car park outside the Coles grocery store. This reciprocal agreement between employers, labour-hire contractors, and accommodation providers is mutually beneficial, as transport availability can influence working holidaymakers' decision-making practices in relation to where they choose to live and work. Development plans for the accommodation complex suggested that a similar agreement is in place for working holidaymakers staying at the site and might benefit employers. Inside the complex, there are designated vehicle bays for transport vans to park when taking working holidaymakers to and from their farm jobs each day. It is then likely that a majority of those staying at the complex who do not have their own transport will be exclusively employed by farmers and labour-hire contractors who can provide it. If the complex is at full capacity, this transportation system has the potential to inadvertently monopolise labour economies and alienate smaller, family-run farms.

Outside of employment-related travel, transportation services are limited. While working holidaymakers are primarily viewed in the context of seasonal agricultural labour, their everyday lives are enacted beyond the employment sphere. They have a continuing need to move beyond spaces of employment and accommodation, and as such, it is critical that transport is available outside of working hours. With none in place, working holidaymakers without private transport will be forced to make their own way when travelling, and there is no guarantee that some will not attempt to walk to Gatton. One profound observation from my fieldwork involved regularly driving towards Gatton, and seeing working holidaymakers working in nearby fields, or walking into the town. They carried backpacks, or plastic bags filled with bottled water, either in preparation for a day's work, or returning home after harvesting outside. Scenarios such as these present genuine physical risks, as the route between Grantham and Gatton is not intended for pedestrian use, and has few footpaths,

barriers, or safe crossings. This issue is somewhat resolved, however, as management shared in an interview that they take their newfound 'kids' (working holidaymakers) shopping every Saturday (Bolton 2019). However, this schedule does not permit working holidaymakers to demonstrate autonomy and agency. As I have described, flexibility can be a desirable attribute for young identities.

Although the backpacker accommodation complex meets core local demographic needs, in a broader sense, it indirectly affirms problematic underlying expectations of invisible labour. Working holidaymakers become acceptable rural residents when their movement is restricted to marginal spaces and they are reduced to their potential for productivity and economic value (Reilly et al. 2018). Regional narratives are often intertwined with the colonial mythos of hardworking, resilient landowners (Lockie & Bourke 2001a). These stories are increasingly complicated by presence of casual, transient workers, who enable agricultural economies to flourish. Working holidaymakers become inconvenient to such narratives when their everyday lives spill over into public spaces, or public life; they disrupt, challenge, and displace the local and national desire for a willing, compliant short-term labour force. Removal from view permits the absolution of public responsibility and ensures that the systemic vulnerabilities built into temporary migration schemes and conditional labour are maintained. There is ostensibly less willingness to acknowledge an indirect complicity in the perpetuation of conditions that impact negatively on working holidaymakers' everyday lives, or a localised responsibility to guarantee their overall wellbeing.

Suggestions for seeking redress

It is important to recognise that the likelihood of working holidaymakers' exposure to risk begins prior to their arrival in Australia. They are pushed towards agriculture-intensive regions such as the Lockyer Valley, because of the conditions imposed by temporary migration schemes, an extension of the state. It is not possible for working holidaymakers to create the circumstances for their own safety and wellbeing, when their everyday lives are structured by external forces. Douglas (1970, p. 98) suggests that "if a person has no place in the social system, and is therefore a marginal being, all precaution against danger must come from others. [They] cannot help [their]

abnormal situation". The manifestations of exploitation and vulnerability working holidaymakers encounter require practical suggestions for recourse, that are initiated by external agents, including various levels of government. Distinct strategies are needed to alter migration policy productively and for regional areas utilising working holidaymakers as sources of seasonal agricultural labour to become known as more than real-life horror stories. Some of the new developments in the regional landscape, including the online employment hub, backpacker accommodation complex, and more longstanding regular events such as the monthly backpacker barbeque and weekly soup kitchen are active attempts to do this. However, they are limited in capacity. At a much larger scale, migration policy continues to inhibit working holidaymakers' autonomy. Recent changes to the Working Holiday visa do not appear to respond to the litany of issues effecting working holidaymakers, but act as a response to national economic needs and a desire for cheap, rather than ethical labour. While locals are paid at the same rate, there are few incentives for those wanting a stable life to take up short-term, casual or seasonal work, meaning that most workers are working holidaymakers.

Migration policy

In offering productive solutions to the issues effecting working holidaymakers, I suggest that closer attention should be paid to the proliferation of vulnerability that stems from the temporal conditions of the Working Holiday visa. Foremost, three years is a protracted period to occupy a temporary status. This ambiguity of associated rights is becoming an increasingly acceptable method of fulfilling labour needs globally, or identifying and distinguishing who is welcome, who is not, and in what specific circumstances. This is a key commonality between disparate groups of people: from necessarily transient working holidaymakers, to Pacific Islander workers occupying tenuous positions in the agricultural system (Stead 2019), and even refugees on bridging or temporary protection visas.

Some have advocated for radical overhauls to the Working Holiday visa as potential solutions. Prior to the approved extensions to the duration of the visa program, a report from the World Bank (Doherty 2018) speculatively suggested that the Australian Government should abandon the '88 days' clause, which requires working holidaymakers to complete the equivalent of three months' worth of work

to be eligible to apply for a second-year visa. To an extent, the '88 days' clause provides a guaranteed workforce in an industry with known skills shortages. However, the linkages between labour productivity and second- or third-year visa applications creates the conditions for exploitation. Other employment-based temporary visas such as the Pacific Labour stream (Department of Home Affairs 2020c) and the Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional visa (Provisional) (Department of Home Affairs 2020d) involve specific sponsorship requirements, which directly put approved workplaces in communication with higher levels of governance. Although these visas involve similarly vulnerable circumstances (Ball et al. 2011; Lee & Nishitani 2017), a more consistent approach to the various temporary work would increase accountability and promote regulation as the foremost concern for industries relying on casual, temporary labour. However, greater oversight and governance of this program exacerbates the vulnerabilities of Pacific Islander workers. This is largely owing to workers' inability to move freely or seek out alternative work. As Stead (2021, p. 13) notes, what is envisioned as governance has the opposite effect, where "requirements are framed in terms of pastoral care and regulatory protections for workers, but they also facilitate control and surveillance of Pacific workers in a context of anxieties about those workers absconding". However, it is worth noting that the Working Holiday visa scheme permits greater freedom of movement, which could serve to alleviate issues associated with more stringent governance.

In addition, rather than effective abandonment post-visa application, working holidaymakers should be more explicitly and actively supported throughout the entirety of their stays in Australia. Working holidaymakers are seemingly required to develop fortitude and tolerance independent of existing support networks (Campbell et al. 2019, p. 99). In such circumstances, the process of mitigating vulnerability should be an ongoing collaboration between local and national government, migration networks and peak agricultural bodies, but most importantly, efforts need to be made to involve working holidaymakers in their own futures. A fundamental difficulty in any attempt at consultation with a temporary, transient population is how to circumvent high levels of mobility – a considerable challenge that was deeply felt during my ethnographic fieldwork. My own solution was to 'catch' working holidaymakers in place, and the same logic could be applied elsewhere. Formalised

entry and exit surveys would present an effective method of gathering valuable information at pivotal moments, but would generate different results than holistic and nuanced ethnography. While working holidaymakers are able to report any issues they encounter during their stays via mechanisms such as the FairWork Ombudsman, these do not relate to the broader working holiday experience, and are unable to connect threads between the visa scheme itself and the proliferation of individual issues.

In addition, if statistical measures such as the census, or national tourism surveys have implications for infrastructure and investment, then the same logic should be applied to temporary migrants. While census data accounts for some patterns of external and internal migration throughout Australia, it is not possible to cross-reference information effectively with the reported numbers of approved temporary visas. As such, it is difficult to know how many working holidaymakers live and work in any given location at a particular time. If methods were in place to connect such information together, then working holidaymakers could be better supported as they live and work throughout the country.

Developing some method of measurement to detect seasonal population shifts would allow greater levels of support and investment into areas with high concentrations of temporary workers. Essentially, a 'checking in' of sorts presents itself as a viable option, drawing from previous iterations of the Australian government *Smart Traveller* initiative (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2018). Until recently, this optional registry was used by Australians travelling overseas to provide timely safety alerts, official government bulletins or warnings, and travel advice. A reversal of this service, tailored towards working holidaymakers travelling throughout Australia, could be a beneficial resource.

Regional development

While working holidaymakers' needs differ according to location, there are some guiding principles that could assist local government in agricultural areas to provide a safer and more secure experience. Overall, being better connected with working holidaymakers who travel to rural Australia to live and work would also help avoid

so-called ‘bad reputations’ that take so long to repair, and deviate from often meaningful, positive intent of local government.

More formal support networks need to be developed, linking regional councils directly to working holidaymakers. In the Lockyer Valley, there is no single key person, institution, or entity working holidaymakers can contact regarding any specific issues they may have. This is the purpose of the hub, but something that is compulsory and government-led would be more regulated. Holistic measures of evaluating their safety are also required. Although methods are in place to ensure places of employment and accommodation conform to safety standards, working holidaymakers travel between these locations on a daily basis.

Understanding that working holidaymakers and temporary migrants more broadly use public space in ways that are distinct from more long-term residents would assist in pre-empting risk prior to the approval and implementation of any new developments. Working holidaymakers’ contributions to the rural economy should be acknowledged, and they should also be recognised as significant regional stakeholders, as opposed to solely being a source of labour. Many express frustration that their labours are not valued in social contexts, walking through the fruit and vegetable aisles of crowded rural grocery stores, and excitedly pronouncing ‘I picked this!’ or ‘this came from my farm!’, but experiencing alienation outside of these locations.

Final words

There are incidents, people, and places that will stay with me from my time among working holidaymakers. They will follow me through all the fields I work in, whether they are academic, literal or both, should I find myself continuing to conduct research in rural and agricultural communities. Through this study, I have come to learn that ethnographic methods are always personal in some way (see for example Rosaldo 1993; Behar 1996). Embodied participant observation cannot be easily or conveniently reduced to some sort of separation between body, mind, and methodological praxis. At every stage of my fieldwork, this ethnographic experience became more and more intertwined with my personal narrative. I physically and

mentally mapped out an uncertain space, seeing it change over time, and seeing myself grow as both an anthropologist and a human being. The town where I spent my formative years and had only viewed through a complex history of rupture, rejection, and a lack of belonging, came to rest in my heart as something else entirely. It became a place where I woke before dawn and worked picking fruit until the morning dew seeped into my socks. I felt persimmons roll around in my hand, while I talked about travel plans with a young French woman. I ate home-cooked Japanese food with participants who quickly became friends. These sensory, emotional memories are now part of me, and are rooted deep within. They are part of the reason why I find it both upsetting and disappointing that many others in that same rural space do not cross paths with the same diverse, vibrant, and dynamic community that I did.

The individual needs to be re-centred in what is a disconnected social and political debate about working holidaymakers. The spaces that they inhabit comprise a fundamental part of their everyday lives when living and working throughout regional Australia, but the importance of everyday life and cross-cultural experience has been forgotten and abandoned. It has been replaced with an economic narrative that prioritises and favours the needs of rural areas and government, positioning institutions and government as absolvent caretakers. While stories of exploitation, in addition to violence, and vulnerability are distressing realities for working holidaymakers, they obscure the fact that this is a population that is uniquely adaptive and creating in locating the emotional and physical comfort, wellbeing, security, and safety that should be guaranteed.

These seemingly preferable narratives of victimhood and marginalisation are grounded in fact, however, because certain conditions allow them the space to thrive. With an increased focus on labour in temporary migration schemes, it is convenient to accept silently their ongoing exploitation with the underlying knowledge that their marginalisation is beneficial. Such implicit attitudes, while obfuscated well by rhetoric, silences, and ignorance, trickle down to the rural areas where seasonal agricultural labour is needed, and working holidaymakers are mostly left to themselves. While working holidaymakers are a self-motivated population with varying degrees of agency, it can be difficult for them to make their own way. The

regional landscape and narrative of rural identity are not intended to accommodate temporariness and transience, despite seasonality and migration being encoded in its history. As such, working holidaymakers operate within relatively powerless spatial and social arrangements. However, through patterns of movement, working holidaymakers give new, unexpected purpose and meaning to unyielding infrastructure, develop their own communities independent of local networks, and reinvent an unintentionally flexible temporary migration scheme to seek out and establish a greater sense of economic and social security.

Perhaps I am making the political personal, when I stress that working holidaymakers' likelihood of encountering vulnerability, exploitation, and risk needs to be transformed from an unsurprising prediction to anomalous circumstances. It is no longer practical, viable or logical to expect them to take root, sprout, and grow in spatiotemporal and material contexts that do not adapt to meet their needs. At the same time, we should not expect working holidaymakers to want this either, as many take refuge and solace in the break from normal life provided by the temporary migration scheme. It is time to move on from anticipating narratives of victimhood and marginalisation, and move towards a more accommodating, welcoming, and overwhelmingly just rural landscape for working holidaymakers to inhabit.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Working holidaymakers interviewed during the study.

Name	Country of origin	Overview (details included where known)	Events attended	Relationships with other informants
Ali	England	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa, found work picking broccoli.	Soup kitchen, monthly barbeque.	Spent time with others from European countries.
Anna	Taiwan	Stayed in share house, worked consistently and found new jobs every six months. Lived/worked in Gatton for close to two years while regularly taking short holidays.	English class, soup kitchen, monthly barbeque, community events.	Knew Ray from Taiwan and went to secondary school with Elsie. Lived with Ray, also spent time with Kota, Mei, Seojun, Shin and Winston.
Bom	South Korea	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for at least six months. Planned to travel for a few months before returning home.	English class, soup kitchen, monthly barbeque, community events.	Lived/travelled with best friend Lucy.
Daniel	England	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Recently returned to Gatton after staying there months previously. Unable to find work, but willing to abandon visa plans in favour of travel if no work was available.	None.	Lived and travelled with Julien, Lucas and Mark.
Elouise	Canada	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Arrived in Gatton/found work two weeks prior to meeting.	Soup kitchen.	Lived with Sophia.
Elsie	Hong Kong	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for close to two years while regularly taking short holidays.	English class, soup kitchen, monthly barbeque, community events.	Lived with Seojun and Shin.
Emma	Italy	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Lived/worked in Gatton for one month prior to meeting.	Soup kitchen, monthly barbeque.	Lived with Irina and mostly spent time with other Italians.
Ginny	Hong Kong	Stayed in share house, living/working in Gatton while regularly taking short holidays until returning home.	Soup kitchen, community events.	Friends with Elsie, Ray, Seojun, Shin and others.
Irina	Italy	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Lived/worked in Gatton for one month prior to meeting.	Soup kitchen, monthly barbeque.	Lived with Emma and mostly spent time with other Italians.
Julien	France	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Recently returned to Gatton after staying there months previously. Unable to find work, but willing to abandon visa plans in favour of travel if no work was available.	None.	Lived and travelled with Daniel, Lucas and Mark.

Kota	Japan	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for at least six months while regularly taking short holidays.	English class, community events.	In a relationship with Mei. Sublet a room in Kevin and Sunny's apartment. Friends with Anna, Seojun, Winston, Shin, and others.
Lena	Germany	Stayed in share house, sought second-year visa. Lived/worked in Gatton for at least three months but experienced a difficult relationship with a labour-hire contractor, which led to a lack of consistent work and unsafe accommodation.	Soup kitchen, monthly barbeque.	Assisted by Seojun.
Lucas	France	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Recently returned to Gatton after staying there months previously. Unable to find work, but willing to abandon visa plans in favour of travel if no work was available.	None.	Lived and travelled with Daniel, Julien and Mark.
Lucy	South Korea	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for at least six months. Planned to travel for a few months before returning home.	English class, soup kitchen, monthly barbeque, community events.	Lived/travelled with best friend Bom.
Mark	England	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Recently returned to Gatton after staying there months previously. Unable to find work, but willing to abandon visa plans in favour of travel if no work was available.	None.	Lived and travelled with Daniel, Julien and Lucas.
Mei	Japan	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for at least six months while regularly taking short holidays.	English class, community events.	In a relationship with Kota. Sublet a room in Kevin and Sunny's apartment. Friends with Anna, Seojun, Winston, Shin, and others.
Paul	Italy	Stayed in a hostel in a smaller town outside of Gatton, sought second-year visa.	None.	Worked at Bruce's farm.
Ray	Taiwan	Stayed in share house, came straight to Gatton from Taiwan. Sought second-year visa, lived/worked in Gatton for at least three months while regularly taking short holidays.	English class, soup kitchen.	Knew Anna in Taiwan. Friends with Anna, Elsie, Ginny and others.
Seojun	South Korea	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for at least a year while regularly taking short holidays.	English class, soup kitchen, monthly barbeque, community events.	Lived with Elsie and Shin. Close friends with Shin, also spent time with Mei, Kota, Anna, Ginny and others.
Shin	Japan	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for at least a year while regularly taking short holidays.	English class, soup kitchen, monthly barbeque, community events.	Lived with Elsie and Seojun. Close friends with Seojun, also spent time with Mei, Kota, Anna, Ginny and others.

Sophia	France	Stayed at caravan park, sought second-year visa. Arrived in Gatton/found work two weeks prior to meeting.	Soup kitchen.	Lived with Elouise.
Winston	Taiwan	Stayed in share house, lived/worked in Gatton for at least six months while regularly taking short holidays. Moved to Melbourne after finding work/acquiring a sponsored (more long-term, skilled) visa at a meat processing facility.	English class, monthly barbeque.	Friends with Anna, Seojun, Shin, Ginny, Elsie, Mei, Kota and others.

Appendix 2: Local residents interviewed as part of the study.

Name	**Age**	**Overview**	**Relationships with other informants (where known)**
Bruce	Early 60s	Stone fruit farmer running a family business, and former neighbour	Neighbour to Heike and Gerard.
Emily	Late 40s	Community engagement officer at the regional council, helps to run the monthly barbeque for backpackers	Familiar with Iris.
Faith	Mid 60s	Co-organiser of the soup kitchen.	Married to Ivan.
Gerard	Mid 50s	Environmental activist living on the hilly scrubland outskirts of town, and former neighbour.	Partner to Heike, neighbour to Bruce, acquaintance of Iris and owners of several small organic farms in the region.
Heike	Mid-50s	Environmental activist living on the hilly scrubland outskirts of town, and former neighbour.	Partner to Gerard, neighbour to Bruce, acquaintance of Iris and owners of several small organic farms in the region.
Helen	50s	Librarian	
Iris	Late 60s	Former schoolteacher (now retired) who runs the backpacker English class.	Sometimes liaises with Emily, Mira, Gerard, Heike, and Keith.
Ivan	Mid 60s	Co-organiser of the soup kitchen.	Married to Faith.
Jane	Late 60s	Business owner and former employer.	
Keith	50s	Caravan park manager	
Stephen	Late 60s	Business owner and former employer.	
Tim	Late 40s	Third-generation family farmer who moved to the Lockyer Valley ten years previously.	Employed several working holidaymakers listed above.

Appendix 3: A selection of individual maps produced by working holidaymakers at the backpacker English class.