

The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of an elderly person's hands. The hands are wrinkled and have a warm, reddish-brown tone. They are holding a small, light-colored, textured object, possibly a piece of wood or a small stone, between the fingers. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the skin and the object.

Elder's Participation in Everyday Occupations

Making the Difference Between
Being Aged and Being Old

— A New Zealand Study —

Valerie Wright-St Clair
WFOT Congress, Sydney, 2006



North Shore, Auckland

- In completion of Doctor of Philosophy through the Department of General Practice and Primary Health Care within the School of Population Health University of Auckland



Overview of Presentation

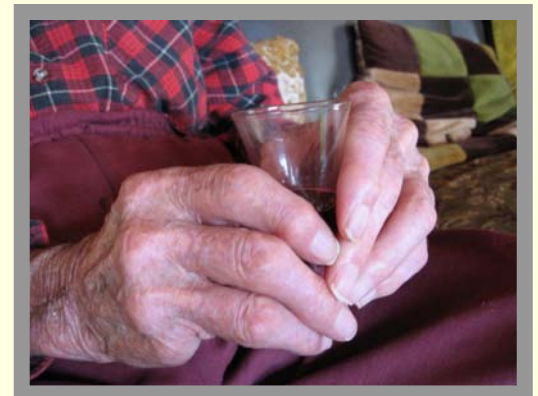
- The demographic, political and research contexts
- Research question & aims
- Methodology
- Methods & design
- The findings
- What does it mean?



The Demographic Context

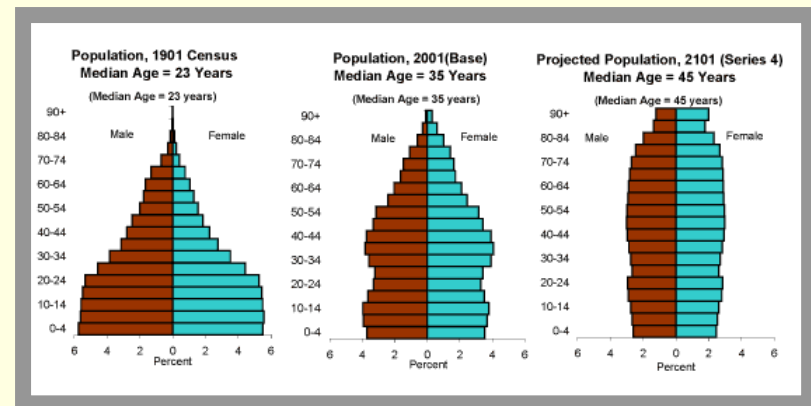
Demographics of an aging population

- By 2051 people aged 65 years and older will make up 26% of the NZ population
- Maori aged 65+ will increase from only 3% of all Maori in 2001, to 16% of Maori in 2051
- Maori will make up 7% of all those aged 65 and older



The Demographic Context

- People aged 85 years and older make up the fastest growing sector of the population
- By 2051 there will be a six-fold increase in those aged 85 and older
- (Davey, de Joux, Nana & Arcus, 2004)



(Statistics New Zealand, 2006)

The Political Context

New Zealand public policy has two important strategies to guide service development and service provision for those aged 65+

- The NZ Positive Aging Strategy:
Towards a Society for all Ages
(Minister for Senior Citizens, 2001)
- Health of Older People Strategy:
Health Sector Action to 2010 to
Support Positive Aging
(Associate Minister of Health, 2002)



The Research Context

- Elder's engagement in personally meaningful, social and productive occupations is associated with aging well
(Glass, Mendes de Leon, Marottoli & Berkman, 1999)
- Community participation and cultural affiliation is strongly associated with better health for elder Maori
(Waldon, 2004)





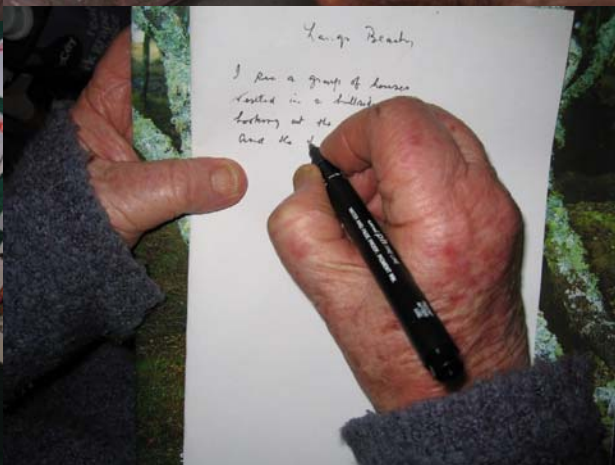
The Research Question & Aims

The Question

- How do elders experience aging in the context of their everyday community lives?

The Study Aims to:

- get closer to understanding the phenomenon of aging through elder's stories of their everyday lives
- explore elder's understandings of aging well
- inform a proposed population study of people aged 85 and older



Methodology

- Hermeneutic phenomenology
- Guided by the philosophies of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Martin Heidegger



Research Methods

Purposive recruitment of 15 participants living in private residences on Auckland's North Shore

Recruitment via the New Zealand electoral roll

Maori recruited with support of the kaumatua, Te Puna Hauora





- 4 Maori men and women aged 70 and older
 - Two women: 77 & 93 years
 - Two men: 71 & 74 years
- 11 non-Maori men and women aged 80 and older
 - Six women: 80, 89, 90, 91, 93 & 95 years
 - Five men: 89, 91, 97, 97 & 97 years



Methods and Design

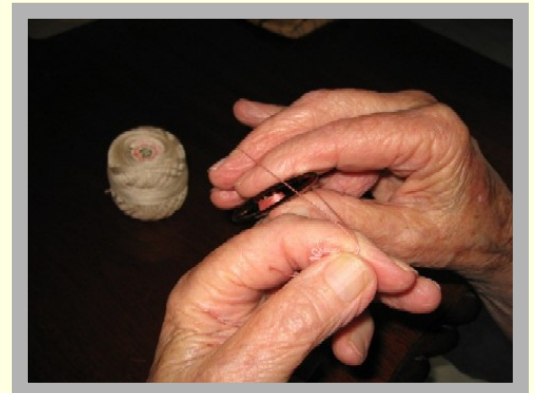
In-depth, individual interviews were conducted as conversations about the person's:

- Everyday experiences, describing things in the moment; the here-and-now stories
- Understandings of aging and how it shows through everyday living
- Photograph of the hands only engaged in a precious occupation



The Findings

- Being engaged in everyday occupations both conceals and reveals agedness
- Three compelling experiences are seen across the stories:
 - Agedness is not oldness
 - The quickness and slowness of time
 - The preciousness of doing





Agedness is not Oldness





Quickness & Slowness of Time





The Preciousness of Doing



References

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What Does it Mean?

