

Nautical Narratives on the Island of Newfoundland: Exploring the Fishing Industry and Reimagining Changing Futures

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I want to thank my Grandfather William Sullivan, Grandmother Dianne Sullivan, and Mother Cindy Drodge, for believing in my dreams and supporting me throughout this process and in my life.

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Figure 1 Photo of the Atlantic Ocean. Taken by me.

Abbreviation Table /Commonly Used Words

TAC	Total Allowable Catch
FFAW	Fish Food & Allied Workers Union
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
DFO	Department of Fisheries and Oceans. They are now known as Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Federal Department)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

Introduction

Thirty (30) years have passed since the cod collapse in Newfoundland and Labrador. The cod collapse left fifteen thousand (15,000) people who made a living off harvesting and processing cod without jobs, and almost eliminated a singular fish species from Newfoundland and Labrador (Bavington, 2010). The cod collapse created many policy changes and ripples of generational disruption in individual livelihoods and inshore/coastal fishing practices among families. Harvesting cod from the waters of Newfoundland goes back for hundreds of years, and many fishers and coastal communities still depend on it today. A significant amount of research on the history of cod fishing, the 1992 cod collapse, and the almost annihilation of a species (Bavington, 2010); but there is room to further explore how local fishers and fishing communities live today. I argue that there is a need to increase local consultation during inshore/coastal fishery policy amendment processes and local engagement with environmental assessment methods in Newfoundland specifically. The thesis critically breaks down industrial ecological systems and looks at how industrial fishing has created a series of policies, regulations, and systems that have historically influenced the contingency of the inshore/coastal fishery.

The local stories captured in this thesis represent hopeful futures that reconcile ways to resolve problems within regulatory fishing systems and highlight individual and collective frustrations with licensing, fishing regions, catch quotas, and environmental assessments that inform policy. I use narrativity to understand actions related to individual and collective identity (Somers, 1994) and use social, economic, and ecological factors to postulate how disruption influences autobiographical narratives, collective identity, and decision making (Fivush et al., 2011, & Calhoun, 2007). I will expand on how individual and collective actions, influenced by

social, economic, and ecological disruption, form into community solutions that reconcile with historical and ecological injustices. I discuss the connections and disconnections between federal policies and local community perspectives when it comes to living with and addressing social, economic, and ecological disruption.

Different reactions to disruptive events such as the cod collapse reveal how individual and group narratives that reflect relationships between society, nature, and lifestyle are culturally and historically shaped. I examine the critical points in history and how those moments influence institutional memory (Linde, 2009). I explore how institutional memory creates a narrative that reflects an institution's image, and influences management techniques, decision-making and rationale (p. 2-6). Additionally, I investigate institutional memory to analyze rational decision making in terms of Canada finding reliable practices for inshore/coastal fisheries management in Newfoundland. I look at alternative predictive models as a way for establishing collaborative scientific tools that use social and ecological factors and data collected from local fish harvesters to guide conservation and economic market strategies. Notably, the 1992 cod collapse created the need for heavy top-down policy regulations that focused on protecting fish populations around the island of Newfoundland. This resulted in a federal decision to decrease in fishing practices (harvesting and processing), affecting those with inshore/coastal fishing licenses, and who typically had smaller enterprises and less financial security than those with bigger, more industrial enterprises. The belief that small fishing enterprises suffered because of large scale industrial enterprises is still a common one among locals in and around the St. John's area (Heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2017), and shapes a wider view on how to operate a successful and sensible fishing industry. The transformation of individual and collective meaning

can be understood as revelations that reflect the “conceptual [and] as ideological” frameworks of their time (Scott, 2004, p. 3-4), therefore, I use these questions below to help guide my research.

1. How do fishers and broader fishing communities speak about socio-ecological disruption on the island of Newfoundland?
2. Does Fisheries and Oceans Canada effectively respond to socio-ecological disruption with the Newfoundland inshore/coastal fishery?

Research Methods

In 2020, I completed my classroom courses at the University of Ottawa and I flew to St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, my home city and province, with the hope to explore the simple statement infamously proclaimed by many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, "*we don't have no good fish anymore., b'y.*"

During fieldwork preparation the entire world was going through the COVID-19 pandemic and so I had to change many of my pre-pandemic research plans. Due to drastic social changes and research ethic board precautions, I had to think about the risks with in-person research and how to protect participant identities. I created a COVID-19 contact/tracker sheet, multiple copies of in-person, virtual, and/or diary consent forms, and made sure that pseudonyms were used for all participant names. The names of the social groups/enterprises are not mentioned purposefully to protect the identities of people in those groups. The photos used in this thesis belong to me and the individuals pictured. They were either taken by me or given to me via a Google Drive folder, with the understanding (and agreeance) that the photos could be used for my research and other public purposes. My fieldwork began June 2021 during the height of the fishing seasons and when public spaces were still not used for social functions, but I was fortunate enough to get a research position with a grassroots activist group. I was happy to share my research skills and ambitions as well as learn more about the environmental communities in the St. John's area. This experience introduced me to other individuals, groups, and organizations within Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as helped me understand the connection between community lenses and broader policy implications.

I use my in-person advantages to explore how local fishers and the local fishing community cope with socio-economic and socio-ecological disruption using narrative theory to

highlight occurring changes in personal stories. I take note of individual agency and central themes of economic and environmental change (Iovino & Opperman, 2012), and focus on the disruption of traditional fishing rights, top-down policies, and environmental change.

Throughout this research I use individual interviews and participatory observation methods to gather life stories from inshore/coastal fish harvesters to reveal the challenges and changes in the inshore/coastal fishing industry. I also review archival documents and other ethnographies on fishing and natural resource industries to further explain the conceptual basis of disruption narratives, and to give broader context to local stories. Disruption is understood as an experience that changes an individual's life through social, economic, and/or ecological systems. I explore how narratives accentuate these systems of disruption and capture how they exist in the policies and regulations that influence fishing practices for inshore/coastal fishers.

Narrative theory guides my conceptual understanding of individual and community identity and decision making. Narrative theory uses stories to help articulate individual perceptions of self-agency, and whether they can be an active agent of change, or a solution, to a problem they are facing (Holland & Peacock, 2001). Somers' (1994) understands identity through flexible networks and postulates that identities are influenced by actions (p. 615) and encased by regulated structures and orders (p. 616) that touch on structural (social, economic, and ecological) systems. Paying attention to articulated problems during individual interviews helps flesh out fish harvesters concerns around regulations/licenses, ocean conditions/climate change, and the contingency of inshore/coastal fishing. Following the traditions and beliefs expressed by fish harvesters highlights key concerns related to fisheries conservation, top-down policies, and fisheries management decision-making. I connect these concerns with broader fishing community narratives to create a vivid local case study surrounding common problems.

Connecting common local problems with incidents of substantial change allows for a better understanding of individual and community responses to disruption. The reimagination of space and future realities are tied to stories of the past and present-day experiences of disruption, leaving fish harvesters and communities to change everyday practices; and the opportunity to reimagine what life can look like for fish harvesting off the coast of Newfoundland.

Narrative theory helps collect stories on how inshore/coastal fishers are affected by federal and provincial policies and regulations and to give detail on what is influencing individual fishing futures and the future of fishing communities. Individual narratives are used to explore spatio-temporal unity and continuity (Hull, 1974, p. 261) of fish harvesters and fish harvesting communities. By considering both location, continuity, and sequence of events, spatio-temporal properties contribute to the organization and interpretation of past and present events (Hull, 1974, p. 260-261). Stories highlight ways of knowing, ways of living, and ways of coexisting with one another and are used as an instrument in stories for individuals to reimagine their reality. Narrative theory helps figure out the relationships that reside between power and occurrences of change (Holland & Peacock, 2001), and therefore helps highlight how fish harvesters perceive power within government regulation systems. Different people and stakeholders such as government entities, political representatives, department officials, union leaders, and local community members all reflect moments of disruptive change and adaptive responses through policies, public statements, and public demonstrations (like protests, townhalls, committee meetings, etc.).

Furthermore, I explore federal fishing policies and how they have developed in response to socio-ecological disruption and compare them to the experiences of fishers and the broader fishing community to prominently discuss Canadian governmental approaches in sustaining the

inshore/coastal fishing industry and federal attempts to avoid disruptive social, economic, and ecological events such as the 1992 cod collapse. This research aligns with the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (2015), an international study that supports responsible and sustainable fisheries, social and economic development, and focuses on consultation with marginalized groups, small-scale fishers, and fishing communities (p. ix). Following this path, I look at place-based solutions, and how they are shaped by individual accounts of socio-ecological (the human-to-nature relationships) and socio-environmental (the big picture) change. These stories were then assessed to look at the dynamics of large-scale transformations that are associated with post-industrial systems, ecological structures, and general beliefs/lifestyles (Whittington, 2019).

The stories collected suggest traditional ways of dealing with ecological disruption and avoiding an environmental catastrophe such as the 1992 cod collapse. The preservation of traditional fishing rights and practices in consistency with continuous scientific assessments is highly suggested among the individuals and communities I researched. Tradition heavily informs beliefs and practices related to traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) (Olson, 2013). It plays a role in the goals, ambitions, beliefs, and ways of reasoning, and is a way of reflecting human history (Hill, 1975, p. 254) and cultural consensus (Olsen, 2013). Anthropologists use free lists, pile sorts, objective tests, and semi-structured interviews to create key variables that inform current market participation, economic market integration, and biodiversity conservation (Olson, 2013). Traditional material objects such as cotton nets and cod filleting knives, and rubber duds (boots) also highlight collective identities and can be catalyst for passing down TEK (Williams et al., 2013 & Olsen, 2013). The relationship between fishing and the fish itself lives through food (fish cakes, rum, dried coconut) personal or collective stories (or autobiographical memories),

musical instruments (drums, Ugly Sticks, and spoons), artifacts (such as old fishing gear, wooden dory boats, and saltbox houses), pictures, newspaper articles, and songs (like Ise Da B'ys and Heave-Away, commonly sang by the infamous Newfoundland group Buddy Wassis Name and the other fellas).

Uncertainty is used to explore how disruption is experienced by fishers in Newfoundland, highlighting the environmental, cultural, and political factors that policy decision-making, specifically for the coastal areas of Newfoundland and Labrador. Qualitative data collection methods such as purposeful sampling, semi-structured interviews, and participatory observation are used to gather detailed stories. I spend a significant amount of time with a social-environmental justice group, inshore/coastal fishers, and community members from fishing communities across the island of Newfoundland to capture individual life stories during my time in the field. I found it effective to communicate my intentions with them and work together to determine who to talk to, where to visit, and how to organize my thoughts. Additionally, I spoke with community elders, professors, teachers/educators, and retired coast guards, to help inform my questions and scope. I found it helpful to use the voice note application on my phone to capture general ideas and thoughts after conversations (in the absence of a notepad).

Research Communities/Areas of Focus

Newfoundland and Labrador is 405.21 km² and full of phenomenal wildlife and natural scenery. Dark green evergreen trees line the highways and forests, and barren spots showcase clear blue ponds and large mountainous boulders that range from light beige and red hues to dark shades of gray. The Atlantic Ocean mirrors a reflection of the sky that dances on the horizon, making the ocean swirl with iridescent blues, greens, and grays, and sometimes with warm undertones that highlight the crevasses of untamable waves. On clear evenings, the skies are sometimes painted pink with clouds that look like cotton candy, and one can hear seagulls sing their cacophony of songs and watch as they swoop down to catch their fish. In the summertime the hills are lined with green grass, blueberries, raspberries, and other edible plants. The sweet smells of the trees, flowers, and ocean, always leaves one feeling warm—despite the wind (it can get very windy).

The province is home to people with mostly Indigenous and European descendants which highly attributes to vast differences in lived realities and ways of understanding. This research reflects the findings captured by a master's student in her late twenties who is a Newfoundlander and has resided in Newfoundland for almost her entire life. I come from both European (English/French/German) and Jamaican (West African/Caribbean) ancestry. It is important to acknowledge the placename of the land I live and study on—Newfoundland, which was formerly known to the Beothuk and Mi'kmaq as Ktukumuk (u-dah-hum-gook) (First Light Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023). Finally, this research is limited as it depicts the thoughts/ideas of mostly European-settler fishers. I made the decision to focus my research efforts on Newfoundland due to the cultural, geographic, and historical distinctions. Labrador is not the focus of this study. Most government institutions and policy decisions are made in St. John's, Newfoundland. It is

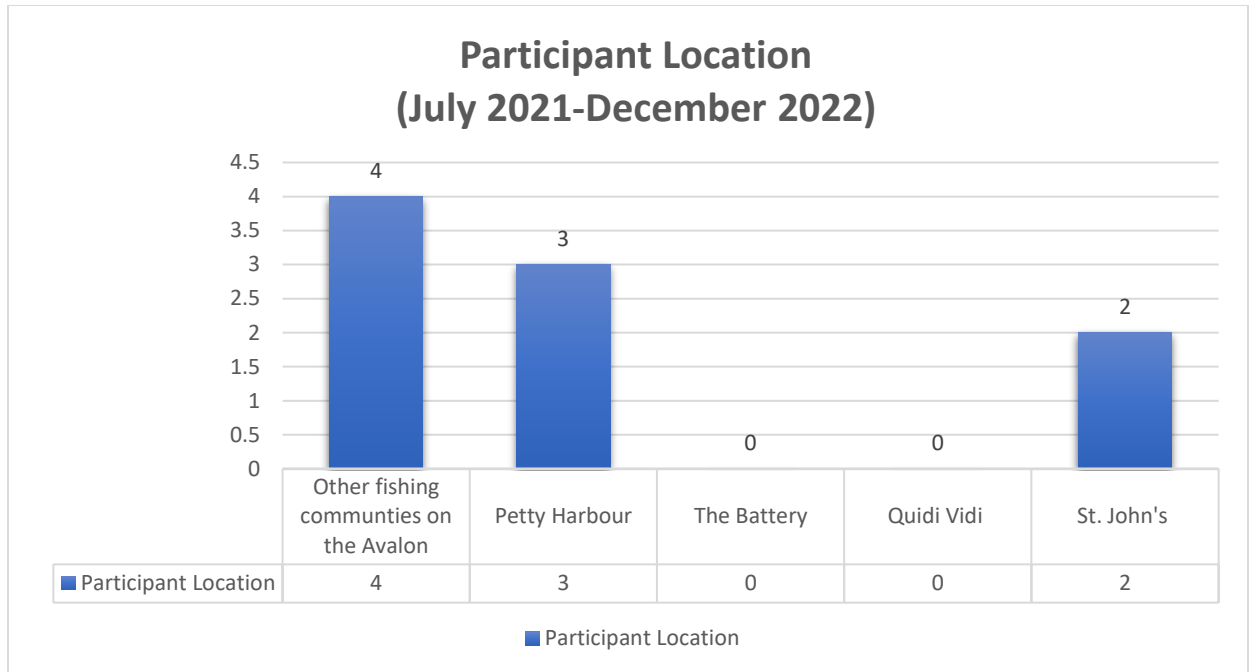
important to mention that Labrador shares a very defined history of Inuit and Innu culture, and so, Labrador deserves their own methodological and theoretical compositions that better reflect their histories and reality. A resident of Nain, Labrador, and Inuk community member gave insight into the cultural-linguistic difference during their speech at the Government House late 2022. They said that most Inuit and Innu in Labrador speak their native language and use English as their second language. They continued to say that this affects the political, cultural, and socio-economic distribution of the communities that make up Labrador. The systemic segregation of both Newfoundland and Labrador will be acknowledged in this study simply to emphasize on choice to focus on Newfoundland and inshore/coastal fishing there.

I use ethnographic data collected from seven (7) fish harvesters to provide case examples of disruption in regulatory licensing systems, fish stocks/market values, and ocean water conditions; and to show how local decision making is tied with the identity and experiences of being a local inshore/coastal fish harvester. I focus on both individuals and communities such as The Battery, Quidi Vidi, Petty Harbour because of their deep connections to the traditional inshore/coastal fishery. The communities in Newfoundland are typically spread out, making driving the most feasible option for travel. I also study historical archives and use photos of old buildings/fishing wharfs/artwork that reminisced of a thriving fishing industry in the aftermath of the cod collapse.

Most research participants that I speak to come from around these places. Others lived in rural communities located on the island. It was coincidence that I bumped into two (2) rural fish harvesters, a father, and a son, during a protest. On the other hand, I was able to connect with two (2) more rural fish harvesters on my own because I knew them from previous jobs and social events. All four (4) of these individuals live outside of St. John's and the metro area, but often

visit town to do business. Additionally, I met three (3) fish harvesters through social-environmental justice networks, who all live in Petty Harbour. Two-thirds (2/3) of those participants recall fish harvesting dating back multiple generations. Lastly, the two individuals from St. John's are related to the fishing industry but in different ways. One is the son of a fish harvester from the mid 1900's to early 1990's, while the other is a retired coast guard who saw firsthand the change in fishing protocols and practices, and who is dedicated to advocating for policies that ensure social and economic reciprocity and sustainable policies in the fishing industry.

Despite some locations having no participants in them (n=0), they were still included because of their historic relevance to the fishing industry and were now time capsules filled with old fishing stages, salt box houses, and secondary archival information. I made up for the lack of participants by listening to old interviews/recorded stories, looking at archived newspapers/documents, and gathering basic insight from family and friends who lived in the area for about fifty (50) years.

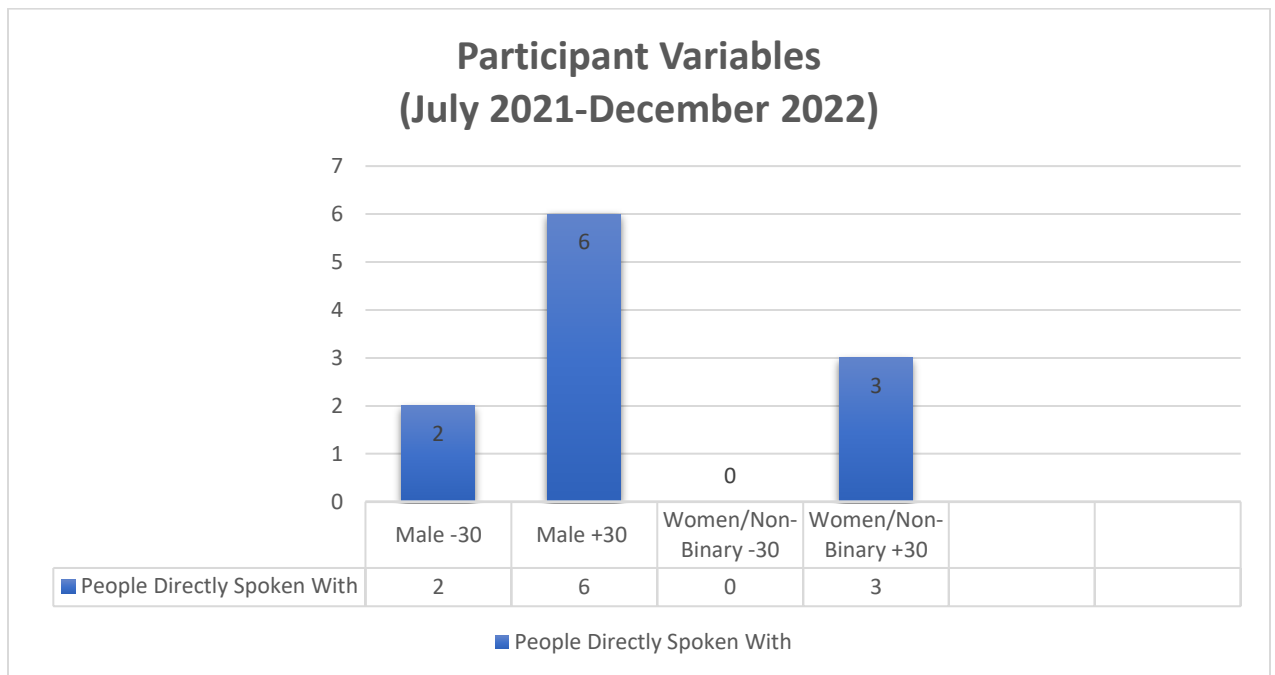


Individual variables such as gender, age, social class, and mode of subsistence, are ways of explaining the connection between TEK, individuals, and communities (Olsen, 2013) are used as indicators to purposefully sample communities and participants for this study. Furthermore, this research focuses on the participants’ ways of fishing make connections between market anticipation/participation, economic market integration and conservation methods. The chart below quickly reveals the age and gender variables of the participants that I directly spoke with during my fieldwork. It is notable to highlight that male participants make up 72% of my research group, while women and non-binary individuals make up 27%, showing that the data collected for this thesis is heavily influenced by an older male perspective. Women and non-binary individuals are grouped together for reasons related to safety and confidentiality purposes.

Nevertheless, the contributions of the women and non-binary participants aligned closely with what male participants were telling me. It is also notable to mention that the non-binary

individual is of Mi'kmaw identity and stated that their opinions were heavily based on their communal TEK, and the “feeling of wholeness and happiness when the belly is full.”

One thing that was notably different from male and women/non-binary participants was the women/non-binary suggested taking traditional fishing out of the commercial industry completely. They had suggestions of economic market integration and conservation that were similar to the small-scale fishery guidelines (FAO, 2013) but largely thought that fishing should be honored as only a local means of providing and sharing means of subsistence. They made it clear that it was a respectful way of treating people and animals through eliminating overconsumption of natural resources and turning away from large-scale fish harvesting techniques.



Many of the research participants sought me out through word of mouth (they heard I was looking for research participants about fishing) or they saw the call for participants that was

widely shared via social media networks. While in the field I spent my time focusing on ways to communicate the intent and goals of my research to people across the island of Newfoundland.

I spoke mostly with fishers over the phone or over zoom at their convenience. Before any interview started the participant was made aware that they could stop the conversation at any time. Despite the laggy/lost phone connections, especially during fisher Finn's phone calls, the phone interviews worked out well. Each interview lasted from twenty-five (25) minutes to sixty (60) minutes. The interviews offered ten open-ended questions. The questions were shared with some fishers at their request so they could fill out their answers by hand and get back to me. Others were comfortable with answering the questions on the spot. The questions came with a subset of lead on questions to continue the conversation, but there was no official script created for facilitation. There was strong emphasis on cultural perceptions and "using your own words" to describe situations, scenarios, and concerns. The questions for the one-on-one interviews focused heavily on individual interpretations and relied on solely oral means of communication.

Group sessions with four (4) social-environmental activists and community members focused on more expressive means like poetry writing, letters imagery/sign making, card games, and "show and tell." There was no interview question guide for the group sessions. People were able to see the question via PowerPoint, during a preliminary presentation that happened before the discussion. The online group sessions hosted by me were supported by the social justice group that I closely worked with. The group session was recorded and had a script and formal presentation to help facilitate ideas as a group before participants were given the opportunity to make their own expressive piece. The script explained and followed the question "What does the future look like for Newfoundland and Labrador's natural environment?" The question was vague, and participants were given a word bank to inspire their thoughts and to help answer the

question. During the group activities, all participants were given notice that participation was optional, and they had the choice to opt-out of the project anytime.

I helped with organizing events with the social justice group I connected with. These events were largely in person and in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador throughout 2021-2022. Admittedly, I attempted to distribute one short online survey to those from a particular social justice group, but I was unsuccessful. The online survey was intended to take less than five minutes and inquired about perceptions of environmental problems in the province. I believe that this was unsuccessful partially because it was during the warm summer we've been having at the time of the survey, and that many were busy with their own projects. I quickly learned that respecting the time of those who you are interested in learning from and being open to their daily schedule really matters. I also believe that this helped strengthen the social bonds between myself and many of the community members I met along the way, as many found it easier to connect with me and share their problems on their own terms.

Outline of the Chapters

The thesis is divided into four chapters describing the ethnographic location of my study, the individuals and policies involved, the methods used to collect people's stories, and my guided conclusions based off my findings.

Chapter 1 sheds light on the inshore/coastal fishery related federal policies, practices, and regulations; and shows narratives from local fishers through one-on-one settings as well as in group event settings.

Chapter 2 chapter describes how people in Newfoundland identify with inshore/coastal fishing and how change can affect how fishers and fishing families reimagine their communities after much change.

Chapter 3 describes how larger structures that control socio-economic and socio-ecological systems such as official structures have managed mass system change, and how disruption can inform us of what has worked and has not worked in those situations; and explores how local stories can reveal different responses to disruptive systems.

Chapter 4 looks at how industrialized eco-systems can consist of people who are not automatically dependent on one another for their core activities (Bass et al., 2004) and explores reimagined pasts and futures of the Newfoundland fishery. It aims to look at Newfoundland fishery in terms of industrial eco-systems, and critically look at how they rely on a sense of common fate, distinct set of products and technologies, specialized labour, formal/informal social networks that encourage competition, and a collective behaviour that supports adaptation/change (p. 1075).

I finalize my thoughts in the conclusion and discuss how fishing practices and the connections between the traditional Newfoundland inshore/coastal fishing industry and injustice are tied to social, economic, and ecological disruption. I highlight how uncertainty and disruptive events can foster multiple ways of dealing with change, creating individual and collective best practices that are socially and culturally influenced. I suggest that these perspectives can reimagine locally informed policy procedures and outcomes and create more localized and sustainable solutions for coastal/inshore fishing now

Chapter 1

Fishing in Newfoundland: An Overview of Inshore/Coastal Fishery Licenses, and Federal Fishing Regulations

This chapter sheds light on inshore/coastal fishery related federal policies, practices, and regulations, and life stories from local fishers through one-on-one settings as well as in group event settings. It shows the findings from qualitative methods of gathering narratives from fishers and related community members through one-on-one settings as well as in group event settings. It describes how interviews can be conducted to illustrate life stories and can allow for less question structure to capture local words, sayings, and understandings.

The following pages pay attention to the policies and regulations under PART III of the Inshore and Coastal Licenses (Section 17.2) of the Atlantic Fishery Regulations; the National Online Licensing System; the Fisheries Act (R.S.C., 1985); specific fishing regions 4R, 3P, 2J3KL; and finally, total allowable catches (TACs) in relation to species at risk and environmental impact assessments. Throughout my research, I found that policies, trusted community leaders, and locals shared concerns about ecological welfare, social development, and financial revenue, but I find contrastingly different supporting strategies for reconciling with lost revenues, declining cod stocks, and fishing rights. The individuals interviewed say that these policies have a responsibility to address their concerns about the ever-changing conditions of the inshore and coastal fishing industry.



Figure 2 Photo of Petty Harbour, NL. Taken by me.

1.1 Examining Inshore/Coastal Licensing

There is a sharp focus on The Fisheries Act because it holds the regulations and rules associated with general local fish harvester concerns. The act also provides key words and descriptions surrounding inshore/coastal fishing regulations that will be discussed throughout the chapters. The Fisheries Act contains the legislative governing documents that regulate most actions that relate to fishing and is amended continuously by the government of Canada. This act defines the actions and procedures of inshore/coastal fishing and holds the most relevance to the fish harvesters I speak to, and to the fishing community in general.

Inshore and coastal fish harvesting is recognized in the *Fisheries Act* as part of the traditional settler (European) fishing culture in Newfoundland and Labrador and treated as distinctly different from Indigenous fishing regulations, described in the Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licenses Regulations. PART III of the Inshore and Coastal Licenses (Section 17.2) of the Atlantic Fishery Regulations oversee inshore/coastal license procedures and gives an individual or a group of people the licensing right to a fishing enterprise. Owning a fishing enterprise is seen as a great way to own make a profit but many locals say that they see more licenses expire or dissolve because of legal parameters and financial restrictions that hinder formal license transfers. Eligibility criteria for kinship/shareholder/ownership excludes aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. Localized heightened awareness around diminishing inshore/coastal licensing has caused concern among individual fishers and local fishing unions across the province.

There are around ten thousand (10,000) inshore and coastal fishing licenses (DFO, 2023 & FFAW 2022) that are dependent on the policies and laws that surrounding the inshore and coastal licensing sections of the *Fisheries Act*. Schedule 1 under the *Fisheries Act* refers to many species of fish that can be harvested under an inshore and coastal fishing license. It specifies regulations that define fishing parameters, from Convention areas to Ungava Bay and the waters of Hudson Strait, east of 70°00' west longitude, and includes the most infamous species of fish that defines Newfoundland and Labrador culture, *Gadus Morhua*, better known as cod. There are exceptions, under the Application section of the Fisheries Act, paragraph (3)(a) states that regulations do not apply to “foreign” vessels.

These licenses represent the oldest alliance between individual family members and local community members that outlines the duties, powers, and responsibilities of inshore/coastal

fishing. Simply put, Section 17-2 (1) considers inshore family fishing corporations (family is defined related to subsection 251 (2) of the Income Tax Act), inshore fishing corporations, and inshore family trusts, eligible for an inshore fishing license. The license must be given to independent core license holders, under the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and own 100% of the voting and non-voting shares of their organization. The Newfoundland and Labrador inshore and coastal fishery is a beacon of continuity as it represents five hundred (500) years of fishing off the coast. Many fish harvesters express a cultural attachment to inshore/coastal fishing and associate it with spending time with a close family member like a father, uncle, or cousin, and so many feel as though they have inherited rights to the trade. The inshore/coastal fishery has distinct policies, regulations, and designated coastal areas, making it distinct from commercial fishing. Many of the locals I spoke with felt like traditional fishing rights were not acknowledged enough in Section 17.2 and often said that other kinship ties should be considered in the licensing process.

In February 2022, I met Roy through community word-of-mouth. Roy approached me via email because he heard I was researching disruption in the fishing community and wanted to learn more about who I was and what I was doing. Growing up, Roy was confident about the future of the fishery, but now, he worries for future generations. Roy has fished all his life, and much like this father, he fished from the port of Petty Harbour and made a good living for most of his life. Roy said, “my fadder (father) fished. My fadder’s fadder fished. And my grandfadder’s fadder fished!” He recalls fishing being the main way to earn a living growing up, and it being very easy to enter the trade because many families had preexisting ties to the trade. If you did not fish, then your father did– if your father didn’t fish, then his brother did– and so

forth. He remembers being a young boy knowing that he would become a fisherman, and that he would be able to provide for his family for years to come, like his father before him.

He was concerned about the next generation getting that opportunity. As a young man, he remembers more opportunities for an individual to finance their own fishing enterprise. Now, he says, the banks are more likely to give a loan to an oil company instead of a young person looking to start their own enterprise. Roy, with heaviness in his voice, expressed that it was a discouraging factor affecting young people and their access to the fishery. When speaking to a younger fish harvester, fisher Finn, he told me that he was lucky enough to be handed down a license to operate as a small/medium fishing enterprise and invested in equipment and things that would benefit him and his crew in the long term. Extra money allowed Finn to focus on maximizing his profits and keeping his crew safe while on board. From our conversations, it seems that Finn always has a full and happy crew and can comfortably provide for his own family during the off season, too.

Aside from Finns heart-warming story, there are other stories about licensing, traditional fishing rights, and the continuation of inshore/coastal fish harvesting of cod. Lily, a kind-hearted and thoughtful fish harvester, is proud to tell everyone that her license was inherited and passed down from her father. Lily told a group of us this during an event series at the St. John's farmers market, that she was "a proud fisherman" who did not take ocean conservation and sustainable fishing lightly because of her deep-rooted beliefs in human/animal welfare.

On another note, section 17.2 allows for an annual continuation of inshore/coastal fishing that is dependent on licensure certification and licensing renewal through the National Online Licensing System (NOLS). DFO (2019) acknowledged in their executive summary that NOLS was increasingly difficult to operate and that fish harvesters were not able to locate the correct

license to apply for and to print off (p. 4). “Online licensing only works if you have a computer,” said one local fisher. He comes from a place where internet service and basic telecommunication technologies lack presence and efficiency. Online processing of payments requires a credit card, posing another obstacle to some fishers who do not have one. In recent times, rural community residents have been openly complaining about the lack of banks around them and fear that more would shut down in the future, making wire-payments even more impossible if they do not have a laptop and online banking.

Roy told me said DFO’s approach to fishing timelines were inconsiderate of the safety of fish harvesters. He noted that there were rules and regulations in place that do not effectively consider inclement weather conditions, and this, in combination with unreasonable timelines to pull in nets makes for tough decisions for fish harvesters and consequently has hefty fines attached to it too. He said that due to the escalating weather conditions, ocean waves are getting “harder” in the cold temperatures that come in winter/spring, forcing boats to become equipped for aggressive and dangerous weather conditions, which can be costly. Without the right financing, local fishing enterprises are not able to meet the requirements that keep crew members safe. In addition to this, Roy says that deadlines to bring in nets are not flexible and do not understand the dangers that come with following red-tape guidelines when on the water in this case. The fishing season determined by the DFO, and Roy says the department does not acknowledge to the changing weather conditions and administers fines without consideration of safety and the weather.

Roy told me that pulling in nets a day early for some can affect livelihoods, and unpredictable weather makes the decision even harder for them to determine whether the next day will be a good day to be out at sea. If the weather is too bad to go out there, some fish

harvesters will risk their lives to pull in their nets to avoid the fines and confrontation with DFO. The fish harvesters who are fined can appeal this in court. A lot of them feel intimidated, as though they are entering a losing battle. Additionally, there are limited locations for court hearings across the island of Newfoundland, making rural access to courthouses and transportation an additional burden to deal with, on top of the fine. This is one of the many reasons why Roy sees friction between DFO officials and the livelihoods of local fishers.

Roy was very serious and told me many stories about the individual treatment of fishers by DFO officers and felt as though many local fishers were being criminalized for having to forcibly adapt fish harvesting techniques. To fish as an inshore/coastal fisher, there are procedures and guidelines to ensure licensure certification and vessel verification (with DFO and Transport Canada); and the requirement to make an online payment (DFO, 2023). Licenses and their regulations are reviewed and enforced throughout the fishing season by DFO officers. Roy suggested ways we could resolve some of the concerns and grievances between locals and federal officers.

But before he did that, Roy told me many just “give up” and pay their dues, and hope that their license is renewed again. Oftentimes, fish harvesters would conflict with DFO officials on harvesting dates, fish quotas, and the use of fishing gear. Some of the fish harvesters I spoke to about this compared their experience to being watched from a guard tower and said miscommunication between fish harvesters and DFO officials often resulted in criminalization and the loss of licenses. To put fishing on full stop, for many fish harvesters, is detrimental, and many do not have the capacity to travel in the courthouse in St. John’s, nor do they have the efficacy to advise legal counsel to help them contest DFO charges. The online website describing the contestation process notes that decisions can be contested by independent fish harvesters but

does not give assurance or a timeline for either process. DFO clearly states that the department has the right to withdraw licenses, “[...] suspend or cancel licenses or to take enforcement actions to keep the benefits of inshore fishing licenses in the hands of independent core harvesters.” Roy told me that he doubts the decision-making process will address their concerns before the fishing season ends. They are aware of the federal government’s intention to regulate licenses but are afraid of the time it takes to make a full decision. Roy fears a decision will not happen until after the fishing season is over.

Ignoring the realities of fishing, for Roy, is costly for local fishing enterprises, misses opportunities for key harvesting times, and exposes fish harvesters to unpredictable environmental conditions. Roy reminisces about how things were in comparison to how they are now, and as a local Newfoundlander and Labradorian would say, Roy is looking out for the future “b’ys.” Paying attention to how fishers attribute agency to nature (for example, the sea) and how nature influences the meanings of natural elements and nonhuman animals, it is possible to understand the effects of larger power structures that relate to socio-biological understandings. The concern about capital expansion into other markets and lack of opportunities to gain access to fishing licenses in comparison to the past emphasizes the “sidelines” (Fife, 2014, p. 102) or spatio-temporal factors (Hull, 1975) that connect with Roy’s individual decision making and behaviour towards DFO and officials.

1.2 Examining Other Federal Fishing Regulations in Newfoundland

In the last 7 years the Federal Government of Canada and related departments such as DFO have taken actions to manage the inshore/coastal fishing industry, specifically in the watery parameters of Newfoundland and Labrador, referred to as Divisions 2J3KL 4R (Government of Canada, 2011; 2023). Amendments to Divisions 2J3KL 4R are based on the plight of marine life, but many locals have concerns about the borders and timelines of these fishing grounds.

In early winter 2022 I had a conversation over the phone with Finn. We were able to speak briefly in between his trips out to sea. Being a proud skipper (respected captain) of a crew, he had many things to do and many places to be before the crab season started—it was a good thing he had a big truck for doing so many things as I knew he was hauling fishing gear from one part of the island to the other. Finn spoke to me briefly about his experience fishing crab. He was concerned about policies lagging and failing to acknowledge the different routes crabs and other shellfish were now taking due to the changes in the water. He told me that it was getting harder to track and harvest them.



Figure 3 Finn takes a photo of his legs and feet and sends it to me via text message, to let me know he is not available to speak to me in person, and that there is little to no cell service at sea.

Fundamentally it is important for fish harvesters to ensure that they are in their designated fishing zone at the right time. “Like many sea animals,” Finn said, “crabs go to where they are most comfortable, and sometimes the harvesting boundaries and timelines used to harvest crab does not react fast enough to these changes.” Finn, being a new father and loving husband, was concerned about how he would do in the upcoming season and wondered how

lagging policies and changing ocean conditions would influence the success of his enterprise. He said that this was only part of the problem. He noticed that the decrease in opportunities for multi-buyer competition has inevitably led to local fishers being able to sell their catches to a select few buyers. This is a make-or-break situation for smaller-scale crab fishers as crab populations and revenues decline. 2016 data shows that the smallest crab fishing boats bring in anywhere from \$32,339 to \$52,911 while the largest crab vessels brought in anywhere from \$227,109 to \$539,564 (Government of Canada, 2016), showing a remarkable difference in monetary and resource capacity between small scale and large-scale enterprises. Similarly, to cod, crab landings (catches) are decreasing too. In 2017, DFO surveys were administered to crab fishers like Finn, and environmental assessments were completed in compliment to the surveys. There were 53,500 landings in 2009 compared to 34,000 landings in 2017 (Government of Canada, 2018). In 2022, crab stocks are alarmingly low, forcing Divisions 2J to shrink by 28% and for local unions to launch economic support programs for crab fishers (DFO, 2022 & FFAW 2023). For crab fishers, the future is grim.

The main concern for Finn is about changing ocean conditions, declining crab populations and the threat of monopolizing crab and related market values and revenues. Finn uses the trap and trawl method to catch crabs but does not know how much longer that method will prove to be successful as there are uncontrollable environmental and economic factors that affect the supply and the value/demand of crab.



Figure 4 Finn takes a photo of his crew member handling crab that they caught. Finn is on the way back home with this catch.

Shellfish has generally become a viable alternative for fish harvesters to prevent overfishing a certain population of ocean biomass, but that window of opportunity seems to be closing. At the same time, cod stocks have not returned to adequate levels since the nineties. Additionally, the 2019 Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat Science Advisory report on northern cod stock assessment said that cod stocks are only at 20% of the pre-collapse period of

the 1980's and that the overall probability of the stock becoming greater was around 63%-73%, which is not as promising as fish harvesters and officials would like it to be.



Figure 5 Photos of building structures, some habitable, from The Battery, St. John's, NL. Taken by me.

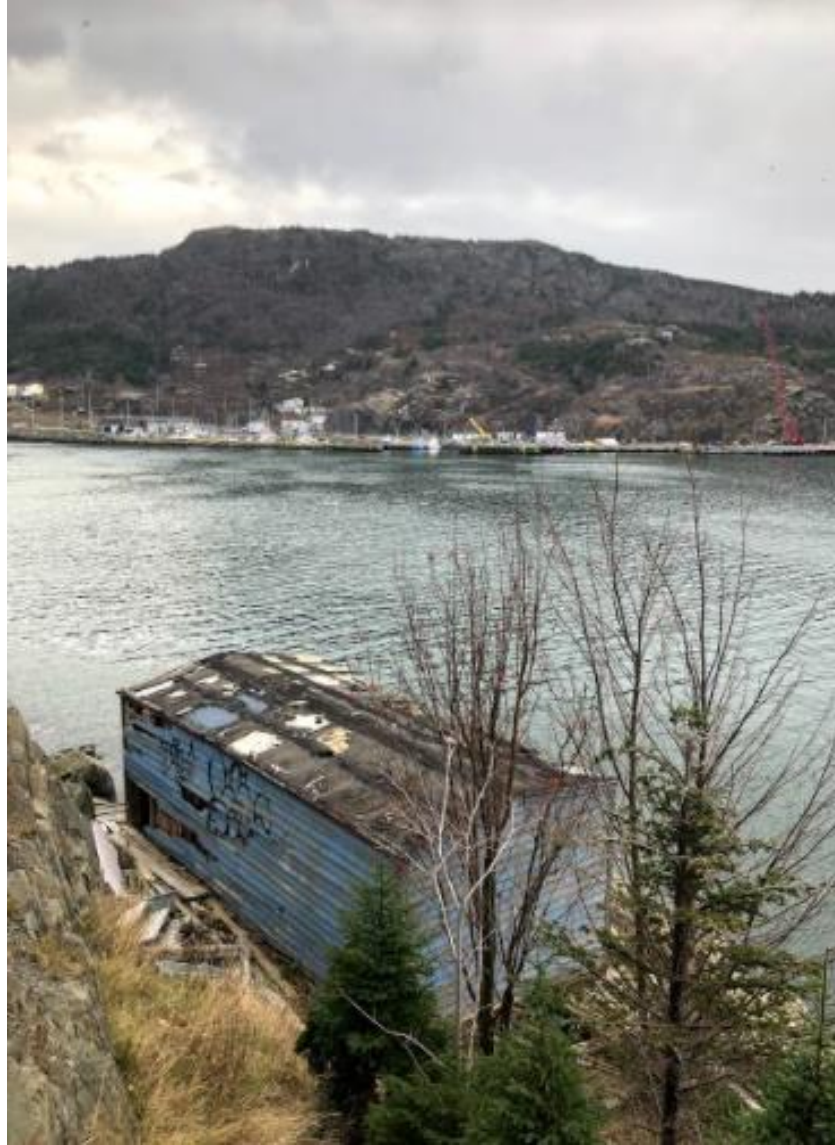


Figure 6 Photos of building structures, some habitable, from The Battery, St. John's, NL. Taken by me.



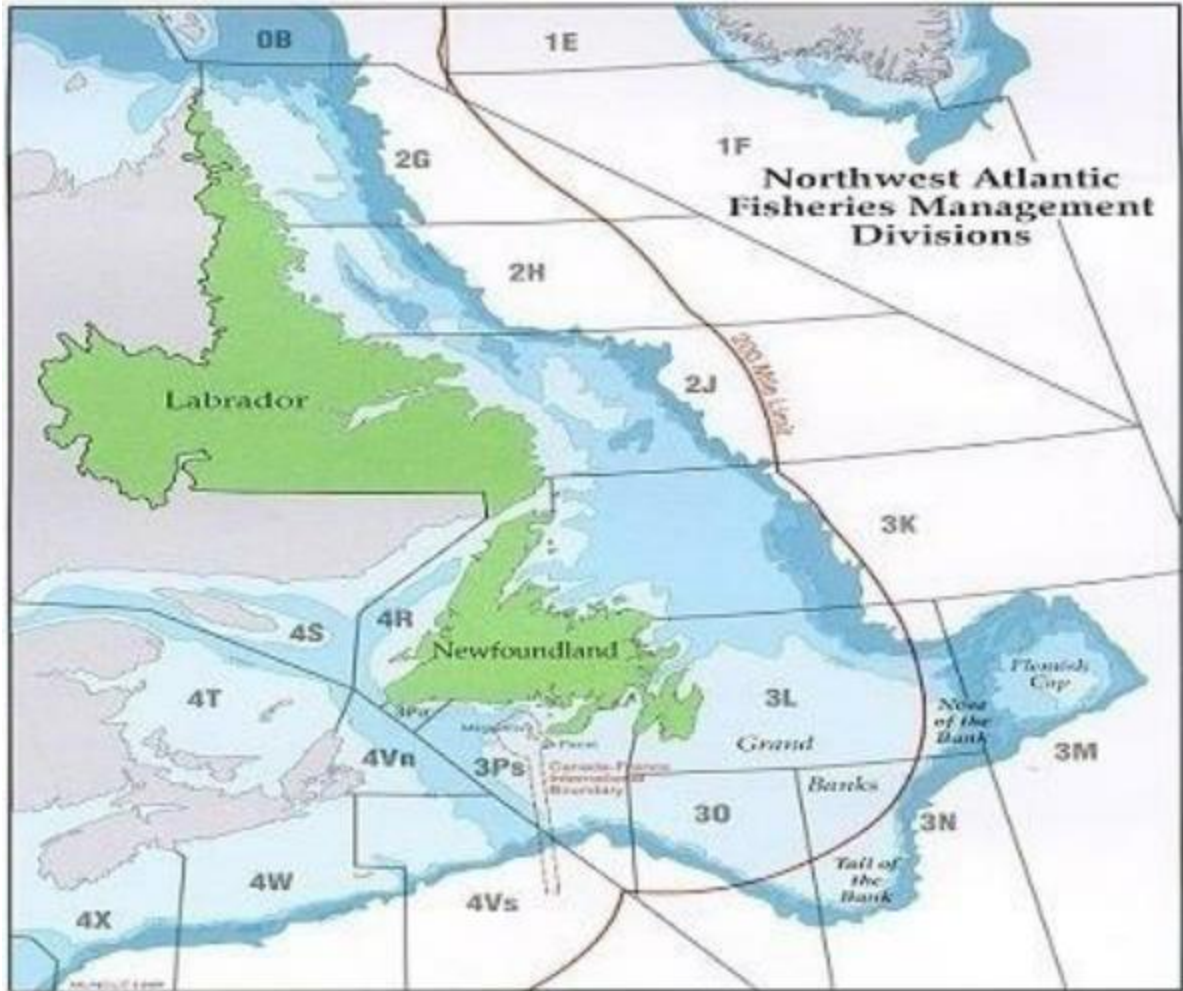
Figure 7 Photo of a fence painted with ocean inspired art, Petty Harbour, NL. Taken by me.

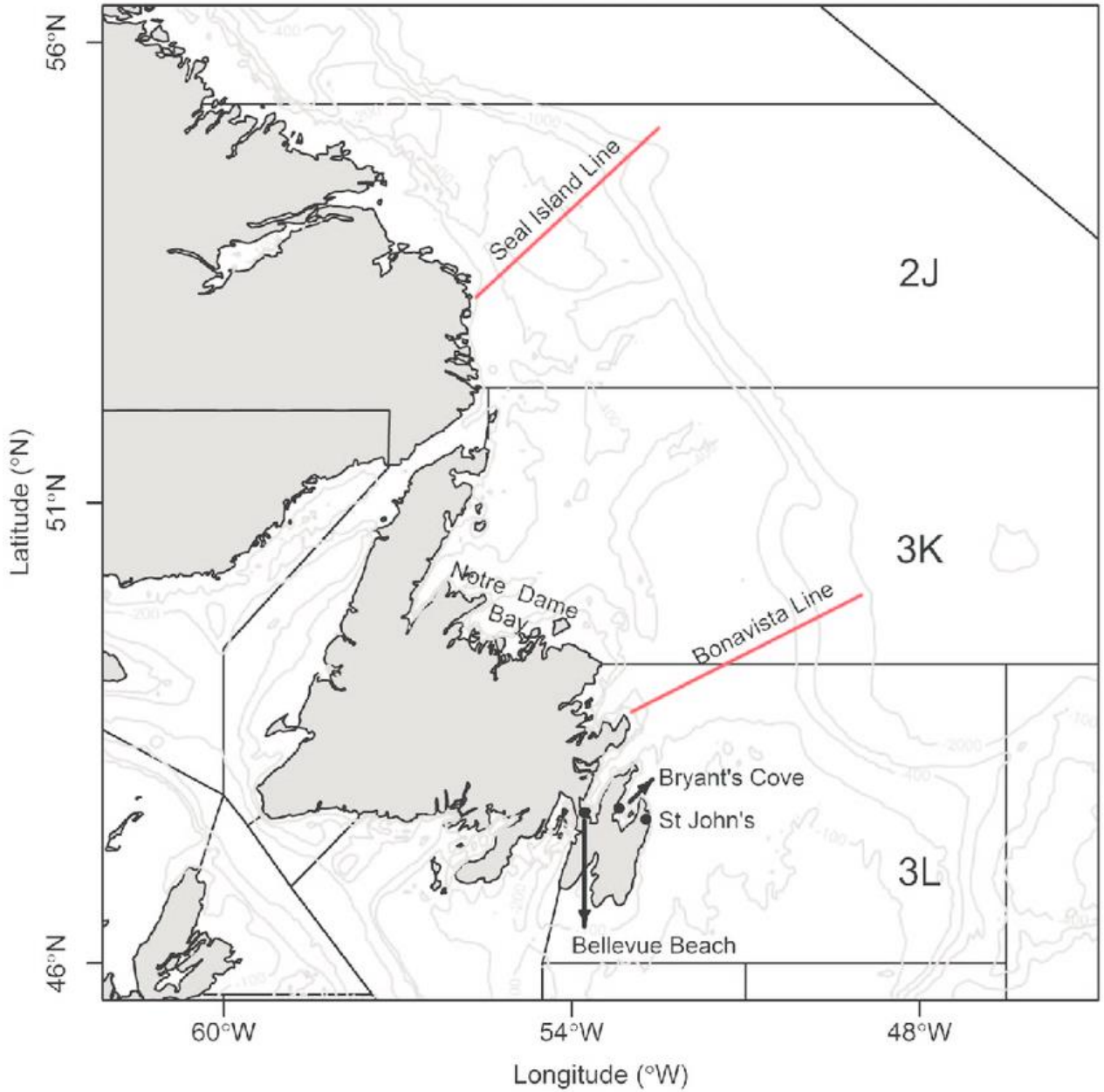
In 2017, DFO held twenty-one (21) consultation sessions that were “well attended” and informed the department on “policies and management measures” and highlighted the vast knowledge of local fish harvesters’ common goal(s) between stakeholders and individuals (DFO, 2019). In DFO’s (2019) executive summary they summarize their findings categorically: communications, harvester knowledge, foreign overfishing and inter-provincial access, science, management measures, fees, and oil and gas. It specifically looks at these regions:

4R	Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Canada. Outlined by DFO and the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)
3P	A fishing zone for cod. It encompasses parts of the Atlantic Ocean and the southern coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. Outlined by DFO and NAFO.

2J3KL	A combination of Divisions 2J and 3KL. Division 2J covers the waters near eastern Newfoundland and southern Labrador. 3KL covers the waters off the northern coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. Outlined by DFO and NAFO.
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It has been recently acknowledged that an overlap agreement established in 2011 for harvesters between L'Anse aux Meadows and Cape Bauld that permitted them to fish a portion of 3K while 4R cod fishery is open, which, in general, reflects and recognizes traditional fishing areas (Government of Canada, 2019). Consultations with DFO have launched further inquiry into a groundfish advisory committee to focus on overlapping privileges and to address conflicts between fish harvesters who hold licenses in Divisions 2J and 4R. The protocols that are currently outlined in the Department's Sector Management Policy need to establish better thresholds for implementing these privileges and monitor increasing stock levels (Government of Canada, 2019). Harvesters from Division 3K wish to have the same overlap and seasonal rights to Division 4R. Particularly when the season is open to 4R and closed for 3K for cod fishing. They also wish to ensure no negative impact on 4R fishers (Government of Canada, 2019). Additionally, a need for increased cod quotas was heard throughout the participating audience. Harvesters in Division 4R want an increased quota for Northern Gulf Cod and higher permitted number of gillnets, want more flexibility in the fishing season (May to September), want increased cod allocations for quality programs, and more research on Northern Gulf cod trophic systems/prey.





Harvesters continue to say that they are unsatisfied with mobile gear fleet inclusion in 3P's cod fishery since 2017, and the changes in re-allocation equivalent to 100% of initial quota after 75% landed. Additionally, they suggest managing strategies for Divisions 2J3KL's cod fishery protocols on individual quota, weekly limits, and for higher consideration to go into drastic changes due to market prices and environmental conditions. DFO responded to concerns with assurance the department would consult with science, committees, and industry experts, to

find resolutions to the list of concerns (Government of Canada, 2019). Currently in 2023 there is still an active collective voice from the fish harvester community vocalizing concerns lack of consultations and consistent market and environment evaluations. To address this concern and create less disparity between local needs and top-down regulations, federal, provincial, regional, and municipal governments must consult with local communities and trusted subject matter experts in the community.

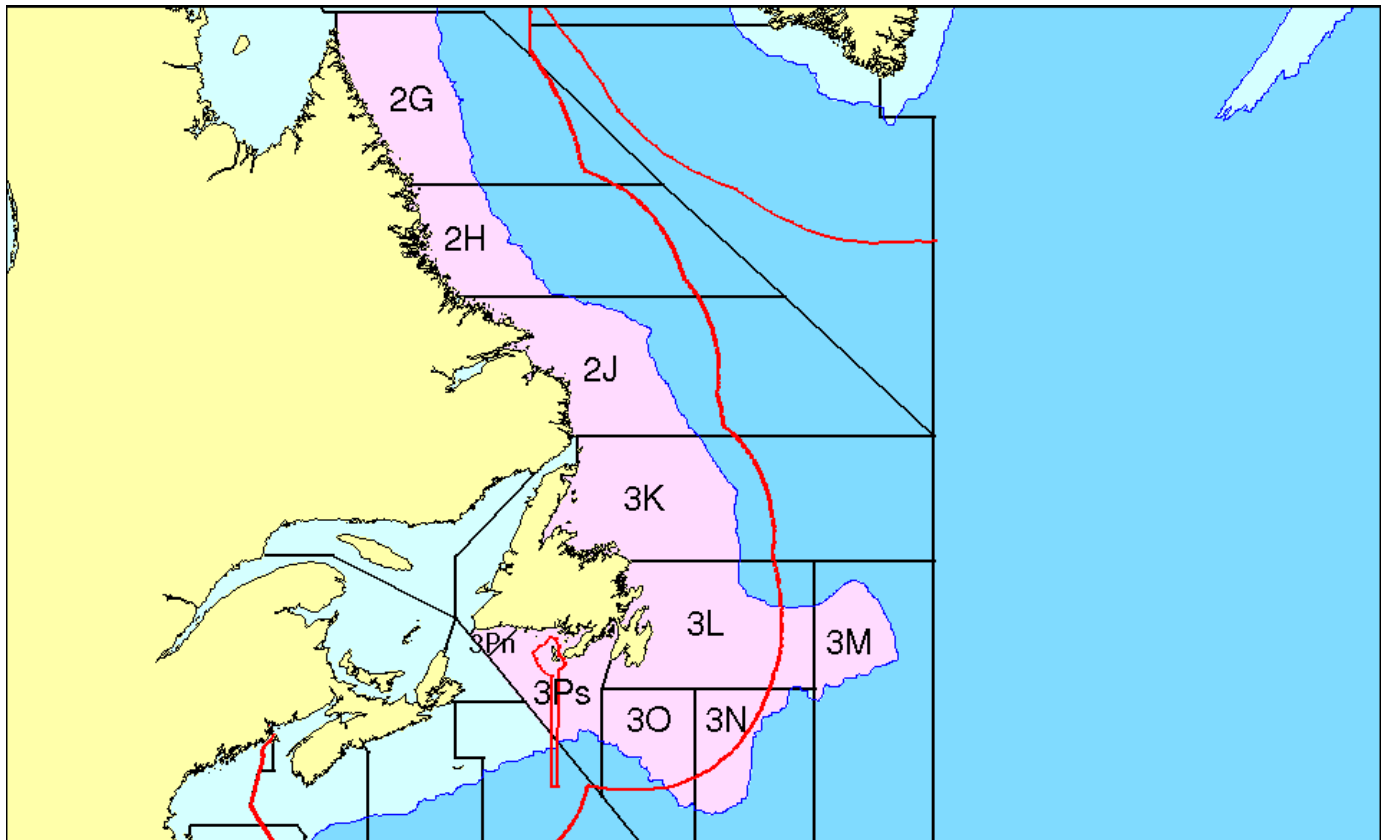


Figure 8 Photo taken by a volunteer crew member during our fishing trip, of the Petty Harbour Mini Aquarium, Petty Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador.

A university professor, Dean Bavington (2010) refers to Newfoundland and Labradorian fish harvesters as the farmers of the sea and says, the key distinction of fishing is that the yield doesn't always come from the same place nor is it captured in the net at the same time, every

time. Inshore/coastal fishing has created ways of knowing how to care for and sustain the practice. While in the field, local discussions around corporate versus local/inshore fishing opportunities, lack of adequate and continuous vessel surveys and environmental impact assessments (EIAs), and the political disregard for historical knowledge and treatment of fish were common themes of conversation. Many pointed out that disruptions that prevented “putting hand to mouth” (as a retired coast guard put it) when it came to fishing, income, and sustenance, was a main problem for the inshore/coastal fishing enterprises today. Local fishing plants are decreasing while unprocessed fish are sold to international plants and then bought back by businesses in the province at a higher market rate.

Local unions and activist groups have called on government institutions and related authorities to consider the smaller dynamics associated with traditional fishing such as considering more local approaches to determining when and how to catch cod fish and who can catch cod fish Amendments to the Fisheries Act in 2019 and in 2023 made DFO policies for inshore and coastal fisheries into law. The Government of Canada’s website explains the supplementary information for the new laws, and states that these regulations prioritize independent core fish harvesters, keeps the benefits associated with the inshore fishing licenses, and maintains a distance between the fishing industry and other industrial sectors.

During my interviews, further discussions happened around addressing previous concerns and measuring total allowable catches (TACs) in a collective way to eliminate scarcity and low daily quotas. For example, Roy, a fish harvester from Petty Harbour suggested that sharing surplus fish with those who did not make the days quota as opposed to throwing the (already dead) perfectly good surplus fish over the wharf can ensure everyone is “good for the day” and that “the fish are respected without going to waste.” In addition to collective ways of

thinking about TACs, many fish harvesters and community members discuss the lack of protocols put in place to prevent fish from leaving the province only to be bought back again.

In August 2022 I went cod jigging with Kandice, Captain L and a group of kind-hearted volunteers. Cod jigging is better known as hand lining and is a method of fishing that uses a “H” shaped wooden item with a long fish line and baited hook attached at the weighted end of the line. The intension of the jigger is to catch the cod by the mouth, quickly bring it up to the surface, and kill it before it can suffer any longer. The wooden jigger weighs about four (4) pounds and the rope is light weight too but carries a heavy bottom to be able to plunge fast and deep into the water. It surprised me how fast the line went down into the ocean after being casually tossed aboard. In mere seconds the line dropped sixteen (16) feet down into the water, exactly around where schools of cod swim about. When I caught a cod fish, the rest of the crew hollered “Pull! Pull! Pull!” until the cod emerged from the water and leaped right onto the boat deck. The hoorays and horras filled the boat as I were holding, what felt to be about a ten-pound (10lbs) fish, but after weighing it I soon realized it was five pounds (5lbs). Cod jigging in a longliner boat is staple of traditional cod fishing for Newfoundland and Labrador and is a cultural symbol that represents an idea of home for a lot of people.



Figure 9 Kassie (me) holding up a cod fish after hauling up the jigging line.

During the cod jigging trip, Captain L knew exactly where the boat could not venture when we were looking for fish to catch and hinted that his father did not have such restrictions in place some time ago. Captain L was comparing the size of the fishing ground to that of his father and used this comparison to show how the parameters are shrinking.

Captain L stared out into the ocean, and mentioned again how his father fishes out there, and expressed his desire to take us out there to look around. He said he could not drive his boat out there and feared the consequences, like the suspension of his fishing license. His dissatisfying reaction to shrinking fishing grounds points to a deeper-rooted connection to the paternal relationship with his father and memories of his father being able to fish within broader parameters.

As we approached the shore, Kandice said to me that there was no other fishing experience like cod jigging, simply because when you connect your hands directly with the line that catches the fish, it creates a special relationship and responsibility between you and the fish. There is also a sense of great pleasure when you catch some cod, to which I can attest to this through my own experience. A common saying amongst most Newfoundlanders is “I gotta get me fish b’y” and “cod is king”. It is written on T-shirts, mugs, signs, and is often said jokingly when ordering a plate of food at a local fish and chips shop. The saying shows how important cod is to people on the island.

In many fishing families, including my own, there are examples of strong and loving paternal relationships and feelings of joy and sorrow that shape the stories of their children. Fishing is a seasonal job that requires harvesters to be away from family for long periods of time, and so many want to spend as much time with their family as possible, and that usually meant having your children around the boat. The time spent between the child and fish harvesting father fosters a platform for learning about all aspects of fishing and are informed by TEK and science. During this time, both knowledge systems are personified in autobiographical narratives. For example, my nan often recalls some of her best memories occurring out on the boat with her father when she was a young girl and catching fish for dinner. My mother often recalls my great-

grandfather repairing his boat and letting her do a few fishing trips when he was in the commercial fishing industry, but she says that they never ate the fish, instead it was all sold. By taking a closer look and comparing these two stories it is clear to see differences in experiences with how cod was used.



Figure 10 My Great Grandfather Papa Drodge on his Fishing Stage, The Battery NL (sometime in the 1930's)

Another community member, Matthew, who is in their late 60's, grew up in a fishing family during the 1950's and recalls his father coming home with small gifts and tons of love at

the end of the fishing season. Like many, Matthew's father worked for most of the year but was always eager to get home. Matthew remembers not hearing from his father for months, until one day he heard the phone ring because his father had found a landline. Matthew's family were able to live a comfortable life from his father's fishing until an unforeseen health condition struck the family for the worst, resulting in his father ceasing to fish and creating financial hardship. Matthew's family had to relocate and start from scratch, and from that, Matthew was able to pursue a university degree and become a prominent educational figure and youth mentor. The stories told by my nan, mother, and Matthew, relate fishing to a strong and loving paternal relationship and recall generational knowledge/feelings/experiences that shape their overall thoughts of fishing.

The stories in this chapter highlight the importance of listening to personal narratives to help highlight practical policy problems and suggest solutions to environmental, economic, and social, disparities within inshore/coastal fishing networks and communities. Federal policies have shown that they can understand the fundamental concerns around conservation and profitability but do not yet adequately address the concerns around licensure, kinship, fishing grounds, and sustainable harvesting/sharing methods.

Chapter 2

Exploring Past and Present ways of Inshore/Coastal Fishing in Newfoundland

This chapter describes how people in Newfoundland identify with inshore/coastal fishing and how change can affect how fishers and fishing families reimagine their communities after much change. It shows how the three (3) communities have changed over time due to decreased fishing activities, and how these communities continue to modify into tourist outlets and memorandums to a traditional past. The following chapter discusses in detail how Newfoundland inshore/coastal fishing and fishing communities can be persevered and hope to encourage more work that considers community consultation, patience, and trust, while addressing important socio-environmental concerns.

2.1 Reimagined Shorelines: Capturing Place, Identity, and Fishing in Newfoundland



Figure 11 Photo taken by me, of an abandoned house beside a newly renovated home, just off the main road in the fishing community, The Battery, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

The details below attempt to historically trace and emphasize the relationship between place, identity, and fishing for Newfoundland fishing communities and how that relationship strengthens individual and collective connections to fishing routines and practices, fishing places (such as fishing stages, boat docks, etc.) and fishing tools (like cod jigging lines, rubber boots, “skipper hats,” etc.).

Newfoundland Labrador’s capital city, St. John’s, holds 40% of the entire provincial population and is home to roughly one-hundred and ten thousand people (110,525) as of 2022

(City of St. John's, 2022). There are narrowly paved streets lined off with big tree branches and parked cars guide you toward the heart of downtown St. John's, where you will find a set of colourful houses off in the distance. If you walk a little further toward the harbour, better known as The Narrows, you will find a cluster of houses belonging to a small community called The Battery. The Battery received its name from due to British efforts to defend the island from the French. The Battery was once called Crow's Nest Cove, but the name did not resurge after military tensions decreased. Despite this, The Battery has always been known for being a fishing community and a home for fishing families, but that has since died down because of the cod moratorium (MUNL, 2022).

The community is made up of small roads, big trees, and flimsy fences that is supposed to convince you they will prevent you from falling into the ocean. The streets are lined with motor bikes, cars, trucks, and trailers that pull small boats, while old foliage creep their way through the cracked pavement. When you sit near the cliffs you can hear loud and eerie echoes from the ocean. Many locals there say the echoes are souls from the ocean, but nothing has yet confirmed this. From afar, it looks like the houses are running down the big hills that they sit upon and as you stare, the wonder of how those houses maintain their stance becomes more fascinating.

I have family ties to The Battery as my great-great grandparents from my grandmother's side (from my mother's side) were born and grew up there. Many archival documents described the Drodge (my family name) family as an active fisher family who were opinionated and community oriented. One of the most infamous family stories from the 1930's is of my great-great grandfather, who left a tub of butter on the wharf before his fishing trip, and to his dismay, could not find it upon his return. The story ends with my great-great grandfather Levi Drodge solving the mystery—two men had taken the butter in his absence. Up until the late 1980's

almost all my family lived in The Battery community. They moved away from the community to metropolitan areas because of the decline in fishing, other job opportunities, and the privatization of wharfs at the time. At the end of my family's fishing era, Irving had offered to buy my great-grandfather's (and infamous fisher), Edmund (Ned) Drodge's (born 1918) wharf, to which he agreed and used the money to move out of the Battery and into a housing complex around Quidi Vidi. Shortly after, his wharf was torn down, and oil tanks replaced the wooden wharf structure. For his children (my grandmother and siblings), their livelihoods changed because inshore/coastal fishing practices changed. Many of them reimagined their futures by picking different occupations in various government offices, service jobs, and trade sectors. I believe my great-grandfather retired after he sold the wharf and his boat. I remember spending many days with him after school. He had once told my mother that babysitting five-year-old me was scarier than fishing on the worst day, mainly because he was not as familiar with childcare as he was with fishing.

My entire family remembers a time when they would not see my Papa Drodge for a long time. He would not come home for days because he was on the water fishing, and it was necessary to store as much food as possible before the winter arrived. There was always enough fish to catch, but there were often hard financial times for families in that area. Families were able to help one another out of hardship by sharing food, clothing, housing, and other necessities. The Battery drastically changed because of the cod moratorium—there is no inshore/coastal fishery there anymore, but the artwork painted along the concrete walls displays a vivid memory of the past. Today it is a place that is sought after for its historic preservation of quaint infrastructure resulting in inflated housing prices and the out migration of existing families who have been there for generations. The Battery changed from a historic fishing community to a

gentrified memoir to traditional fishing communities. The Battery is not the only place where local fishers and fishing communities have experienced drastic changes. Quidi Vidi, a small historic fishing community, has also experienced this transformative fate.





Figure 12 Photos taken by me, of the artwork displayed on the walls in the historic fishing community, The Battery, St. John's, NL.

Just twenty-minutes away from The Battery is a tiny fishing village that most St. John's locals refer to as "the gut," also known as Quidi Vidi or Quaida Vaida (pronounced [kitty-vitty] or [qu-eye-die-vie-da]) (CBC News, 2018), you can still see the outlines of old fishing stages and the integration of new building supplies to help upkeep the structure in the face of inclement weather. Quidi Vidi is one of the oldest fishing villages in North America and is home to many of its original fishing wharfs and attracts tourists from around the world because of its village-like infrastructure despite it being moments away from downtown (MUNL, 2022). Nobody really knows how Quidi Vidi got its name. It is unlikely that the words Quidi Vidi derived from the French, a historian Hiscock notes, "...The records of French visitors here at the beginning of

the 1700s — Abbé Beaudoin, for example, wrote a diary as he went through here, he got it fooled up. He spelled it two or three different ways, with the weirdest spellings...[and] really had a problem with this English word that he was hearing. So, we know that he didn't recognize it as French.” (CBC News, 2018).

Today, many locals do not question where the name came from, rather, they hold it in a place that is dear to their hearts. Folks who grew up in Quidi Vidi understand the deep cultural roots that bound Quidi Vidi to the historic story of Newfoundland. Historical records from the local university archives hold audio interviews from John Barnes, who a non-fisher, born in 1949 and who grew up in Quidi Vidi. Barnes talks about the demolition of traditional building structures to make room for modern buildings, and how he had taken the bricks from the demolished rubble and used it to construct additions on to his own shed in Quidi Vidi. Barnes was unhappy with the way historic structures were being torn down without regard for what they stood for. He exampled a building that was left over from British colonial times, and how it was used as a nursing lodge/health care area for Quidi Vidi. Barnes gets emotional when he talks about the fishery and says, “... you won’t get me to stop talking about that you know... Once you get me started, I won’t stop... [and] you know I never wanted to be interviewed about this stuff...” (MUNL, 2013). Since the 1500’s the fishing stages that dance on the shorelines reflect an effortless intention to resist harsh waves and cold Atlantic waters. The displays of beautiful and colourfully painted wood, iron, and ropes that make up the stages, combine to compose a picturesque scene for the eyes; while the sounds of the ocean crashing into itself and the rocks, and the taste of the salt water, fill your other senses with the incumbent feeling to be at unequivocal peace. When you face the water from the shoreline, you can see a rainbow of colours encroaching on the water as it reflects the vivid structures surrounding it. Red, pink,

white, green, blue, purple, yellow, and orange highlight the different building structures as the eyes scan from a distance. The location has an abundance of sights, sounds, and smells. Locals and tourists flood the tiny streets in search of experience, hoping to catch a craft beer at the local brewery (pictured below, green building on the right), or an interesting story from an old skipper. For many people who spend the day there, time moves slowly.



Figure 13 Quidi Vidi Brewing Company (right) next to houses built on fishing stages.



Figure 14 Photos taken by me, of Quidi Vidi Village, NL



Figure 15 Photos taken by me, of Quidi Vidi Village, NL

The last field site is called Petty Harbour Maddox Cove but is better known as Petty Harbour. It is a small fishing village just behind the hills of Shea Heights and burrowed beside the farming community, the Goulds. Petty Harbour is filled with houses of many shapes and colours, placed in various patterns across the shoreline, heading up into the hills where the old wooden Christian churches and stone littered cemeteries rest. Petty Harbour has a strong connection with fishing and has made a profitable and well-known name for itself over the years for being an old fishing community. Petty Harbour is similarly structured like The Battery and Quidi Vidi with its long yet narrow roads, parked cars along the streets, salt box houses lined along the shorelines, and emerald green fishing nets/ropes hung every which way across the houses, fishing wharfs, and lobster traps/crab pots. Petty Harbour is where I spent a lot of my participatory fieldwork methods and had the opportunity to cod jig with a couple of fishers and a volunteer crew.

Petty Harbour today has existed since the 1500's when early European fishers were newly exploring the coastal waters and "made fish" on the shorelines. Annie Lee, a woman who was interviewed by the town and whose interview is available on the Petty Harbour Maddox Cove website, spoke briefly about what "making fish" was about and how that work was solely for the women. She claims that men never touched fish to "make it," describing the working relationship between the binary genders of men and women, and how the relationship built a mutually beneficial process of catching fish (by the men) and salting fish (by the women). She notes that "making fish" required women to be weary of how many fish came in at a time and the weather conditions for salting. She continues to say that women would stay mindful of rain and arrange the fish in a way so that it could easily be taken up in the face of increment weather. After all, salt does wash off and time was not a luxury for many who had more fish to make. This

method of “making fish” has been carried on for hundreds of years Petty Harbour and throughout Newfoundland and Labrador and speaks to the gendered division of labour and the inclusion of women in the traditional fishing industry. In Petty Harbour, women have been historically close to the sea and have paid diligence to ecological conditions and environments that influence their work and reacted accordingly to changes in weather conditions and fish yields (TACs today). Many women in Petty Harbour today have reshaped their lives, similarly to how my family shaped theirs after the Battery could not support fishing anymore. Many women work in office jobs, service jobs, medical fields, or in tourism now.



Figure 16 Artwork of women "making fish." Photo taken by me.

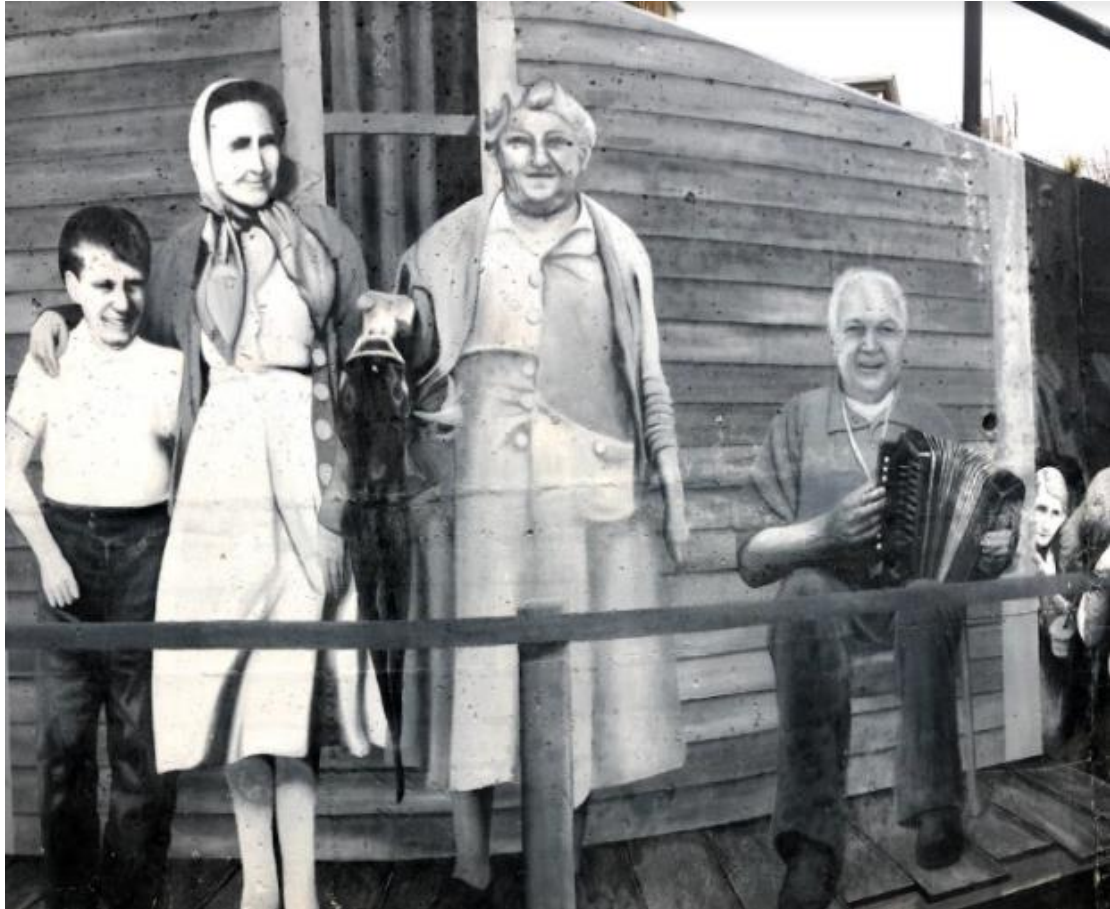


Figure 17 Artwork of women who participated in “making fish.” Photo taken by me.

For a large part of history, it was popular for men to fish and pass down the trade of fishing to younger men on the island of Newfoundland, but that has changed now, many women and gender diverse Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are familiar with fishing as opposed to just “making fish.” Davis’ (1986) ethnography has demonstrated the influence of women in the traditional Newfoundland fishery by focusing on a small Anglican fishing village on the isle of Newfoundland called Grey Rock Harbour. They emphasize how the roles of women and their labour create relational identities and dimensions of identities that stem from fishing life (p. 132). Davis strongly suggests that, despite women historically not being on the boats, the identities of women who are affiliated with fishing is multifaceted and has been a foundational character of

the traditional fishing industry (p. 133). Davis critiques others of neglecting to consider the gendered-division of labour, (p. 133) and relational identities that resonated in social settings and relationships—from financial decision making, processing, and handling the fish, to job satisfaction and pride (p. 134). Women and gender diverse individuals often told me that they noticed a predominantly large number of men at the decision-making tables, and that men also held many seats on pricing committees and fishing unions. They noted this based off their engagement with press conferences and briefings/statements given by stakeholder organizations.



Figure 18 Photos of Petty Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador. Taken by me.



Figure 19 Photos of Petty Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador. Taken by me.

I had the pleasure of meeting fishers from Petty Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador—Roy, Kandice and Captain L. During our conversations, I could not help but highlight the emphasis on the non-binary gendered approach to the word “fishermen.” Despite the use of the word fisher in this research study, many women-identifying fishers called themselves fishermen. Kandice told me that she was offended when I called her a “fisher” because she was a fisherman. She was adamant that being called a fisherman and being a woman meant symbolizing her emotional and physical strength and belonging to the fishing industry. Statements like the one from Kandice highlight the influence of language and linguistics on a person’s sense of identity and place. The result of dynamic social dimensions that relate to fishing, creates an occupational

community (Davis, 1983), that comprises fisherfolk, regardless of gender, who are informed of the consequences, benefits, and risks associated with fishing during a time that was on the verge of a major disruptive event (p. 139), keeping in mind, the cod collapse happened just seven (7) years after this ethnography was published. The of the us against them (p. 139) narrative, that so often highlights the impact industrial fishing has on traditional, inshore/coastal, fishing echoes into the generations of today.

For Newfoundland fishing communities, another linguistic cultural term that refers to comradery and reciprocity of respect to one another is, “b’y” (sometimes spelled “b’ye”) [pronounced the same as the “bye” in “goodbye”]. The word “b’y” brings forth a sense of friendliness towards a person. It does not have a class-based, gendered lens, racialized lens, or age limitation to it. This term is used in common phrases among people in the province and can be found in traditional fishing songs such as “Ise da b’ys,” which speaks to boat building, sailing boats to commonly known trading ports, and coming back to loved family and friends for a dance when everything is done. It is also used in sentences to emphasize something, depending on tone “yes, b’y,” “no, b’y” or “oh my b’y” can often quickly affirm, denounce, or empathize with something.

Despite its similarity, many would disagree that it is a shortened term for “boy.” It is a term of endearment, and the terms holds closeness to the Newfoundland and Labrador culture specifically. It is important that terms like “b’y” and “fisherman” are noted for research that takes a local, space-based approach, because it can highlight critical aspects of micro social relationships and help us eliminate traditional scopes/norms that often cloud fishing related research with patriarchal-based lenses. Without understanding the underlying dimensions of key words like “fisherman” and “b’y” it is possible to miss out on a large part of local knowledge and

storytelling that speaks to the gendered lens and different formations of identity and space in traditional and contemporary settings. The voices of women in the fishing industry have always been loud about how fishing, fish processes, and fishing climate has changed from the shorelines and are proud to be working on addressing those changes today. During my fieldwork, I was able to meet and speak with women who were engaged with the Newfoundland fishery—for most women who identify as fishermen, the knowledge of fishing and processing fish was passed down through generational lessons (family members) or through community experiences (learning from your friends' family). When I was listening to some women-identifying fishermen, they were mostly focused on amplifying the solutions that were based off their own experiences of fishing and their knowledge of sustainable and resourceful traditional fishing measures.

Lastly, “b’y” affirms community among those who live or are familiar with the province—for example, in mid-February this year, I was stranded in the Montreal airport, and I was able to form a friendship with a group of eight (8) Newfoundlanders and two (2) Labradorians based off me saying “b’ys, if you’re flying to Newfoundland, the bus is here!” In the hotel lobby the morning of the revised flight. I was immediately approached and asked what part of Newfoundland and Labrador I was from. This term is an important consideration when thinking about language, culture, and social formations. Terms like “b’y” have been proven to contribute to cultures that emanate high levels of unity and solidarity among people in the province (Vezina, et al., 2014).

During my fishing excursion in Petty Harbour with Kandice and Captain L, (pictured below) we all became fishermen and “a nice group of b’ys (close friends) by the end of the trip. It was a true testimony to changing identities and social bonds based on place and traditional

fishing practices. Sequentially, the next chapter discusses how narrative theory can examine socio-ecological changes and enlighten researchers on how locals come to understand and deal with the ricochet of changes that occur from social, ecological, and economic disruption.



Figure 20 The b'ys!

2.2 Using Narratives to Explore Perception of Environments

The social sciences posit central subjects, or individuals, and connections to experience, and historical events (Hull, 1974). Traditional philosophers and historians have developed relational ways of understanding the integration of individuals into historical (or community) narratives. Morton White once argued that the cause-effect relationship helps integrate individuals into a historical narrative. Maurice Mandelbaum counters this by emphasizing on the micro-relationships that form connections among events and suggests that individual contribute to the unity of historical narratives through acknowledging the spatio-temporal properties that change over time (Hull, 1974, p. 260). Mandelbaum argues that spatio-properties allow for coherent arrangement of events over time, allowing for rational decision making, actions, and developments, within a single narrative.

Historical events highlight the traditions of the fishing industry in Newfoundland and creates a thread between individual memories and stories of the Newfoundland fishing industry. I look at these stories in conjunction with analyzing archival documents and other resources from media, like online databases to understand how disruption has shaped the inshore/costal fishing industry and how it influences socio-ecological systems, policies, and individual/community contingency. I combine Mandelbaum's approach to spatio-temporal connections with the concept of TEK, to contextualize and frame how fish harvesters and fishing communities reimagine their lives in the face of unrecoverable disruptive events such as the cod collapse and regulations based on heavy conversation efforts from the Canadian government.

Bontoyan (1998) uses qualitative interviews and a five-point scale questionnaire to understand local people and their environment based off the idea of intra-cultural variations of perception, insinuating that culture and nature have a connection. Narratives in the post-industrial or “post-modern” context have two facets within the social sciences, under what is referred to as material ecocriticism (Iovino & Opperman, 2012, p. 79-81). The first facet focuses on “the way matter’s (or nature’s) nonhuman... capacities are described and represented in narratives (literary, cultural visual)” (p. 79). The second way focuses on [nature’s] ‘narrative’ power of creating configurations of meanings and substances...” (p. 79). I examine environments by looking at individual perceptions of life contingency, cultural connections, and ecological relationships.

During my data collection and writing process I paid diligence to when fish harvesters acknowledged moments in their lives when their sense of unity and/or continuity was affected. I focus on moments of disruption. When unifying socio-ecological factors (TEK, science, and policies) fail to coincide with each other; and when changes commonly brought up in the material/non-human form (like fishing gear, licensing, fish populations), to show when and how historical ways of knowing/doing is disrupted. I show these moments of failed unity, and disruptions in normal day to day life to articulate the series of events, people, and other factors that led up to continue to influence them.

Stories and reactions from past traumatic events serve as a tangible reference to present day experiences, which questions whether the past was really left in the past (Myerhoff, 1964). These reflect how folks symbolize and respond to various kinds of troubles or potential threats to community survival (Myerhoff, 1964). In this case, the thread would be the abolishment of inshore/coastal fishing entirely and/or the extinction of cod. Even certain present-day events like

news around the price of fish, and limiting licensing regulations evoke emotions, conjure memories and behaviours that were once based off past disruptive experiences like the 90's cod collapse, old mercantile systems, and financial scarcity. Fife (2014) proposes that regulatory relationships between food, production, and consumption, has justified, condoned, and facilitated raw resource extraction rhetoric in response to the 1990's cod moratorium (p. 103), and a debate surrounding the commercialization of the remaining cod populations (p. 104).

Narratives demonstrate that time and location can be multi-sited and multitemporal when articulating life stories. Morton's use of historical narrative (Hull, 1974) can be as a way people create life stories in the past tense and places the self as being the affected or the affecter in the story. It could be asked, who was at the root of the conflict here? Was this person administering or receiving the consequence of the event? Memory is multi-sited and multitemporal (Ricoeur, 1991), and highlights the factors that shape the anticipation of oneself in certain scenarios. Self-narratives are not only found in memories, or songs (Peacock & Holland, 1993), they are also found in social media blogs and interview-style radio shows. In most cases online captions/blogs are written statements given by individuals often highlight important issues or messages that they think can be actioned/understood across a broader community narrative.

For example, Roy recalled during his younger years as having widely available opportunities to hold fishing licenses stands as a memorable contrast to the current situation which has created a decreased opportunity for younger fisher generations to own inshore/coastal licenses. Petty Harbour is the same place from which all this change occurred, making Roy question the risks and outcomes associated with DFO policies, regulations, and related officers. He sees local fishers and younger fishing generations as conflicted when they engage with DFO,

as they possess the most sustainable and resourceful techniques, but are often met with institutional conflict, fines, and stress.

Despite being met with undesirable outcomes at times, fish harvesters are proud to harvest fish off the coast of Newfoundland. The province has a long political history of advocating for natural resource development and sustainable control over the fishing industry. Unity and solidarity in Newfoundland and Labrador is tied to a long history of exploitative resource extraction and ownership and fishing (Bill, 2011), and can be a way to highlight and individual and community identities (Peacock & Holland, 1993, p. 371). When you walk through the streets of downtown St. John's Newfoundland and Labrador, you may see the Newfoundland and Labrador flags decoratively hung on someone's patio, or a fence painted in old patriotic colours (pink, white, and green), or an old saltbox house placed facing inward from the main road, making someone question how that happened, or when. The pre-confederate Ode to Newfoundland was eliminated at the university convocation in 2023 with great contestation from MHA members such as Minister of Tourism Steven Crocker (CBC, 2023). Despite the removal, The Ode to Newfoundland is still harmoniously sang by many at festivals/musical events.

A high level of collective community identity creates social solidarity among people and helps mobilize collective action to hold public institutions accountable and support a collective responsibility across communities (Calhoun, 2007). There is relevant research from other European countries and the United States that suggests group forming serve as an incubation hub that directly deals with socio-ecological disruption (see; Axsen et al., 2018; Boykoff et al., 2011; & Hammond, 2018). These groups can curate collective attitudes and behaviours that are preserved through various forms of familial and non-familial relationships (Potoski, 2017). For example, during my time with the social-environmental group there was a manifesto about

individual care and collective responsibility that touched on aspects of social and environmental justice and community care. Before you were able to join the social environmental justice group, you had to sign a document agreeing to learn about the manifesto. Many folks were happy to speak with me about the manifesto and it is always open for debate/change.



Figure 21 Photo taken by me, of the bow of Captain L's boat as we head into shore, Petty Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador

Small places like the island of Newfoundland hold individual stories and transformative identities, and vast memories of fishing, that bring communities together to find ways to understand and live with change. The people who lived in places like The Battery, Quidi Vidi, and Petty Harbour experienced changes in socio-economic and socio-ecological factors like less opportunity to fish, the erasure of long-standing fishing jobs, and policies and regulations

connect to negative encounters with DFO officers who enforce strict TACs for inshore/coastal fishers.

When socio-economic and socio-ecological systems are regulated through professions and local systems they create jobs, and resources, producing avenues for new kinds of unity and contingency connections which may echo in songs, stories, real life experiences, and other ways of expressing oneself and the community around them.

Chapter 3

Adapting to Change and Dealing with Disruption and Uncertainty

Chapter 3 describes how larger structures that control socio-economic and socio-ecological systems such as official structures have managed mass system change, and how disruption can inform us of what has worked and has not worked in those situations; and explores how local stories can reveal different responses to disruptive systems. The discussion centers around using disruption as a conceptual tool to show how organizations, and institutions, respond to changes in socio-economic and socio-ecological systems by using narrativity and memory as preliminary guides for organized decision-making. Finally, institutional memory (Linde, 2009) is used to construct a narrative that reflects an institution's image, and influences management techniques, decision-making and rationale (p. 2-6) in the context of federal decision-making processes and policies.

3.1 Disruption in Social, Ecological, and Economic Systems

Disruption is a drastic change in social, economic, and ecological systems that inevitably alters community structures over time. When social economic or ecological disruption occurs within a small geographic setting, for example, The Battery, individual and community narratives are highlighted, and new futures are reimaged and mobilized on an individual and collective level. Disruption happens when there are moments of change in continuity and unity socio-economic and socio-ecological systems. These changes are articulated through autobiographical narratives around fishing that focus on historical and current events, and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). Sharing fishing gear, surplus fish landings, fishing grounds, and fishing knowledge among Newfoundland fishing families has been a means of understanding and coping with disruption.

Linde (2009) uses the institution to define “[...] both formal and informal groupings of people and established and recognizable practices” (p. 7) and specifies it as “[...] a corporation, the practice of medicine, or marriage.” (p. 8). Institutional mobilization, or when an institution acts in times of disruptive social economic or ecological change, can be a way to explore how institutions remember their own history and how they maintain, modify, and manage it to keep it working (p. 9). Since the confederation of Newfoundland and Labrador (mid-1949) Canada has continued to work with various stakeholders from different government levels to authorize various policies and legislations to alter the livelihoods of inshore/coastal fishers (Heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023). For example, in 1950, just one year after confederation, fish harvesters were encouraged by federal and provincial governments to switch from their gasoline powered trap skiffs (boats passed down through a paternal figure, i.e.: grandfather or father) to

longliner boats to encourage more time out on the water and to be able to harvest larger fish landings (Heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023).



Figure 22 Workers at a St. John's Fish Plant, 1978 (Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023)

Many of the individuals I spoke with have been alive (or have heard stories) to experience some of the seventy-four years that Canada has been in charge of developing and regulating the Newfoundland inshore/coastal fishery. Many say they remember federal and provincial government officials pitching ways that suggested that the inshore/coastal fishery could thrive as large-scale global industry. Many feel as though Canada changed the local

practices and continuity of an industry that existed hundreds of years before Canadian management. Many of the individuals I spoke with expressed that Canadian regulations has failed to mitigate the risks associated with destroying opportunities for cod stocks to replenish. Canada has implemented EIAs and local consultation meetings to counter these concerns to increase conversation efforts and cod stocks.

Fishing in Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the biggest cultural symbols of the province (Reid, 2011) and is a valuable resource for domestic and international market participation for the province. The cod collapse closed off many fishing opportunities for future generations as well as eliminated cod down to 1% of its initial population and created ripples of generational disturbance in the livelihoods of fisher families (Bavington, 2010, p. xii-xxv). Since the cod collapse, Newfoundland and Labrador's fish stocks have never fully recovered leaving many fish processors, specifically fish harvesters (or fishers), uncertain about their futures. Despite the cod collapse and the troubles that followed, fishers continue to participate in the industry because fishing is one of the biggest industry exports in Canada today (Government of Canada, & Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2020).

Despite continuous efforts, fish stocks have not fully recovered since the 2000's, leaving many fishermen uncertain about their futures. In 2017, vice-president of FISH-NL (Federation of Independent Sea Harvesters of Newfoundland Labrador), Richard Gillet, decided to participate in a hunger strike to underline the importance of maintaining the five-hundred years of fishing (CBC, 2017) through fair policies and practices that upheld the value of fish. Other fishermen who agreed with Gillet protested the declining fish stocks by setting their own fishing gear on fire in Port au Choix, Newfoundland and Labrador (CTV, 2017). Like Gillet, other fishermen felt

livelihoods were threatened with the reality of having no other choice but to stop fishing for good. (Government of Canada, 2011).

In 2020, COVID-19 delayed the opening of the spring/summer fishing season for crab (CBC, 2020), leaving many fishers at a loss for economic and lifestyle sustainability. President of the FFAW, Keith Sullivan, notes that the concern for the fishery diminishing in conjunction with keeping fishermen safe from COVID-19, is a complex issue and is something that will take time to figure out since current fishing boats and related processes need special regulatory considerations for social distancing guidelines (CBC, 2020).

During May 2020, many fishers were faced with additional operational restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing many to resort to protest, petitioning, and frustration. CBC news (2020) notes that there have been at least two thousand letters sent to Parliament calling on officials to act within the fishing community. One (out of the two hundred protestors) individuals yelled out at Keith Sullivan (FFAW President at the time), “What did you do about it? Fucking nothing!” during the event. Five (5) days after the protest the federal government announced that it would issue a \$470M pandemic relief package that aims to help cover up to 75% of losses for fishermen whose income decreased by 25% (CBC, 2020).

“The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in reduced demand and declining prices for Canadian fish and seafood products and has had significant impacts on the livelihoods of Canadian fishers. With today’s announcement we are making sure fish harvesters can get the support they need in these times of crisis.”

- The Hon. Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance (2020)

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic fish harvesting organizations emphasized the lack of protection fish harvesters and fish processors face under the COVID-19 lockdown. Concerns about decreasing global fish market values and lockdown restrictions that prevented fish harvesters/processors from working created angst across the fishing communities in Newfoundland. Questions about protecting the livelihoods of fishers/processors and efficient ways to integrate the inshore/coastal Newfoundland fishing industry into a global and fruitful economic situation was highlighted amongst union leaders and supporting institutions. In 2023, the same questions still float around—who will protect the traditional rights and livelihoods of inshore/coastal fish harvesters, and what policies need to be looked at for fair economic participation? The answer is not one policy over the other, but rather a continuous consulting strategy that informs federal policies and regulations, and overall management styles of institutions.

Government policies and regulations respond to disruptive moments that occur in social, economic, and ecological systems. These responses change based on environmental assessments conducted by federal institutions and scientists. Stories of when laws changed also reflect when ocean conditions change, or when institutions responses differently to well-known fishing practices/spots. The table below shows total allowable catches and landings (what was actually caught) for Atlantic Cod, which highlights the close relationship between fishing regulations and fishing opportunities for those who fish Atlantic Cod.

Table 1. Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and landings by management year of 4X5Y Atlantic Cod in metric tonnes (mt).

Management year	1982–1991 Average	1992–2001 Average	2002–2011 Average	2012–2021 Average	2020/2021	2021/2022
TAC	23,500	11,821	4,615	1,072	825	825
Landings	24,075*	11,178*	3,887	801	507	630

*Landings for 2001 and prior are based on the calendar year, landings post-2001 are based on the management year (April–March).

Additional work on local adaptations to changing industry conditions has added to the value of this research. Moore's (2019) ethnography in the Bahamian Islands discusses the social and economic reorganizations of traditional fish harvesters in the face of beach and ocean privatization. The shift in the governments use of space has hindered the continuity of fishing for locals. In turn, the locals have reimagined economic means for themselves on the shore through side gigs like tourist guides to local areas. For Moore (2019) the idea of social and economic opportunity has shifted from fishing to tourism. They vigilantly write about how locals respond to finding new ways for economic opportunity now that fishing is no longer an economically reliable. Whittington's work (2012) on uncertainty, disruption, and risk in industry eco systems, explores how state efforts in industry reveals how systematic disruption (p. 120-122) can resonate in local narratives that discuss past, present, and future, socio-ecological relationships. Systemic disruption creates conditions where different outcomes of the future become reimagined, and as a result, can influence communal knowledge systems and individual understandings of livelihoods. In all, disruption creates new opportunities for job markets and competition, but it also squeezes the imagination to think of doing something outside of the norm by disrupting tradition and contingent social, economic, and ecological factors.

Job opportunities and regulation of spaces can be seen as a catalyst for reimagining human identities and for criticizing systems of disruption. Connecting these changes to larger global power structures and markets to critically examine the way change affects how individuals and communities see themselves and co-exist large scale change (Moore, 2019). In this process the individual is exposed to the socio-ecological changes around them and are subjective to the roles imposed by political and economic power systems that orchestrate the changes. Many locals create new ways of living. The presence of changing conditions of daily

life requires individuals to manifest themselves as needed by emerging labour markets resulting in a subjective identity. The interpretation of subjective identities can be translated contextually to understand how fishers in Newfoundland come to understand change within their communities and within themselves. Stories about finding new means to exist during times of large-scale change highlights the problems faced by folks and the pathways people take when faced with disruption.

Dynamic socio-economic and socio-ecological relationships become influenced by disruption produce different conceptual ideas of the future, the self, and the community. Throughout the rest of the chapters, the relationships between humans, non-humans, nature, and industrial systems are highlighted like the ways discussed by Whitington (2012, 2019) and Moore (2019). Tracing local fishing stories and broader community stories related to fishing practices, helps understand socio-ecological transformations and can help create place-based solutions and uplift local voices that are often not a part of the majority such as inshore/coastal fishing folks. Disruption and socio-ecological understandings highlight how people react to and live with social, spatial, temporal, economic, political, and environmental change.

Paying attention to local people, science-based decision making, government development plans, and labour market outcomes can show how disruption occurs dynamically and can conjure different meanings that supports new pathways of living under new conditions; and pathways to managing change. In 2020, I heard a story about not being able to sustain their fishing enterprise because they could not catch enough fish, and said, based on TAC quotas, he suspects he will not be fishing the way he is used to for much longer. I heard this person speak on VOCMs (voice of the common man) show Open Line hosted by Paddy Daly, an older gentleman with a kind and witty personality. Open Line airs their calls without prerecording, so

callers who get airtime are speaking live. In this instance, a fisher called into Open Line and seemed distressed that his future was at risk because of problems with licensing regulations, fish availability, and sea cucumber harvesting. He proclaimed that he had felt as though the local fish population was not managed correctly and being unfairly harvested by larger foreign boats (VOCM, 2020). He said that he was not sure of the kinds of regulations in place for fishing, but he had planned for these sorts of mishaps to be a common thing in the future because of mismanagement.

The fisherman, who had been fishing for thirty (30) years, said that he had originally started harvesting and anticipating profits from sea cucumbers because of the resulting missed opportunities to harvest large amounts of fish and unclear licensing guidelines. His story highlights how low efficacy policies change time and space for him, scarce socio-economic and socio-ecological conditions as part of his life as a fish harvester. His future of fishing is articulated through the loss of being able to harvest enough groundfish/cod on his fishing trips but being able to save his livelihood with sea cucumber harvesting.

3.2 Uncertainty in Newfoundland Fishing

Newfoundland and Labrador's shorelines are mostly protected by a designated conversation area called an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The EEZ is home to schools of codfish and other biodiverse marine life and "[...] ranges from 12 to a maximum of 200 nautical miles from baselines. Within this zone, a country has sovereign rights over the exploration, exploitation, management [,] and conservation of resources in the water, on the seabed and under the seafloor. A country also has jurisdiction over certain activities like marine scientific research and protecting the marine environment [...]" (Government of Canada, 2011).



The map above shows parts of the historically pronounced fishing grounds called *The Grand Banks*, extending past the EEZ, causing concern about exposing fish to large scale fish harvesting practices. Local concerns about causing disruption in the codfish populations are largely related to catch quotas (or TACs) for inshore/coastal fishers. Fish must be able to lay enough eggs to successfully become mature fish and replenish the cod population (or cod stock). When cod matures, they begin to migrate, exposing them to larger-scale fishing operations outside of the EEZ. Many inshore/coastal fishers feel as though many of the cod are harvested when they migrate, and their eggs are likely harvested too as they are known to lay them further past the EEZ. If cod stocks do not replenish, then TAC decreases, and many fishers struggle to find an alternatively (and just as valuable) available catch. The suggestions made to me are based on a series of similar situations to highlight where federal policies work and where they do not work. I discuss how navigating solutions has created opportunities for reimagined futures about sustainable fishing and social-economic development in fishing communities in Newfoundland

from a local perspective. The fish harvesters interviewed in this thesis are aware of the importance of science and EIAs but are wary that policies are being implemented and enforced without consideration of traditional local knowledge passed down from inshore/coastal fish harvesters over generations.

Uncertain ecological and economic factors highlight a common concern about the contingency of fish populations and economic market integration is a huge concern for fish harvesters. There is low predictability for fish populations to become larger, making it harder for fishers like Finn to foresee financial success each year. Fundamentally Finn wants to keep fishing to make money and live. Canada has attempted to support individuals like Finn by administering fish population monitoring tests. The results stemming from fish population monitoring directly affects fishing regulations and allowable catches. The fish population data is converted and translated into what is deemed responsible TACs. The undoubtable federal goal has always been to maintain high cod stock populations, as mentioned in the Species at Risk Act (that has managed recovery strategies since 2005). But many local fishers and broader fishing communities feel there is not enough federal, scientific and community cooperation to foster practices that will increase overall fish populations. There is a need for more local input during EIAs and for fishers to be able to administer their own population monitoring tests.

Industry models that are based off scarcity and annihilation change the ways of thinking about regeneration (Bavington, 2010) and narrowly define ways of looking at a problem. Whittington (2019) connects disruption and uncertainty in terms of how management systems act to define people and the future. He emphasizes that disruption creates uncertain ideas of how things should be, and so management systems that deal with natural resources attempt more trial-and-error attempts to fix micro and macro systems of disruption. One study (Bauer et al., 2019)

uses uncertainty to help distinguish the nuances of ecosystem-based fisheries management (EBFM) models, specifically in the Baltic Sea. EBFM can be defined as “... a set of principles for managing fisheries as parts of complex socio-ecological systems” (Bauer et al., 2019, p. 2) and has been deemed as high priority when it comes to deducing the effectiveness of fish harvesting techniques and developing successful management strategies for both human and fish species. She continues to note that fisheries-focused management models simply highlight the socio-ecological systems (p. 2); but it does not encompass an adequate or general measurement of risk assessment or give a clear picture that maps out the likelihood of uncertain factors occurring.

Fisheries management research should focus on socio-ecological relationships and the use predictive modelling tools that can provide more accurate forecasts around fish populations, fishing division grounds, and eco-friendly and abundant fishing season(s). The measurement models can be based on an array of factors that touch on population numbers, age, exosystemic niches, and population demographics that relate to the physical traits of non-human species. Additionally, EBFM can be a successful tool to manage single-species models and multi-species models, and that it is possible to operationalize EBFM with respect to the eco-systems and management systems that define the fishing industry. It can provide premature economic market analyses for future fish markets because it could inform the appropriate committees that set the market value for all the harvested sea fish in Newfoundland.

In their study, empirical analysis was carried out through three (3) simulation models tested to explore how effective predictive models can be. Bauer (2019) explains that data for informed management systems need to be more qualitatively informed to be able to tend to sensitive context of ecosystems (p. 3). At the same time, hard science indicators (math,

chemistry, biology etc.) are still important for determining the effectiveness of management strategies (Bauer et al., 2019). Due to the importance of these factors with respect to management and outcomes, and their potential to influence EBFM, the researchers decided to use simulations of major commercial fisheries in the Baltic Sea to aid in the evaluations of 1. Ecopath with Ecoism, 2. Multispecies Stock Production Models and 3. Globally Applicable Area-Disaggregated General Ecosystem Toolbox. Each model could help develop strategies based on relevant input data to help develop further strategies and EIAs to predict and rebuild Newfoundland's fish populations and maintain a healthy fishing industry.

Federal government institutions and local communities, fishing organizations, and fish harvesters all desire predictive models to inform them on what to do to support both a thriving economic and ecological environment for the inshore/coastal fishing industry. A promising pathway forward would suggest an increased effort in testing predictive models and training local inshore/coastal fishers and fishing organization leaders in how to administer tests at their own discretion (at no cost to them). I received a more detailed glimpse of how locals were measuring their predictions and how they felt about those predictions at two key events.

In May 2022, I helped organize an in-person event at the St. John's Farmers Market that focused on individual stories of fishing and fishing practices in Newfoundland. This event included fishers from different fishing communities on the island of Newfoundland and a local audience—general admission was free. The farmer's market is very large as it hosts weekly markets with different local vendors and has a fully equipped kitchen for various needs. It has become the local spot for community goods to be sold and exchanged. It is not out of the ordinary walk in on a Saturday and smell the scent of curry from Taste of India food booth or to buy a pair of crochet mittens from a local Nan just a few meters over in the same big room. The

venue was also wheelchair friendly and had accessible bathrooms for all bodies and genders. Since we were aware of the large venue capacity, we were able to serve food, eat, and stay socially distant from one another. The event was organized by several amazing volunteers who were passionate about social justice, fishing, ocean sustainability, cultural preservation, and more. Some of the volunteers knew the featured speakers from fishing backgrounds and were more than happy to invite their friends to share their excitement (and possibly extra hand at something).

During the event, a few fish harvesters gathered to speak to me and a group of community members regarding equitable fishing practices. To start we all grabbed some fish cakes (cod, potato, Newfoundland savory, and butter mashed together, then rolled into a ball and fried in a pan) and listened to some traditional Newfoundland tunes on a fiddle as folks found their seat. The Farmer's Market was warm and cozy—perfect for a brisk St. John's evening. There was complimentary tea and coffee available for folks to sip on while they ate their fish cake. For those who were passionate about fish but who did not eat it, we offered a vegan option, too. The event featured around 45 people from various backgrounds. The background of those who attended were homogenous and predominantly white, but not all (including myself). The age range was vast, from children to elders, and there were many diverse genders in attendance. We set up numerous tables and chairs for folks to sit in small groups and positioned a long table at the front of the room for the speakers. The speakers were given time to speak about what fishing and justice meant to them, and the audience were able to ask questions after the speakers were finished.

When folks were speaking, it was optional for the audience to make a sign about ocean health and clean waters as they listened to the symphony of knowledge coming from the speaker

table. The speakers focused on the loss of control over traditional cod fishing and emphasized on how government entities were not doing enough to consult with fishing communities who have generational knowledge about the water, the sea life, and how to respect the ecological systems that allow for cod (and other sea life) to become food. Several speakers showed how it could be possible to consult with locals to help determine how to deliver the benefits to local communities and ecosystems. They often expressed ideas of reciprocity as a guiding method to feed communities, give “good work” and “useful skills” to people, and as a collective way to understand how to care for the ocean and its creatures. They suggested bringing more fish into grade schools so that children could have at least one meal with fresh nutritious food, without harmful preservatives or chemicals. They expressed how important it was for schools to take this initiative as they understood it as a way of learning how to live in Newfoundland Labrador.

During the Fisherman’s Protest in March 2022 I heard Keith Sullivan say very loud and clear on the Confederation Building steps that there was no difference between the current Newfoundland government and the traditional mercantile economy because of the way that they ignore the true measures that indicate the health, value, and contingency, of fish—most importantly, codfish. The control over the value of cod and the restricting regulations around the inshore/coastal fisheries reflects and political and structures that are not informed by local fish harvester perception on harvesting fish, local and global markets, or current environments. Below are visual examples of the March 2022 FFAW protest held at the Confederation building, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. It is a striking coincidence that in the third photo, the protesters are standing faced opposite John Cabot, the person who is claimed to be responsible for European exploration and settlement on the island of Newfoundland specifically.



Figure 23 Photos of the 2022 FFAW fisherman's protest, held outside of the St. John's Confederation building. Taken by me.



Figure 24 Photos of the 2022 FFAW fisherman's protest, held outside of the St. John's Confederation building. Taken by me.



Figure 25 Photos of the 2022 FFAW fisherman's protest, held outside of the St. John's Confederation building. Taken by me.

In addition to the regulatory factors that affect trophic structures such as the relationship between seals and cod, it is important to note that climate change affects sea life and the socio-ecological systems that surround them too (Woods et al., 2022, p. 465). Climate change affects the socio-ecological systems that encompass sea life, and so that system must maintain some sort of level of triumphant? Response (or resilience) to mitigate the ecological interventions and foster social adaptation to change (p. 465).

Comparing management models may also help researchers go beyond the measuring metric used in traditional fishing industries (i.e., mortality vs. biomass models). As discussed, EBFM is a way of understanding holistic predictive models that use science and local community indicators that inform projecting scenarios. In comparison, environment-based

management (EBM) is a predominant pattern in economic and ecological objectives from a managerial point-of-view, that, according to Beaur (2019) are valued according to a “catch-based and biomass-based indicators” (p. 3) as well as “trophic structure[s]” within that ecosystem (p. 3). EBM focuses on solely the extraction of fish with attention on anthropogenic factors (Woods et al., 2022), like effective fish population harvesting methods and large-scale measurements (like tons per unit) of total catches. The approach does emphasize resilience and adaptation– but lacks clear consensus on how to implement changes that consider the socio-ecological aspects of industries– specifically the fisheries (see Ogier et al., 2016; in Woods et al., 2022). Despite the gap in practical implementation EBM is a commonly used method to help plan adaptive responses and exploring the factors that create pathways for adaptation options (p. 465).

The systems that encompass socio-economic and socio-ecological realities like managerial responses, policies and regulations that are not informed by local fishers, and the conflicts that arise from those differences create frictions between fishers, communities, and companies/governments. The results of these factors create a large disparity in economic and ecological resources and lack of official responsibility/response to the situations, making locals feel as though they need to imagine their own solutions which are often supported and informed by real life experiences.

Roy emphatically spoke to me about the changes in the ocean, and how sea life, crab, for example, has become more and more difficult to fish for too. He said that winter and summer ocean temperatures dramatically became more opposite from one another and throughout the years crab migrate to places where they never have been before which costs more gas, wastes more time (to track them down), and yields less and less crab each year. Finn told me that he has noticed the same thing too. Roy explained that what was happening to crab was similar to what

happened with cod, he suspected large-scale industrial trawlers of deterring crab and cod population growth and migration. He blames scraping the ocean floor for killing baby fish, breeder fish, and destroying cod eggs. He said that once the ocean floor is scraped, there is little to no chance for life to grow back there, and today, you can see the effects of these dead zones as you navigate away from your usual fishing path. Traditionally and still to this day, Roy told me that many local fish harvesters forbid the harvesting of baby fish, breeder fish, and cod fish eggs, as they are seen as vital parts of the ecosystem and opportunities for greater yields in the future. For Roy, he sees this as a complete disruption in attempting to make a living and can destroy families, as the seas are unforgiving and cold.

Roy's narrative expresses his frustration with the policies and regulations of DFO and attributes these as factors that contribute to the conflicts between DFO officers and inshore/coastal fishers. He says that these policies overlook the individual and conscious decisions to fish sustainably, making efforts towards local reciprocity go unnoticed. Roy's claims acknowledge power relationships of the affected/affecter and enlightens us on how disruption can be understood from local and institutional point of views. Looking at the power that resides in systems of disruption in micro and macro contexts can expose longstanding ways of thinking about socio-ecological change and preservation of fishing communities, fishing practices and ecologies.

Additionally, Kandice critiques the colonial foundations that has provided a regulated enterprise of fishing for hundreds of years and says that certain words tie into fishing management and policies echo colonialist initiatives by focusing on massive catches and revenues instead of the practice of fishing itself and those involved. Her eyes were crystal clear, and her voice was strong. She says that she is not surprised that Newfoundland Labrador has had

the problem of risking their livelihoods to fish for many years. There is a creeping incentive to think outside of suggested models from the past, as Kandice expressed in her conversation with me, and the need to think of fishing as a way of bringing nature and people together in hopes they can co-exist stably for a long time.

The next chapter emphasizes the friction between fishers, communities, and larger power structures like companies/government officials, by accounting for historic moments that defined the cod fishery and its expansion over time. Additionally, *Ecowomanism* critically looks at the history and culture that wraps around the Newfoundland traditional fishery and develops an argument that pinpoints how the fishing industry has always extracted from people and animals. Lastly, it centers equitable approaches to reconciling for the mass European extraction efforts that contributed to what Newfoundland fishing is today. In all, the chapter traces how industrial expansion initiatives in the cod fishery create environments for disruption to reoccur and speaks to a larger context of industrial power systems, nature, and embedded disruptive systems.

Chapter 4

Reimagining the Inshore/Coastal Fishery and Finding Place-Based Solutions with Locals in Newfoundland

This chapter aims to show how capitalist-colonialist systems create environments where disruption is tied to social and economic development. Furthermore, this chapter aims to look at how industrial power structures and colonialist influenced histories can be used to promote and continue exploitative conditions for both humans and animals, especially in the context of the industrialization of the Newfoundland cod fishery and contribute to the erasure of people, animals, and exploitation. The discussion further delves into individual and community stories to highlight systems of disruption and how they can appear in social relationships that have been historically built between the act of fishing and the industrial expansion of fishing.

4.1 Reckonings with Change and Innovating Pathways for a Future

Disruptive environments that create unstable working ecological, economic, and social conditions like the Newfoundland cod fishery can create waves of experiences that involve adapting to changing job conditions, financial situations, and ecological changes to natural resources. Today, Newfoundland fishers and fishing communities have faced a myriad of challenges resulting in disruptive changes in socio-economic and socio-ecological systems. During the final months of my fieldwork, I was able to speak more with fishers and members of the community about the details of their solutions to more equitable ways of reciprocating fish and fishing resources locally to inshore/coastal fishers. Many of the individuals who I spoke to give reference to historic fishing ways and conflicts in capitalist-colonialist systems as the main influencers that contributed to the failure and collapse of the cod fishery.

Local communities have organized problem solving issues around job quality, socio-economic wellbeing, and ecological health and have reimagined ways of existing based on these solutions. More formal efforts put forth by local fishing unions and other supporting unions are prime examples of local organizing power and collective efforts. Mary Shortall, former President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour spoke in an online seminar about this. Shortall said that socio-economic and ecological problems are extensions of a labour issues, and that the fundamental goal should be to examine problem solving strategies and focus on giving benefits to local people, such as the local fishers and communities. She spoke profoundly about how unions in the entire province of Newfoundland and Labrador not only create a presence of communal solidarity, but can protect workers, and distribute economic and social prosperity more equitably.

In July 2022, during the 30th anniversary of the cod moratorium, I attended a film at The Rooms, a local museum, called “Last Fish, First Boat” by Jenna Verma. The film follows a local fish harvester, Eugene Maloney, whose life was disrupted by the collapse of the cod fishery. The film follows Eugene’s story from a fish harvester to a self-taught boat builder and highlights just how wonderfully unique people like Eugene face situations of uncertainty and large adaptations in life. Although Eugene had limited resources, he was able to support himself and his family through some of the toughest ecological times in Newfoundland. Like the 1849 Newfoundland bank crash, fish harvesters were left to face reality alone, again. The film also highlights the idea of intrinsic value, a Marxian term, that for the purposes of the film, and this research, refers to as the local/cultural value of the object. This value system does not fully encompass the cultural conditions in which value can be born from as it focuses on a market-based framework. This is only one side of the 3-dimensional problem, as there are social, economic, biological, and ecological preconditions that make the fish more valuable.

In August 2022, I was fishing off the coast of Petty Harbour with a crew of volunteers and friends. We embarked on an afternoon of fishing with Fishing for Success, a social enterprise that focuses on fish. Captain L, owner and operator of the boat we were fishing in, said that he could understand how people here (in Newfoundland) nowadays did not care where cod comes from, and said it was because they are not aware of what it takes to catch and process it. He said that codfish was one of the very few sea animals that could provide us with vitamin D, as they produce their own supply of it for themselves. Captain L explained to me one evening, as he was cutting open the belly of a small, five pound (5lbs) cod fish, that since cod live predominantly at the bottom of the sea, they needed to produce their own vitamin D to live—and since we do not get a lot of sun in Newfoundland, it was important that we eat cod fish because it

is good for our health. He continued to explain, as he threw the head of the cod down the hole in the floor of the shed (which led back into the sea), that vitamin D can help our skin and minds, especially during the winter months; and that eating codfish can prevent mental illnesses like depression, by providing sustenance to us.



Figure 26 Photos taken by me, of Captain L washing, filleting, and preparing the cod fish to cook. The rest is tossed back into the ocean, using the green slide (pictured right), for other fish/sea life to feed off.



Figure 27 Photos taken by me, of Captain L washing, filleting, and preparing the cod fish to cook. The rest is tossed back into the ocean, using the green slide (pictured right), for other fish/sea life to feed off.



Figure 28 Photos taken by me, of Captain L washing, filleting, and preparing the cod fish to cook. The rest is tossed back into the ocean, using the green slide (pictured right), for other fish/sea life to feed off.



Figure 29 Photos taken by me, of Captain L washing, filleting, and preparing the cod fish to cook. The rest is tossed back into the ocean, using the green slide (pictured right), for other fish/sea life to feed off.

Captain L notes that people are getting further and further away from understanding that codfish is more than a fancy meal on a plate at a downtown St. John's restaurant and they are missing the fact that it has provided people with health, life, skill, to people. The market does not consider the health benefits of eating codfish, nor the competition of seals and climate change, or the time needed for filleting/processing fish. He voiced that since factories have replaced most humans with machines for fish filleting, he sees the loss of value per fillet only logical from a

market point of view. Kandice, the fisher woman who I met earlier in the year, and who had helped Captain Leo with his sailing, said that to unlearn the value system that devalues the sustenance of codfish for humans and only engaged in large-scale fishing, we need to start rethinking capitalism.

Kandice said that she was adherently opposed to the extractive mode that demanded long working hours—and that the entire point of fishing was to feel connected to the people around you and to be able to survive by sharing resources, skills, and having mutual respect for humans and nature. Kandice was pointing to the idea that the measures used to value fish were deprivation folks from accessing something that was inherently good for them—this, inevitably, connects to the disassociation amongst the general populations (especially youth), and the cultural value that has been historically attached to maintaining a sustainable relationship between cod fish and fishing.



Figure 30 Photos taken by me, of seagulls waiting for our bat and the ocean (left photo); and Kandice (green coat, on the right photo) and other volunteer crew members waiting to haul in their fishing line, Petty Harbour, NL.



Figure 31 Photos taken by me, of seagulls waiting for our bat and the ocean (left photo); and Kandice (green coat, on the right photo) and other volunteer crew members waiting to haul in their fishing line, Petty Harbour, NL.

Captain L was sure that if people knew the value of a “good fish” then they would pay the price—but, he said it was just not feasible in this economy to do something like that as a businessperson. The co-captain arguably replied and said that the problem was not in acknowledging the process but downsizing the industry. She further suggested that smaller pockets of fishing would be economically and economically better. She pointed out that competition has led to long working days for everyone, and that nobody was happy with the way capitalism has enforced large scale fishing practices. The conversation lasted hours as we filleted cod, boiled potatoes, and roasted them in the shed that overlooked Petty Harbour one warm evening.



Figure 32 Photos taken by me, of the view from inside the fish filleting shed, Petty Harbour, NL.



Figure 33 Photos taken by me, of the view from inside the fish filleting shed, Petty Harbour, NL.



Figure 34 Photos taken by me, of the different rubber boots you can borrow from Kandice and Captain L, Petty Harbour, NL

Dean Bavington's book, *Managed Annihilation* (2010) summarizes the reality of the NL fishing industry and attributes its failure to practical incompetencies in industrial management strategies that did not consider critical fisheries-based sciences giving poor estimations on cod population structures and trophic systems. Additionally, they say global economic markets were ignored while priority to industrial fishers were given on the assumptive basis that industrial fishing trawlers would not overfish. Socio-cultural value is ignored, and current regulations do not consider the socio-economic situations of traditional inshore and coastal fishing. For example, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, PPE (personal protective gear) and related resources was more readily available to those who had bigger fishing enterprises while many inshore/coastal enterprises are forced to choose between safe working conditions or bringing in an income. Many captains also had to rethink how they manage space on their own

ship, by maintaining the recommended distance of 6 ft apart, and by following sanitization regulations.

Since 2020, there has been less of a consultation style with fish harvesters and more efforts to regulate licensing parameters. As per DFO and the Conservation and Protection sector, (the investigative function of DFO) reports from 2021-2023 (please refer to Table of DFO's Review Process and Benchmarks, 2023 below), there has been roughly a 47% drop in inshore questionnaires (which refer to questionnaires related to inshore fishery regulation compliance), and a 0.8% difference in requests for follow up information. There is no comparable data to show the difference in revised arrangements and can point to less frequent communication between DFO fishery officers and the fisher. It is stated that "[...] fishery officers have the authority to take enforcement action, including recommending prosecution of both license holders and third parties/controllers (e.g., processors, lenders, other license holders)" (Fisheries and Oceans Canada: Inshore Regulations, 2023) under Section 78 of the Fisheries Act.

Fisherman Finn spoke a lot about how the relationship between fishery officers and fishers was conflictual. He said that generally, it would be better, if fishers could consult more with DFO and fishery officers about the regulations and policies that control inshore/coastal fishing. I listened to him explain on zoom, that the criminalization of inshore/coastal fishing eliminates communal opportunity for sustainable practices and removes food sustenance to the province. He said that removing this way of fishing removes an important connection that helps create less suffering for the fish in general.

There is a large amount of empathy for fish and how they feel when they are caught among many inshore/coastal fishers in Newfoundland and Labrador as many see it not necessary to prolong death, especially out of water. During my fishing trip, I noticed that Captain L quickly

snapped the necks of the fish and tossed them in a bin—which sounds inhumane when you spell it out, but in fact it was a quick death for the fish, who had just emerged from the icy cold waters. When we arrived on shore, we measured and weighed the fish, and to my surprise, I thought I saw a fish slightly moving. I became recognizably uneasy at the sight and was asked by a helper “what’s the matter?” to which I replied, “is that still alive?”—after a pause, she looked at me and said “no, that is their nervous system reacting since death happened so quick, they are not alive and they did not feel it” and with that explanation, I accepted the event, but moved further away from the bin of fish regardless. It was an eye-opening moment, though, and a way of thinking about life, death, and kindness to animals.



Figure 35 Cod fish caught by Captain L the crew and I

The more we spoke about sustaining fishers and the fishery, the more we thought about the scale of yields per inshore/coastal boat and ways we can share the fish and create more economic benefit for local communities at the same time. Roy suggested creating school lunch programs that had fresh fish and making fish more affordable for local restaurants and grocery stores. He also mentioned that by creating more community-based harvesting systems, ecological

and social accountability in the inshore fishing community would be stronger too. The table below shows the number of questionnaires distributed to inshore/coastal fishers from 2021-2023, and as one can see, there has been a decline of questionnaires, and therefore less questions asked.

During the day of September 14, 2022, the most significant hurricane in recent times, Hurricane Fiona, swept through Port Aux Basque, a historic fishing community on the west coast of the island of Newfoundland, leaving many boats destroyed and catastrophic numbers of marine animal casualties. Apart from this, Hurricane Fiona brought a real fear that climate change was happening to our oceans and right outside our doors. Discussions around changing water conditions heightened during this time, and many feel as though warming climates are contributing to our low cod stocks and dangerous weather like Hurricane Fiona. The constant fear that changing weather conditions will affect cod stocks and the safety of crew and coastal cities is something that broader fishing communities and fisher organizations highlight often.

Table of DFO Review Process and Benchmarks, 2023

Year	Inshore questionnaires (1)	Request for additional information (2)	Revised Arrangements (3)
2021-2022 (April to March)	1174	342	N/A
2022-2023 (April to September)	550	281	37

Retrieved from: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/commercial-commerciale/atl-arc/inshore-regulations-reglement-peche-cotiere-eng.html>

Additional concerns from the broader fishing community and one of the most recognizable unions in the province referred to as the FFAW. In early, 2022, when I witnessed around 400 fishers and related workers gather at the Newfoundland and Labrador Confederation Building to protest the unfair policies, regulations, and laws that they felt were leading them in the wrong direction such as the way of pricing fish and shellfish and fleet separation policies. Fleet separation policies were introduced to Newfoundland and Labrador fishing enterprises in the 1980’s which prohibits companies from owning inshore/coastal fishing licenses and allows for the 10,000 inshore/coastal enterprises to exist. Many of the inshore/coastal licenses are owned by small families that have traditionally been passed down throughout generations (FFAW, 2022). Sullivan said that the traditional way of small-scale fishing enterprises is one of the most sustainable methods for fishing and should be valued as such (FFAW, 2022). He said that this is a beginning of consulting with inshore/coastal fish harvesters, and that there needs to

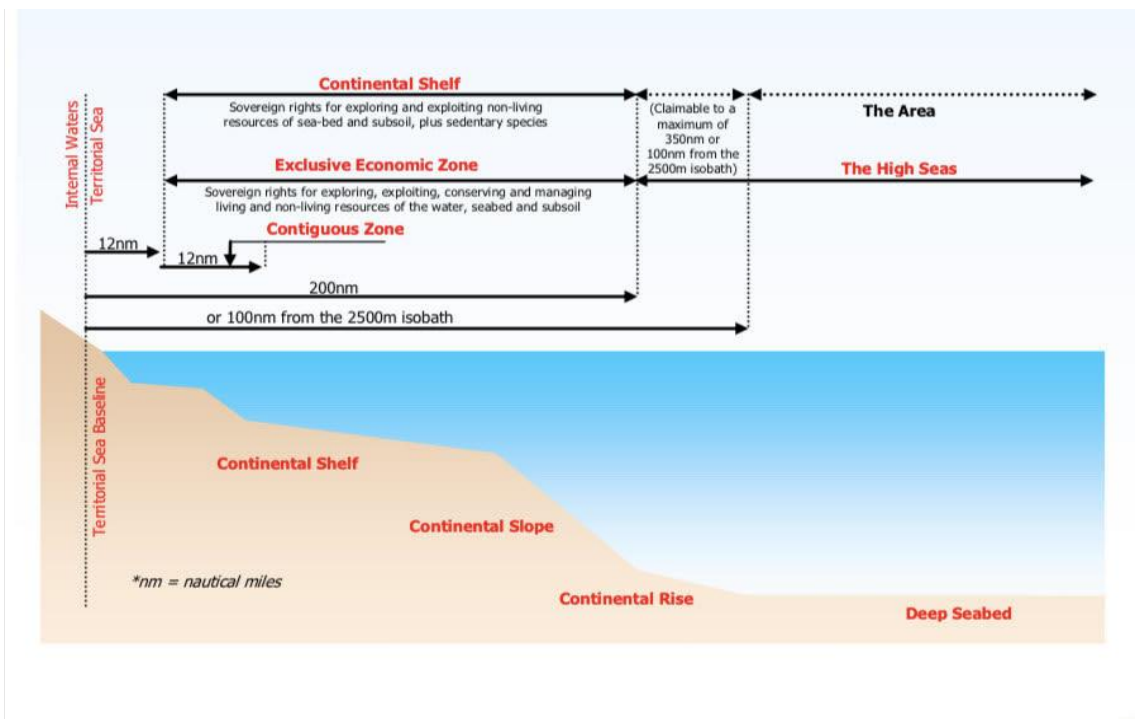
be critical conversation about fish prices so that inshore/coastal enterprises can stay competitive in the market. You could hear chants that highlighted how government policies were preventing local fishers from getting what they consider as fair fish pricing and fair rights to harvest, process, and sell fish to those around the province. He compared present day government strategies and management styles to traditional merchantlike systems that formerly controlled the price and distribution of harvested fish, and in most cases, left fish harvesters in precarious and dire positions. This is not the first time that fishing unions emphasized on the political unfairness that attributes to inshore/coastal fisheries, in fact, in the early 1900's the Fisherman's Protective Union existed to combat and highlight these very same systemic problems that orient around failure to consider socio-ecological factors and financial procurement for locals (Maritime History Archive, 2012). Michelle Audette mentions that unions are an important aspect to building equity within workplaces, and that it is important to look at how unions have historically upheld equity and community-oriented leaders to combat exploitative measures that are often backed by profit, greed, and various forms of violence (Audette, M. [2022]. Conference: Indigenization and Decolonizing knowledge: University of Ottawa).

Individuals have spoken about this too. A young fisherman, Lily, spoke about how fishing gear can work in unison with sustainability goals and maintain fishing quotas. Lily is a bright woman, no older than thirty-five years old from the south-east part of Newfoundland. She also spoke about the traditional ties that are associated with the fishing gear that she was showing and said that for generations her family had been very familiar with the gear used to yield fish. Lily showed us knots, and ropes that can be easily traced while you're on the water. These same ropes can be used for fishing nets and are biodegradable, so on the off chance that you cannot find your net, it will dissolve into the water without leaving toxins because it is made from cotton

fibers as opposed to plastic. She showed us another traditional lobster trap that allowed for smaller/immature lobsters to swim out of, so that they could continue to grow and live until at least next season. She said that she wanted to bring in those two items to show us how easy it can be to respect the ocean and the sea life. She also emphasized not always taking the entirety of the catch, too—she said that the gear allowed for people to take what they need instead of taking an abundance of things from the ocean. She closed by acknowledging that only some fish are valuable and are worth fishing for, such as cod, and that we needed breeder fish to stay in the waters so they can lay eggs (and let them develop undisturbed). For Lily, the result of these tools being passed down has given her the skills, knowledge, and position to advocate for more frequent use of this kind of gear.

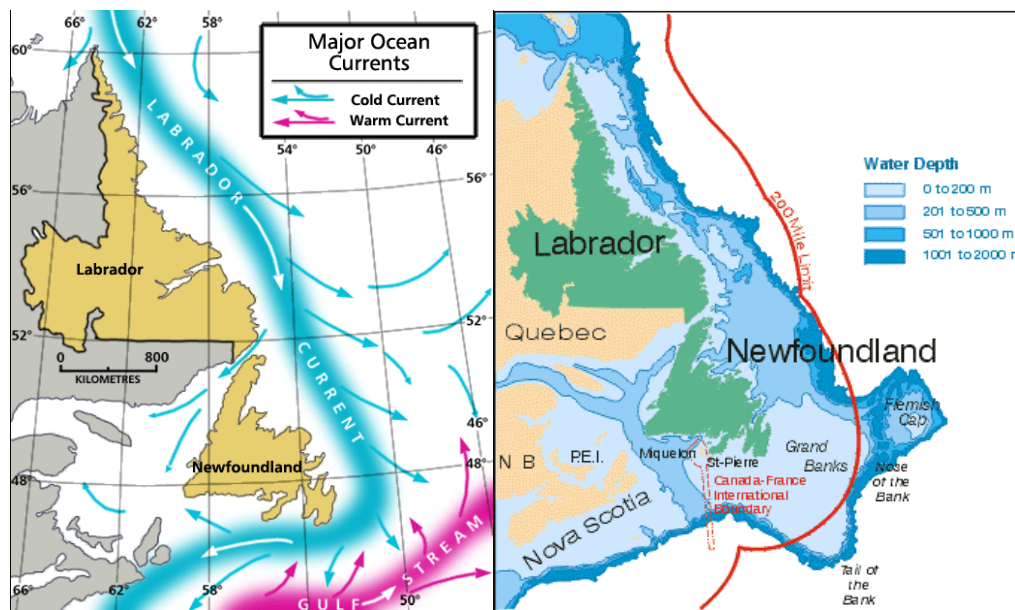
The second speaker, Kandice, spoke about the effects of simultaneously losing human relationships to fishing and access to fish. She continues to say that fisheries have traditionally been used to extract from the sea and people, especially in Newfoundland. She refers to the acceleration of colonial strategies to “get more.” The idea of receiving the maximum value from the maximum number of fish has resulted in seeing fish as a commodity. This has resulted in the transformation of traditional vessels to large, industrial, trawlers, which scoop up all sea life, hire less people to do the job, and abide by laws that enforce dangerous fishing practices for sea life and fish harvesters. She suggested that generally, industrial and large-scale fishing must remove itself as a way of obtaining a mass number of fish at once. Lily is pointing to the idea that overfishing is a national problem, not just a problem specific to Newfoundland. Canada recognizes this too, for example, in 2018 Canada produced one million tons of fish (OECD, 2021) while in 2021, Canada produced around 190,000 tons of fish (DFO, 2023). She continued to say that the province should collectively start teaching youth about connecting to the ocean by

creating more opportunities inside and outside of the classroom to learn about fishing gear, safety equipment, and how to fish. She said that fishing is learned through hands on experience, and so fishing field trips and lessons on handlining, knot tying, and boat building/repairing, would require different spaces, teachers, and times. She continued to say that being closer to the ocean and fishing can bring a higher sense of value and teach people from an early age about interdependency, nature, and food preparation. The diagrams below are from the Government of Canada's Defining Canada's Maritime Zones (2011) which shows that EEZs (which are typically 200 nautical miles from the shore) do not protect Deep Seabed's, inevitably exposing biodiverse populations and affects waves of lifecycles connected to them. Newfoundland and Labrador is divided by a continental shelf (see red line on map below), which is home to phytoplankton, which serves as the first link in the trophic chain (Heritage NL, 2023).



The currents flow swiftly and change temperature on an annual basis (from 7-10 degrees Celsius) due to the Labrador current. According to Captain L and many other fishers, these

conditions are perfect for codfish to breed and call their home—cod can reach up to seventy-seven pounds (77lbs) in weight and are known to live in cold, rocky waters (NOAA, 2023). As they are cold water fish that enjoy those conditions. Newfoundland’s *Grand Banks* currently lack warm water currents just enough to attract the codfish (Heritage NL, 2023). There is irrefutable proof that the waters around Newfoundland give the island a geographic advantage and makes fishing for cod specifically.



The photo below is one given to me by a young person who was working for the Farmers Market that evening as a facilitator. They told me that after listening to the speakers, he had realized that he was inspired by advocating for the right to fish sustainably. He said that he agreed that fishing at smaller scales and at local levels would stop a lot of overfishing and it would prevent fish harvesters from being exploited. He said that as an international student (he did not specify from where), he was surprised at how deep the history of fishing was and how important it still is. He expressed his want to get involved in the conversation more, which

personally fascinated me, because something someone said sparked an energy that made him think about fish, fishing, and our connection to those things.

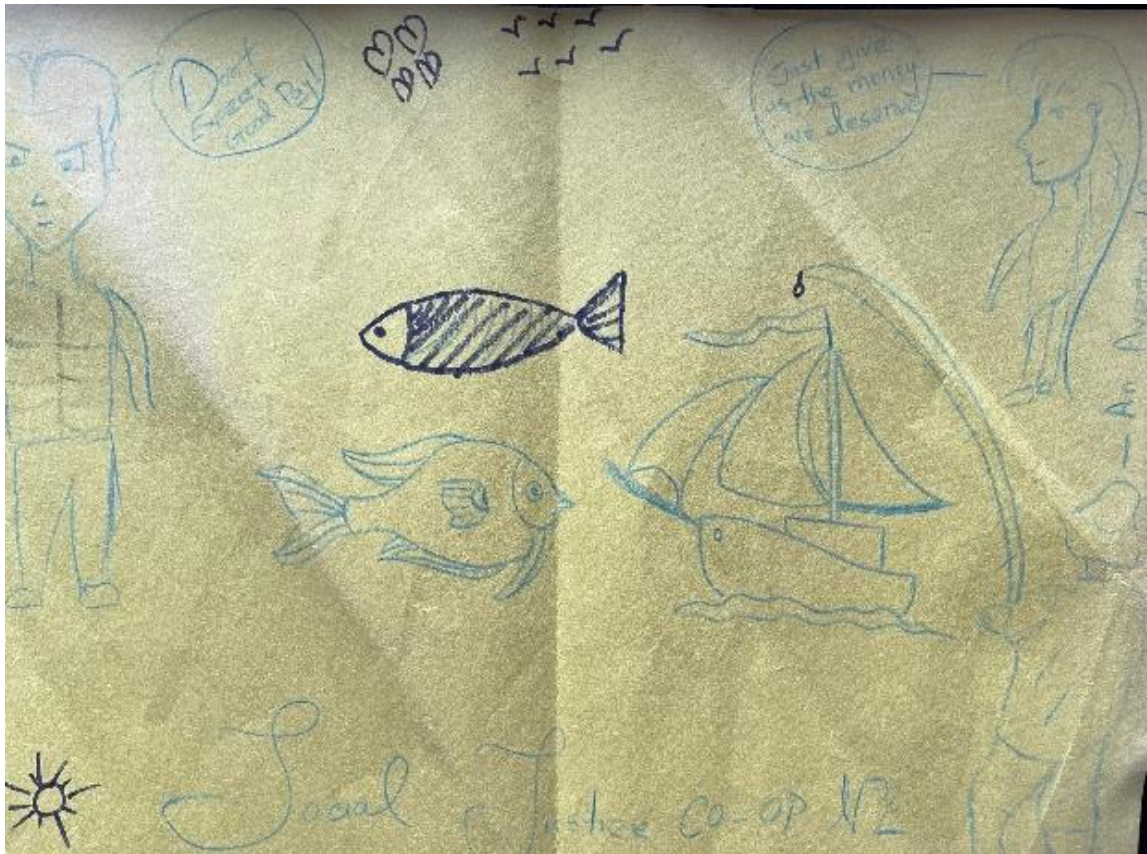


Figure 36 A picture by a local individual who attended the Farmers Market event. I was given this photo to share, by the creator.

During their closing remarks, Kandice and Bill, a retired coastguard, poignantly suggested regulations and policies that are locally informed and not production centered. They spoke about the fundamental issue of communities not having enough fish to eat because of industrial structures that prioritize harvesting fish instead of the practice of fishing itself. Ultimately, they suggested community-informed guidelines that do not dissociate fishers from their means of fishing, the fish, and prioritizes livable earnings/revenues.

At the end of this event, I approached Kandice, who gave me a booklet from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Voluntary Guidelines for

Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (2015), that promotes the instrumentation of international principles and guidelines that focus on small scale fisheries, supports the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and informs the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (p. v). Additionally, it promotes a human rights approach to empowering small-scale fishing communities and supports participatory decision-making processes from the ground up. The Small-Scale Fisheries Guide (SSF-G) follows the Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Sessions of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and serves as a perfect example of “bottom-up participation” (p. v) that represents data from over 120 countries, 6 regions, 20-civil society organizations, and over 4,000 government representatives (p. v).

The SSF-guidelines are a 6-year endeavour proposed during the 28th annual COFI session, where there was a shared need for international efforts to regulate small scale fisheries through a framework. Throughout 2010-2011, various workshops were held in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, and the Caribbean to consult and propose governance and operative solutions that would guide a foundational small-scale fisheries framework. From 2011-2013 the first draft of the guidelines was revised through a participatory and consultative process (FAO, 2015b), and finally in 2014, the guidelines were finalized through a technical consultation process which included 88 FAO members, 4 international NGOs, and 59 representatives from civil society organizations (p. 7).

In all, these guidelines hold as an example that reflects a practical international perspective on small-scale fishery regulations, and provides a holistic synopsis of social development, employment, and decent work; value chains, post-harvest and trade; gender equality; disaster risk and climate change; responsible governance of tenure; and sustainable resource management. The guidelines propose culturally appropriate tenure rights to fishery

resources and to land in coastal/waterfront areas (p. 9) and to address the socio-economic issues of fishers and fisher communities to better address health services, financial services, social protection, public infrastructure, and additional public services (p. 10). Additionally, it suggests that a feminist or gender-lens be intersectionally applied to all aspects of gender equity in the fishing industry and for *Inter Alia*, which calls for more women to be included in the decision-making process and for them to be able to make decisions themselves. In detail, it suggests that the guidelines recognize the value in post-harvest chain activities (processing and other activities), and women's traditional role in post-harvesting activities, to further suggest their placement in the decision-making roles.

The suggestions made by the FAO (2015a) prompts a more critical discussion about how fish harvesters, post-harvesters, and fishing communities have been historically silenced their socio-political identity, overall value to the labour market(s), and their right to fish in a particular space. Sections 5.9 through 5.11 suggest that states ensure that fishing communities are not evicted, erased, or infringed upon, by larger-scale fishing initiatives, that states are holding effective and meaningful conversations with fishing communities, and that individuals and communities have equitable means to access competent legal representation in a timely and affordable manner, and should follow tenure rights according to national legislation (p. 6). A lot of the same concerns were raised by Keith Sullivan, Kandice, Roy, Finn, Lily, and Captain L through their stories and opinions based on living the fishing life. Many spoke of a broader, historic, context that, in their opinions, inevitably shifted power out of the hands of fishers. Kandice suggested that capitalism was the root of the problem, but I propose, based on archival research and whispers of trade ships and merchants in stories of struggle, I argue that colonialism is the root of the problem when it comes to state control over water, including fishery resources

(FAO, 2015a), and the socio-economic and environmental downfall of Newfoundland fishers, Newfoundland fishing communities, and means of harvesting fish. This shows how small-scale fishing can be a way to deconstruct power systems and redistribute resources and profit. I aim to critically connect the historical and contemporary conditions that shape the Newfoundland cod fishery and its environment, by connecting influential colonial narratives and current regulations.

In the next section I will discuss how these historic sagas about the birth of the cod fishery have transformed over time to inevitably influence Newfoundland fishing culture and policy making decisions. I look at how these transformations contribute to promoting and normalizing disruptive ways of living for inshore/coastal fishers. Based on the stories and archival information I gathered, I suggest establishing more equitable ways of thinking about the history of Newfoundland fishing, fishing management, and co-existing as humans and non-humans

4.2 New Futures and New Histories: Women and Racialized Perspectives on the Inshore/Coastal Fishery in Newfoundland

This section proposes to historically highlight the Newfoundland fishing industry to critically discuss how the Newfoundland fishing industry reimagines space, humans, and nature by looking at new ways to continue fishing and holding a close and caring relationship with the ocean.

Anthropology has contributed to the longstanding idea that fantasizes discovery, science, and people, under an exploitative and extraction-based lens. Cusset (2008) emphatically speaks about how anthropology has failed to recognize how dangerous banality can be when it blankets a history that has erased, rebuilt, and reimagines, the subject of our study which are living things. He continues to say that modern anthropology should not only take note of the fallacies that

romanticizes a colonialist narrative that surround classical anthropological work but must also be critical of how colonialism has influenced the discipline and anthropologists should be more critical of their own work and the popular culture that surrounds them in their daily lives. Colonialism is group domination through processes in which a dominant group decides to permanently take up space, resources, and power in a place that is not their own; while imperialism is the domination of spaces, resources, and power in a place where the dominant group does not decide to stay (Horvath, 1972). The relationships formed between these two processes created ideas, stories, and actions, that formed the foundations of white supremacy, dehumanization of humans, and the exploitation of labour and natural resources.

These actions have transformed into exploitations and landed indentured European descendants into small, rural, and remote fishing communities with little socio-economic resources, and has created social, economic, and ecological disparities the places in which the descendants of mainly enslaved West African people have made their homes, such as Jamaica and Haiti. However, new ways of living were created. It is useful to think of the result as new realities being born amid colonial and imperialist systems. This shapes and changes *simple interactions* like reciprocity, desirability, and ownership, and shows a deeper connection between individual agency and nature. Overall, this last section highlights the impact of colonial violence on Newfoundland and historically related coastal/inshore societies and their way of life, as well as the deeper connections between human-environmental interaction and adaptation.

I use colonialism and popular culture to highlight how disruptive systems has subjected humans and nature to everlasting change and look at how this has historically shaped the narrative around the Newfoundland fishing culture. Historically, Newfoundland, the island, is the result of mostly English navy officers who sanctioned the coastal shores for fishing opportunities

(Cadigan, 1992). Each community, depending on what part of the province, has its own narrative on fishing, and is now home to many people with English/Irish ancestry. Thousands of people came over on boats from England and Ireland and settled along the coastlines to make space for fishing ports. The formation of fishing communities along the coast was highly dependent on European conquest for fish, and so people settled along the coast, once settlement was allowed, and made these fishing ports their worksites and their homes (Cadigan, 1992).

The popular stories about the hardships of European fishermen shared over a drink at the local St. John's bar shows a very small picture of how the Newfoundland fishery came to be. Women from European descent was often seen as helpers, or caregivers. During an online panel, I heard local professors and academics carry a discussion centered around the significance of the inshore/coastal fishery and women's history on the island and how local fishers can become independent leaders and "get away from the bread winners". The discussion explored ways that empower fishing communities and brings equity both socially and economically to all fishers regardless of gender. One of the speakers, Barbara Neis, suggested that leadership training classes and more opportunities for community funding would help equip more independent, local, inshore/coastal fishing enterprises with the assets to be successful. Another speaker, Mark Cadigan further, iterated that working on breaking down the divisions between processing and harvesting could create community solidarity and union solidarity across workers in different sectors. They suggest that this may also help communities organize themselves to set up more efficient reciprocal relationships that produce holistically satisfying outcomes.

This was not the only mention of women participation, there was another instance during my fieldwork where alternative images of women's participation and racialized presence were brought up. During that very chilly night in May 2022 at the Farmer's Market, Kandice said

something that stuck out to me. She said, “Newfoundland has experienced a very specific history of white/European presence, and so we must recognize that our relationship with fishing is also.” Kandice is a well experienced fish harvester, who has their own social enterprise that teaches people, especially girls and marginalized genders, how to fish. Kandice is a small-structured woman, with a sun kissed skin, and smile that emulates warmth. She is much shorter than me (I am 5’6”), but I’ve seen her haul in a fishing rope faster than a 6’ man—and then turn around to make a joke about it. She continues to emphasize the effects of people, policies, and governing bodies and how they are affected by this history. She says that we are missing out on seeing the human relationships that form with other people and other places through fishing. Kandice talked about capitalist and colonialist systems that make people disconnected from the ocean and from catching fish as well as the social benefits of fishing, sharing your catch, and preparing your food with other people. She says that since Newfoundland has excluded a lot of women and racialized people from fishing practices here, we have a lot of unlearning to do. For a large part of history, it was men who fished and who passed down the trade of fishing to their son or nephew, but that outlook has changed since the 1980’s, many women and gender diverse Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are familiar with fishing (Davis, 1986). Historically there were boat builders, coast guards, fish filleters, and fish fryers. On the other hand, racialized people, especially women, were background characters, only to be used as a muse or gimmick in historic narratives and popular culture. There are stories that hide deeper, and it is commonly known that St. John’s was a “cosmopolitan mecca” from 1500-1800, where merchant ships would often dock, with goods and people. Neil Kennedy, a professor at Memorial University mentions a ship from 1788 docking in St. John’s and carrying at 250 people from Bermuda. Furthermore, Dale Jarvis, a Newfoundland Folklorist tells us that there are numerous historic newspapers, one including a

ship with a Norwegian captain and a ship full of African (or Black) sailors (Campbell, X., & Barrett, H., 2023, p. 50-51).

Since the European contact with the new world, the island of Newfoundland was home to an array of shipbuilding masters, fish harvesters, merchants (McCann, 1988; and Pike, 1984), and was a colony for the British crown. There are records dating as far back as the 1800's that describe seventy- five-foot boats that could hold up to one-hundred gross tons (Pike, 1984). It is estimated that by 1896 there were a thousand vessels in and around Trinity and Carbonear, but due to vast changes in infrastructure and coastal deterioration, it is near impossible to tell where these shipyards existed once before (Pike, 1984). Infamous ships such as *The Betty*, *The John*, *The Hope* and *The Britannia* were owned by large merchant families like the Lesters and Garlands, who had the resources and capacity to make Trans-Atlantic voyages. Pike quotes a Trinity based historian, and notes, "In the parliamentary report of 1718 it is stated that nearly all the Poole vessels engaged in the Newfoundland trade were built in the Colony."

Records from the Intra-American Slave-Trade Database suggests evidentiary facts that *The John*, built in 1805 at a weight of about 135 tons, to voyage to Europe and places like Jamaica, Barbados, Havana, and many other Caribbean and Western Pacific places. During the early 1800's many folks, including a boatbuilding named Prowse of Trinity, saw an influx in the demand for massive ship building (Pike, 1984). Due to limited archival data and limited records dating past the mid-1800's, I cannot trace the ships voyage from the small bays in Newfoundland as they were not registered destinations for ship building—but, in the same breath, the vessels weight, name, and dates align very closely. There are many other examples that are like *The John* example, which has led me into a rabbit hole of archival research, attempting to connect names, places, and ships to places like Newfoundland. It is critical to think about how

shipbuilding to get a better understanding of how resources like ships, inevitably led the way for massive production opportunities and transference of people and goods.

Ship nation owner	Itinerary
Voyage ID 82050	Place where vessel's voyage began IMP London
Vessel name John	Principal place where captives were purchased IMP Gorée
Vessel owner Wilson	First place where captives were purchased Gorée
Flag of vessel Great Britain	Second place where captives were purchased Gorée
Flag of vessel IMP Great Britain	Third place where captives were purchased Gorée
Place constructed Non-British	Places of call before Atlantic crossing
Year constructed 1796	Principal place where captives were landed IMP British Caribbean, colony unspecified
Place registered	First place where captives were landed British Caribbean, colony unspecified
Year registered	Second place where captives were landed Gorée
Rig or type of vessel Ship	Third place where captives were landed Gorée
Tonnage 169	Place where vessel's voyage ended London
Standardized tonnage IMP 169	Linked Voyages
Guns mounted	
Cargo	

37 Archival evidence by the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. Note: IMP stands for: Imputed Resulted are Calculated by an Algorithm

Newfoundland and Labrador, and the cod fishery has place marked colonialist venture for territory and for larger-scale imperial expansion over people and resources; and shows how those processes created a watery pipeline to export people, goods, and fishing skills and other necessary services used to maintain it. Understanding how these relationships are extracted from different marginalized bodies can help reveal how contemporary capitalist systems and industrial development strategies exude the same detrimental traits. Terms that help influence this way of thinking can help thread a critical lens through individual community and global stories.

Ecowomanism (Harris, 2016), a term also coined by Pulitzer Prize recipient Alice Walker, is a

theoretical term that creates an intersectional plane centering “perspectives from women of African descent and reflects upon women’s activist methods...” (p. 1). Ecowomanism, from a theoretical perspective, understands climate change, and “earth justice” (p. 1) by considering many factors such as race, class, gender, history, religion, and environment. It conceptualizes the use of space, resources, people, and policies on micro, meso, and macro levels because it does see things as disconnected—rather, connected through various stories and power structures. Ecowomanism allows for us to look at dominant pedagogies that have ruled over histories, peoples, and places, and can intersection narratives to clearly reflect these large-scale systems to individual experiences.

Ecowomanism questions the capitalist-colonialist power systems reflected in global narratives and how that influences Newfoundland and the Newfoundland cod fishery. Colonialism is group domination through processes in which a dominant group decides to permanently take up space, resources, and power in a place that is not their own; while imperialism is the domination of spaces, resources, and power in a place where the dominant group does not decide to stay (Horvath, 1972). It is evidently known that the French, English, Portuguese, and Normand’s, carried ships of hundreds of people over to Newfoundland throughout the 14th up well up into the 19th century (De Loutre, et al., 1949, p. 5-6). It is important to think about this critically under the perspective of eco-womanism, as the human and non-human bodies are now being reinstated and used in a process that extracts resources, labour, and profit. Well up into the twentieth century, Black, Indigenous, and racialized people were not considered people, therefore would not be considered as crew/notable actors for records. There is currently more archeological effort being put into revealing more about those who came here, and some local professors and community academics are working diligently on these efforts. In

De Loutre's (1949) account of French settlement on the island of Newfoundland, they note the labelling the Beothuk as "savages" (p. 8), which immediately dehumanized and racialized that community. The Beothuk were already settled on the shores of Newfoundland, residing in wooden houses that were covered in fish skins, and who ate off the land and sea (p. 8).

The way in which we store memories through storytelling, and how those stories reside in spaces of fact vs fiction, can affect how systems, events, and people are remembered. The very mere concept of discovering the Newfoundland fishery almost four hundred years ago, is a very limiting and isolating concept that separates our longstanding relationship with fish and fishing. It insinuates the idea that fishing as an act is exclusively owned by a particular class of people and that fish are seen as the means to comply people to an exploitative system. The separation of people, nature, and the emergence of a society that seizes creatures for the mere exchange of power and money has been a historically gradual process. It has wrapped itself around popular culture in Newfoundland and saturates what many know today as Newfoundland history. It was not only the English in pursuit for land, power, and riches, many other nationalities migrated in and around the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador for fishing opportunities. It is believed that the Portuguese were the first settlers to acquire surplus fish off the coast of Newfoundland. Corte-Real landed at the shores of Newfoundland in 1501 and collected an annual tax on the fish carried from Newfoundland, carried out by demand of King Emmanuel October 14, 1506 (De Loutre, et al., 1949, p. 6).

Sagas that mix artifactual evidence and historical narratives give many reasons to believe but also question the stories like ones of Erik the Red, Lief Erikson, John Cabot, and Christopher Columbus. For example, there were longtime claims that the historical *Vinland* was the isle of Newfoundland, and that those who came from Scandinavian descent settled in various spots in

North America. Archeological digs evidently shown regard for intentional trading systems and contract between different Indigenous groups (Fitzhugh, 2000 & De Loutre, et al, 1949, p. 4-6) and contact with the Ilse of Newfoundland since 1001 (De Loutre, et al., 1949, p. 4-6). In the early 1960's archeologists found the first accounts of Viking settlement, L'Anse Aux Meadows at the northern tip of Newfoundland and conjured proof of the relationships between Inuit and Viking settlers for at least five-hundred years before European contact (Fitzhugh, 2000). It is here in anthropology and archeology where stories are enthralled with the idea of *Vinland*, a name that equivocally refers to the idea of a new world for the Vikings by attempting to understand the reasons when and why they travelled, where they travelled, and what they did there. Fitzhugh (2000) says that other anthropologists have attempted to trace historical lineages of Vikings and have succeeded in revealing more and more evidence of their presence. Here, it is interesting to note that the idea of when/why/how land was discovered is only one dynamic to the story (Edney, 2020). The conception of discovery has predominantly ensured one-side of the story gets told in dominant historical narratives, and commonly disregards or deactivates the agency/autonomy of the group who experienced the changes that engulfed everyday life. By negating "discovery" as merely a way of revolutionizing society, then we are ignoring the people, spaces, socio-political systems, and cultures that are being affected. Ecowomanism helps us question the scope of how these narratives of discovery overlook the shifts in Indigenous settlement(s), shared fishing/hunting/gathering techniques, and shared knowledges. The analysis of objects, resources, and settler-people as agents looking for a new world, ignores the changes made to the place that they settled in. Space, animals, people, and nature are transformed by imposing forces like the quest to discover a new world. It must be acknowledged that new worlds are not blank worlds they have people, animals, plants, beliefs, and realities that have

been overshadowed by history and the power that rests in the institutions that officiate history and are in control of remembering.

In Ecowomanism, the conquest to discover new worlds feeds into the logic of white supremacy, individualism, materialism, capitalism, and slavery, harms the planet, people, and marginalized bodies. Wolf (1982) notes in their book Europe and the People Without History that the degradation of the other non-British people aided in the elimination of their histories, cultures, identities, and societies. Ecowomanism pushes this idea one step further and can suggest that it eliminated the way in which people initially connected to the planet and introduced ways that harm human bodies and non-human bodies as well. The equivalence between the poor (and middle) working class, racialized bodies, women and marginalized gendered bodies, and non-human bodies, in the eyes of colonial and capitalist systems is uncanny when you consider the violence, coercion, and exploitation, endowed on all. The violence occurring on interpersonal, socially, systemically, and environmentally, are now being seen today as low wages, massive forest fires, limiting job markets, low cod stocks; and weak government policies that do not hold large corporations accountable to reach a net zero economy by 2030, nor to reduce the mass harvesting of sea life. This is the result of systems ignoring the lives that were swallowed up (human and non-human) to get power and profit to very few.

Large scale industrial fishery goes hand in hand with Edney's (2020) comment that describes the paradox of discovery and "scientific revolution[s]..." (p. 1). The birth of Newfoundland, for example, as we know today, is primarily based on the English version of excursion, truth seeking, and resource accumulation, but this simultaneously creates a way of life that reconfigures the truth and sets the tone for past, present, and future realities. When dominant historical figures such as Christopher Columbus and John Cabot are wrapped in a fabric that is

seen as curious altruism, or “heroes of science” (Edney, 2020) it becomes easy to desensitize to the details of how discovery works, and what is lost when someone encroaches on a land that is not their home. In 2004, a very common narrative, one that I learned in my in my 4th grade elementary Newfoundland Studies class, that spoke about how and why the English settled on the island. I remember these stories well as I presented it on a posterboard at the school science fair that year. I added additional resources to help elaborate on some important points that help define this research. Initially, Christopher Columbus is centered in many of my childhood history lessons as the person who “discovered” Newfoundland. Columbus proclaimed that the seas that surrounded Newfoundland were filled with fish. So much so that boats would have trouble getting through the density of the fish’s presence, and that one could drop a bucket in into the water and find plenty of fish when you pulled it back up.



Figure 38 A codfish hanging by a hook with an attached scale. The total weight of the fish was 4.25 pounds. Photo taken by me.



Figure 39 Photos taken by me, of the high-grade codfish caught by the crew and myself, during the Petty Harbour fishing experience, August 2022

Popular culture can influence perceptions of cultural norms and the historical narratives that justify its reality, for example, Disney, has capitalized off romanticizing violent narratives and is guilty of fostering dangerous cultural norms (Cusset, 2008) and racist perceptions of racialized people, while simultaneously supporting white supremacy and colonialism. One of the

most infamous series, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, should be heavily critiqued by anthropologists for many reasons, but for the purposes of this research project I am limiting my critiques.

First, it mystifies colonial routes via the Atlantic Sea, dehumanizes racialized (predominantly dark-complexioned Black people) people as they are predominantly background characters (unless you count the very fair-skinned, Spanish-actress, Penelope Cruise, who has no political voice, and ends up being a fiery love interest for Captain Jack Sparrow later). The five part movie series displays European based-pirate on the cover, Captain Jack Sparrow, who the audience soon learns is opposed to the colonial imperialist system that seek to capture him for various crimes, deeds, etc., Captain Jack Sparrow can be seen sailing the classic Atlantic Slave Trade Route, exploring ports of the Caribbean islands with his crew (who are predominantly, if not all white), drinking rum, shooting at colonial navy officers, and stealing from the aristocrats that overrun the company that move, exchange, and export goods/people/services, called the East India Trading Company.

There is one scene in *Pirates of the Caribbean 2*, where they sail to the Tortuga islands (on a real map, can be located off the coast of Haiti) to pick up what they consider as disposable crew members. The island was dark, dingy, and full of drunk, dirty, people, with nothing to lose. The crew visits only for a short time to enlist those who were “worthy” of sailing into their deaths, and to play a small protagonist role during a bar fight scene. Historically, for Tortuga, it is very similar to Jamaica in the sense that enslavement from the Spanish, French and English overturned previous ways of living, and how it became intertwined with Columbus’ venture for new worlds. Digging a little deeper here to make a connection between the Disney scene of Tortuga and the reality of a silent history that surrounds the colonialist idea of expropriating resources. The dirty faces the dim corners of the bar in which they visited and expedited

enlistment of people in the movie, can make one think about how human identity was flipped on its head. It makes one wondering about the number of fish harvesters who were considered pirates or slaves in the eyes of Navy Officers and Captains; and how many bodies, stories, and livelihoods were drastically shifted, silenced, and siloed, in very dynamic ways because of a venture driven by power and profit. Disney has produced 5 major works that create thousands of underlying narratives that do mystify these tragedies and realities.

The cod fishery in Newfoundland and Labrador similarly uses a romantic narrative that encases violent systems, much like how the 19 dual purpose merchant-slave ships made in Newfoundland (CBC, NL, 2019) were only discovered to have this dual purpose in recent times. Camille Turner, founder of the Afro-Nautic Research Lab provides insight into how the 19 ships were used to feed slaves and transport cod Stories like this are still being uncovered. Camille says in a CBC article, "I'm not here to blame. What my intent is, is to really honour the people who are made invisible by this rewriting of history, and writing them out," and she stood in front of her exhibition that connected historical places like Bonavista to the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade routes. Through her research, she has been able to recover stories from West Africa and the Caribbean.

For example:

“[A] schooner, the Maria, built in 1785, loaded up 80 people from West Africa to sell in Grenada. Ninety-three per cent of those were children. Another one, the schooner Fly, built in 1781, never made it across the Atlantic at all. The database notes that after it picked up 113 people in present-day Nigeria, the ship was attacked — "cut off by Africans from shore" — and its human cargo were freed back to shore.

- Camille Turner

Other stories like the short story book “The Life of W. H. Sailor” by Bushra Juanid provides even further insight into African diaspora in Newfoundland and Labrador. It describes an archeological site in Newfoundland and Labrador and refers to the preserved memory of an African descendent who was named W.H. Sailor, a name given to him based on the markings on his shoes. There is still a lot of unknown history behind his societal status, why he was here, and what he was doing here. But one thing is clear, African ancestors stepped foot here and lived their lives in Newfoundland and Labrador in one way or another.

How history is chosen to be remembered has layers (personal, structural/institutional, societal), but how mainstream history is curated has to do with the systems, and institutions put in place to maintain its truth-like longevity. In 2023, as I sat down with a local Jamaican novelist in the province, Xavier, who focuses their work on the historical connections between Jamaica and Newfoundland, we discussed how museums, including our local one in St. John’s, does not

do a good job at alluding to the presence Black people and Europeans historically on the island. In a small coffee shop off Military Road, we drank warm drinks in the cold of January as we talked about the layout of the prestigious museum and the layout. The museum, called The Rooms, is a metaphoric reference to the many rooms that contain different “stories” of history. As you approach the building, you see its massive glass windows that stretch up into the sky. When you walk in, you are greeted by security and black granite floors. After paying a fee you can enter the many rooms that point to Newfoundland and Labrador’s history. You are mesmerized by the large photos of people, fishing gear, traditional musical instruments, and a lovely café on the 4th floor. Ironically, this is where I met Xavier.

The Rooms, we agreed, was a fantastic place, but could utilize its space to represent more of Newfoundland and Labrador’s dynamic history. More specifically the history surrounding merchant ships, enslaved indentured people in the province, and their influence in the fishery. He continued to explain that during his research, he came across a lot of connections between boat building, slavery, and Newfoundland. The history that outlines the most infamous image, the Newfoundland merchant ship, has been heavily influenced by predominantly slave hands. Hands that belong to both Afro/Caribbean slaves and indentured Europeans who has no choice but to work, but notably had better contracts than Black slaves (who worked on no contract outside of obligations surrounding slave labour) (Wolf, 1982). The ships used to voyage from Newfoundland and across the Atlantic seas to the Caribbean were also fishing ships and merchant ships (Campbell, X. & Barrett, H., 2023). When one triangulates of how ships were made, who was on them/what they did, and where they went, it creates a dynamic web of narratives that tell a more detailed story about how the practice of large-scale fishing was used to define the lives of people of the past and today.

Wolf (1982) emphatically references slave labour and indenturing poor white bodies as a foundationally influential driver for the European industrial revolution, and in general, a large benefit for employers. He also briefly mentions the idea of free labour as a driving force for industrialization (an idea borrowed from “Capitalism and Slavery” by Eric Williams. It is well documented that even the Portuguese arrived in Newfoundland before the British, and it is also well known that the Portuguese were responsible for the uprooting and rebranding West African people into slaves to accommodate the mass production and expenditure of sugar and other commodities (Campbell, X. & Barrett H., 2023) The relationships formed between these two processes created ideas, stories, and actions, that formed the foundations of white supremacy, dehumanization of humans, and the exploitation of labour and natural resources. These actions have transformed into exploitations and landed indentured European descendants into small, rural, and remote fishing communities with little socio-economic resources, and has created social, economic, and ecological disparities the places in which the descendants of mainly enslaved West African people have made their homes, such as Jamaica and Haiti.



Photo taken by me, of an old bottle of Screech—a rum used to trade fish, people, and other commodified resources, via event:

When we consider the amount of undocumented, free, and nomadic labour of both Black slaves, and indentured people around the world, and on the Newfoundland coasts, it allows us to understand the exchange of people, labour, knowledge, and goods and the development of large-scale industrial capital. When we consider this, it becomes much clearer that the Newfoundland fishing industry was sanctioned based off greed and power, and now it is inevitably clear that the industry would eventually overflow on itself and collapse in, but this is at no fault of the local fishers, who for centuries, have been subject to the slow violence of this industry. Slow violence is not a surface level concept and alludes to the direct and indirect ways in which all living things are denied resources that enable them to live. Slow violence is a policy, it is a government, it is an event, it is an environment, and most importantly, it has no timeline. It exists in society as a cataclysm of disruption and denial of life. An example of slow violence on the island of Newfoundland is from the Beothuk and Mi'gmaq who were murdered, had land encroached upon, and children stolen. Slow violence does not refer to the direct atrocities of settler insurgence, but the way in which life changes for Indigenous folks because of it, and how this erased a quality of life that people were used to. Settler contact employed a series of diseases, rules, weapons, and ways of living that harmed Native populations, nevertheless, I am told by locals in St. John's that Indigenous places names and knowledge about the sea, the animals, and the land, were valuable and used exploitatively by settlers. (Campbell, X. & Barrett H., 2023). Newfoundland and Labrador, and the cod fishery has place marked colonialist venture for territory and for larger-scale imperial expansion over people and resources; and shows how those processes created a watery pipeline to export people, goods, and fishing skills and other necessary services used to maintain it. Understanding how these relationships are extracted from

different marginalized bodies can help reveal how contemporary capitalist systems and industrial development strategies exude the same detrimental traits.

Wolf (1982) points to this idea of slow violence and says that this was a major reason why Black slaves and indentured Europeans were so useful to building industrial capital, as they were often away from their homelands (p. 199) and had no other choice but to be subject to new ways of life. This, as unexpected as some may say, inevitably created different social bonds, knowledge, values, and languages among these groups of people. In sense, one would think that of course slow violence creates a new way of living, under which any would assume to label as resilience. But, for many reasons, I believe that this is an incorrect and shallow interpretation—it gives an assumptive interpretation that things are somehow resolved or complete, when they are very much not. Newfoundland is still caught up in the 1992 cod collapse and cannot let go of its imperial past. There are underlying narratives that are formed from slow violence, narratives that reflect the disruption and denial that was mentioned earlier. For example, when I sat down with Xavier, we noted that there are similar words that Newfoundland and Jamaica share such as “gwaan,” which means to “go on”. Jamaicans will ask you “wah gwaan” to inquire about you are doing today and to show familiarity with you, when Newfoundlanders will use the word in context of jesting someone to leave (in a joking manner), for example “gwaan wit’cha.” Jamaica and Newfoundland also share recipes that share similar ingredients such as dried coconut, salted fish, and molasses. Additionally, Newfoundland’s most traditional rum is Screech, a Jamaican rum, that was traded for D-grade fish (Campbell, X & Barrett H., 2023) and transported on merchant/slave ships. Lassie buns (molasses buns), fish cakes or salt fish fritters (potatoes/flour, salted fish) and snowballs (round cookie with coconut) are now material connections that speak to a past that defines Newfoundland fishing.

Structural and societal processes like colonialism and how it established enslaved and indentured bodies create a dynamic narrative based off the industrial domination of fishing in Newfoundland. The boat blueprints, fishing practices, languages and sayings, and staple foods/drinks from voyages, are proof that industrial fishing has done more than influence the 1990's cod collapse—it has shaped the lives of people involved in the Newfoundland fishing industry for over five hundred (500) years.

Conclusion

An abundance of thoughtful research has been put into understanding the infamous 1992 cod collapse but there is room to explore how individuals and communities have adapted to changing weather, changing oceans, changing working conditions, and changing economies. In this thesis disruption results in change; and stories are places for understanding how locals come to a consensus about best practices during change. The stories in this research prove that social, ecological, and economic disruption creates multiple adaptations and multiple resulting possibilities. Stories and understanding best practices help shed light on an individual's perception of themselves and their relation to broader history and life-changing events; and can serve to navigate cultural connections to the broader community. Newfoundland has a unique connection to the fishing industry because it has been a way of life for hundreds of years and continues to be a viable pathway to live and to make a living for at least ten thousand (10,000) enterprises today.

Ultimately, this research considers ways anthropological inquiry can develop ways of understanding local stories and seeks to answer the questions: How do fishers and broader fishing communities speak about socio-ecological disruption on the island of Newfoundland? What can disruption narratives reveal about the Newfoundland inshore and coastal fishery? Finally, if federal Canadian policies and regulations understand socio-ecological disruption with the inshore/coastal fishery? Aside from these questions, the research digs deeper into Newfoundland's collective memory and popular fishing narratives in relation to the reckoning of stories that highlight women and racialized people like never before. Emerging histories and futures commonly came up in personal stories that were able to be supported by archival documents and formal news on fisheries related policies; for example, the history on Screech and

ways to share fishing grounds/TACs were brought up by individuals in the community but could be tracked and validated using university archival data and scientific assessment summaries from DFO.

I used the stories of fishers and other participants to show how they have adapted to change and how it is possible to continue fishing in their communities. There is an everlasting theme of hopeful reimagination that is captured at the heart of these stories in this thesis that points to a strong individual and collective connection to inshore/coastal fishing in Newfoundland. Throughout my research I found it difficult to find ways to initially connect local perceptions, federal policies, and my analysis of the inshore/coastal fishery but I overcame this by delving deeper into life stories which made me fortunate enough to focus on select policies. While doing secondary research on local stories I found an abundance of content about the history of Newfoundland fishing but very little on fishing in Newfoundland today. So, issues surrounding social, economic, ecological, and sometimes labour related issues were fine-tuned by individual stories collected by me.

I made the choice to anchor local stories to help this research navigate local problems and solutions under a qualitative scope and to relate them back to formal policy concerns. The importance of using qualitative methods to amend policy and conjure solutions is highlighted in this thesis as many local suggestions provides proof that practical methods and traditional methods can work together to sustain an industry from micro to macro level. It has been found that locals are informed with both scientific and traditional knowledge and that federal departments such as DFO are attempting to acknowledge and respect some aspects of this traditional knowledge. A bottom-up approach to fisheries management is what many want from federal policy, but this research has limited scope in suggesting ways to do this. From a local

perspective, federal Canadian policies do not understand socio-ecological disruption within the fishing community to the extent that it should. But many have said, despite their fears, they are eager to work with the government officials to find ways to keep fishing going and to preserve it as the valuable economic and cultural driver that it is.

Therefore, this research prescribes that there should be an increase in federal efficacy when it comes to local fishing concerns. Based on my findings, the federal government should invest in strategies that will help local fishers understand the licensing systems better, provide more financial support to ensure licensure continuation, faster alternatives to the online registration of licenses, and to listen to extenuating cases when licenses cannot be passed down as per federal requirements. Additionally, investments in local fish processing facilities and supportive programs to ensure fishers and fishing communities do not lose their licenses/equity to banks before, during or after harvesting season. Finally, funded training and technologies to provide more frequent environmental measurements and tracking of fish populations, migration patterns, ocean conditions. This would, in turn, help sustain the inshore/coastal Newfoundland fishing industry and would be a step in the right direction, according to the locals I spoke with.

Using narrativity and disruption as guiding stars for this project helped underline the socio-economic and socio-ecological systems that were regulated by the federal government governments, and how those systems work together to create benefits and limitations for inshore/coastal fishers. Using narrative theory revealed how disruptive systems create responses that are often because fishers and fishing communities are uncertain of their futures. Policies and market values of fish have worked together to break regular ecological patterns, and opportunities for social/community/ economic development resources in fishing communities that are in urban, rural, and northern areas in Newfoundland and Labrador. Though this project

did not use Labrador as a research site, it assumes and believes these measures can be applied in a culturally specific and regional context in Labrador, and more research must occur before feasible steps are taken.

Spending time in the places where fishers were from and where most of the archival research was obtained gave a more detailed picture of life stories as I was able to retrieve relics and participate in traditional cod jigging, which enhanced my understanding of place-based disruption in relation to disruptive systems. While I was out fishing, I understood how fast someone can become connected with the feel light ocean mist as the boat creates a way through the waves, and the excitement in your heart when you feel the line pull, and you wonder how big the fish will be, or, how annoying and fast the seagulls are when they want your bait. The day went by as quickly as I became friends with everyone involved in that experience. Describing fishing in the physiological sense and how that combined with social bonds has helped me understand how socialization on the water can strengthen personal identity with fishing. The experience was an incredible way to find deeper ways of connecting fishing, identity and place.

There are ways to explore management strategies that do not impose regulations and structures that suggest there can be future conversations that is a combination effort between field research, my own findings, and FAO (2015) guidelines.

1. Culturally appropriate tenure overfishing resource and *inter alia*. To include feminist and gender-diverse individuals and perspectives at the decision-making table and to provide more resources for fishing enterprises to successfully fishing throughout the entire fishing season.

2. Creating ecologies that include local community perspectives, environmental impacts of industrial processes and fishing regulations that do not reflect ecological sustainability in local community and regional contexts.
3. Provide more resources making policy engagement more available for rural and northern fishing communities in Newfoundland and Labrador so that fish prices, TACs, employment and benefit contracts, and job retention efforts, that bring federal, provincial, regional, fishing unions, and local fishers (retired and presently fishing) to the table.

There is potential for these ideas to be applied to a fishing community in the form of a pilot project (lasting four [4] years to track results) comprising of a small-scale, community driven fishing project, to measure the satisfaction of local fishers and their communities, DFO federal department, and stakeholders, Additionally, this would serve as an opportunity to compile grant money (so that licenses are not threatened by a bad season/run) for ecological tracking technology to ensure fishing practices are well within reasonable TAC parameters as well as to leave room for tweaking/better results for. It would be interesting to use some of the suggestions around sharing fishing grounds/catches, and to adjust the fishing season in attempts to harvest the right fish at the right time, and to leave the younger ones for the following year. The intent of the pilot would mirror the suggestions centered around tweaking and adapting policies to create continuity and certainty—not necessarily large-scale harvesting and maximizing profits.

The people who I have met along my fieldwork reflect a kindness and strength that gave great depth to this study. As I drove to each location, made calls, and met online, it was clear that everyone who participated had a story with a strong theme of change, and had many ideas around sustainability, continuity, and unity. The different knowledge from past and present experiences on the water helped shape what ecological change looks like on the Atlantic waters

and gave a voice to cod fish, a resource that is well sought after and hoping to be well looked after for many years to come. The bright colours of the houses and the friendly smiles from faces as you walk down the tiny roads engulf you with a sense that the future is bright and can look like many different things. There are practical ways of implementing local ideas of moving forward such as the ones suggested above, and there is opportunity for federal government departments to follow this example in rural and coastal settings.

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