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Article abstract

This paper presents the Newfoundland boil-up as an integral means of transmitting folk knowledge over time, space and gender boundaries. Boil-ups allow community members to formulate cognitive mapping Systems of the conceptual limits of home through work and leisure activities. In the face of rapid economic change brought about by the closure of the cod fishery, as well as encroachments into rural areas by government and other external agencies, boil-ups have become important as an expression of rural Newfoundland’s distinct culture and society.

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"There's Nothing Like a Cup of Tea in the Woods" Continuity, Community and Cultural Validation in Rural Newfoundland Boil-ups[1]

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On a warm July morning a line of people weave their way toward an unstable wharf where a skiff waits to be boarded. They hand bags of supplies down the line and store them in the hold. A Coleman stove, an iron pot, a kettle, a guitar, cases of beer, potatoes, homemade bread, codfish, and crab legs make up part of the provisions. As all hands settle down, Paul starts the engine, steers the skiff clear of the shoal ground, and the trip out the bay begins.

The air is cooler now but tastes of sweet salt. Some seagulls fly overhead as pudgy puffins attempt their takeoffs. As the boat heads toward the open water, sprays of mist hover in the distance. The humpbacks are congregating in the mouth of the harbour to feed upon caplin and codfish. The huge animals surface around the boat, waving their flukes in salutation. They frolic for the passengers, perhaps innately aware of the delight it produces. The boat continues to follow the graceful animals out to open water, but eventually gives up the pursuit.

Now the skipper turns toward the land, following the shoreline until he reaches a place called Lance Cove. He circles the boat around a rock sentinel known as "Long Will," before dropping anchor. The passengers transfer to a

1. I would like to thank those residents of Cape Broyle who graciously completed surveys and answered queries pertaining to the boil-up tradition. Thanks also to Philip Hiscock at Memorial University's Language and Folklore Archives for allowing access to student essays. Appreciation as well to Diane Tye, Pauline Greenhill, Patti Fulton, Trevor and Ron Day and Dot and Andrew O'Brien for their encouragement and instruction.

dory which has been towed out behind the skiff. After three trips, everyone is landed safely on the sandy beach. In this sheltered place the coolness of the ocean gives way to the heat of the rocks which tower above. A smell of salt and caplin spawn rises from the hot sand. Each passenger takes a bag from the dory and lays the provisions around a smooth, flat rock, a perfect stand for the Coleman stove. Philip goes looking for water, Paul fires up the stove, Rhonda peels the onions and potatoes, Gerry tunes up his guitar.

The boil-up has begun.

The boil-up continuum: traversing time, age, gender and space

The *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* defines a boil-up as "a brew of tea, and sometimes a snack, often taken during a rest from work in the country or on a vessel" (Story 1991: 56). As a child growing up during the 1970s and 1980s in the small Irish Catholic fishing community of Cape Broyle, Newfoundland, a settlement of 700 located approximately 50 miles south of the provincial capital of St. John's in a region of the Avalon peninsula referred to as the Southern Shore, I was well aware of these types of boil-ups. I would watch my father preparing to go into the woods to hunt or cut wood, noticing the items which he would pack into his knapsack. He would include food for the break which he would inevitably take during his work, always making sure his sack held a kettle, mug, spoon, fork, knife, container of milk, as well as one of sugar, and tea bags. Sometimes he would have salt fish, a can of beans and homemade bread. When he worked as a fisherman for several years in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a trip to the trap would not be complete without preparing fish stew during the steam back in the bay. As men in Cape Broyle continue to venture into the woods surrounding the settlement to hunt rabbits, moose, caribou and partridge, to cut timber to build homes and keep them warm, or hunt seabirds from the cliffs surrounding the harbour, the boil-up endures as a necessary and enjoyable break from work.

The boil-up has also been incorporated into leisure pursuits, such as weekend outings. Friendship and kinship units take to the wilderness and water, introducing children to the methods of the boil-up and familiarizing them with the landscape which surrounds their communities. As a component of both work and play, boil-ups, and the areas in which they are held, become a means of identifying communal lands and the conceptual boundaries of home. Such knowledge is transmitted through time and across gender boundaries, allowing Newfoundlanders to defend and maintain a sense of

and closeness to place. This transmission of knowledge becomes increasingly crucial as frontiers once considered shared property are appropriated by government and other external agencies. In the face of rapid economic changes brought about by declines in the fishing industry, resulting in new modes of subsistence and increasing out-migration, boil-ups have become important as symbolic expressions and vital enactments of Newfoundland's distinctive culture and society, for current residents and expatriates alike. Student papers submitted to Memorial University of Newfoundland's Folklore and Language Archive, and surveys I distributed for my research, vividly illustrate the importance of this tradition to the way of life in rural Newfoundland.

Boiling-up during work and play

For centuries the residents of Newfoundland outports nurtured a lifestyle which was tied to nature and its cycles. Following a seasonal round of labour was essential for survival. Trips into the "woods" and "country" to extract material from the environment were as necessary as harvesting from the sea.[2] Scholarly observations made in the 1970s still hold true today, and indeed

> Outporters have learned to become very versatile people. Their economy is *partially* subsistent, in that they catch a portion of the fish for their own home consumption. They also grow their own vegetables, pick berries...build their own houses using readily available local timber (House 1978: 107).

While such a subsistence way of life is no longer necessary or viable, as produce is imported from commercial farms and the fishing of cod banned since the introduction of a government-imposed moratorium in July 1992, many still proudly maintain the traditions of their ancestors who established communities hundreds of years ago, breaking bread in locations recognized for generations as boil-up spots. There is a continuity through time in terms of the type of food brought along on trips into the wilderness, although many people have added their own contemporary inventions. Most often hunters and woodcutters fill a knapsack with foodstuffs which are easy to

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2. In Cape Broyle, the term "woods" denotes those grounds which are on the outskirts of the official community boundary, whereas "country" refers to the expanse of relatively barren terrain extending several miles into the Avalon peninsula. Excursions into the former usually last several hours while journeys into the latter are more time consuming.

carry over long distances and can be prepared quickly and easily, as the following example illustrates:

> In the way of food, not much canned items are brought because they tire a hunter and prevent him from walking a long distance or running fast in the country. Light-weight foodstuff such as caplin, saltfish, bread, tea, raisins, nuts and dehydrated soup, are usually carried in a knapsack when moose hunting (MUNFLA ms 81-595: 14).

Tea is an essential component of the boil-up; the term itself stems from that fact that those partaking in such a break prepare a kettle and drink the tea they have made on the spot. Many sources show that participants anticipate hot, steeping tea much more than a lukewarm drink from a thermos, but the entire experience of consuming the beverage in the outdoors appears to be the real attraction. My father expressed this sentiment when I questioned him about his experiences and the food he carried on his excursions:

> A piece of salt fish, or maybe caplin was preferred. The fish or caplin would be roasted in the campfire. The fish first and then the caplin was preferred over can food, bread was also preferred. It was important in this sense; tea made in an open fire was preferred to thermoses. We would often comment, while having a smoke and a chat, that nothing tasted like a good cup of tea in the woods.

His comments are echoed by others who agree that the essence of the outdoors is perfectly captured in a cup of tea seasoned by woods air:

> One great tradition that has been around for a long time is having an apple juice can, a big one, and you boil your tea in it. And there's always some of them kicking around the river and left there, you know. The tradition is that the tea's not very good until it's boiled twice and you must stir your tea with a piece of pine tree to give it that extra special flavour (MUNFLA ms 92-414: 6).

> The grub bag was laid out (if it were to be an all day trip) with its usual fare of watered salt fish. The bread and butter was added in the morning so as not to be stale. Tea and kettle rounded out the preparation along with dry woolen socks, and finger-and-thumb mitts or cuffs (MUNFLA ms 80-282: 21).

> [When] snares have been checked and reset or new ones set, the men sit down and eat their lunch. This may be done every trip, but most of the men do it many times during the year. A fire is set in the ground by digging a hole with your heel. Each one scatters to find some dry twigs,

> leaves, and usually some "blasty boughs" — boughs from the trees that are dead. Paper and matches are usually brought with you. An old tin can is usually used for a kettle, since it has to be held over the open fire. When the fire has a good flame you put your kettle on a long stick and hold it over the fire. The men take turns doing this until the water is boiled. In your lunch bag, you will have brought mugs, teabags, milk and sugar, some "lassy homemade bread" and maybe some fish wrapped up in paper which is thrown on the fire to cook. When everything is ready, everyone sits around the fire and has a "mug up" (MUNFLA ms 82-142: 51-52).

> A day of woodcutting, either on foot or by slide, usually is broken by a "boil-up" in the woods, the necessary ingredients carried along into the woods in a flour bag or "ninny bag." A sheltered spot near running water is chosen for the meal. Green boughs from the trees are cut and placed in a thick layer on the ground to provide a seat. Dried withered sticks called "rampikes" are used for the fire, often started with dried spruce boughs called "briss" or the dried moss called "muldaw" that hangs from the branches of many trees. A branch is cut for a "pot bar," and a kettle or pot of water is placed over the fire to make tea. Salt fish is usually brought along, and thrown directly into the fire — sometimes wrapped in brown paper — to be roasted. After several minutes it is removed, and the burnt skin peeled away. Bread and butter may also be taken along, and sometimes is toasted over the fire to make "squinge" (toast) (Pocius 1979: 124-125).

The type of container used and the method of boiling may vary, but the desire to stimulate the senses remains a constant. People appreciate the strong flavours, the smell of the smoke from the fire and the contrast between a chill in the air and a hot drink in the stomach. Boil-ups nourish the body during the working day but they also provide a physical and emotional break from labour. Boil-ups are an essential part of outdoor activity related to work in the woods, on the barrens and on the waters of Newfoundland. While an extra pair of dry socks warm the feet, a hot meal warms the soul.

This pattern of outdoor cooking was also widely practiced by the men who made a livelihood from the waters surrounding Newfoundland. Fishing crews used to cook on board their boats during breaks or following a day on the water, sharing meals on deck. Community members recognize many coves in Cape Broyle Harbour as areas for these boil-ups, such as the trap-berth called "The Cookroom."[3] Fishermen would often drop their moorings in one of the many coves which are contained within the four mile long harbour.

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3. The term "trap-berth" refers to an area of shallow water in which fishermen set their nets. These areas are identified by a variety of names which were assigned by

One member of the crew would board a dory and row to shore in search of fresh water. Others would gut, split and fillet freshly caught cod fish, the main ingredient for the traditional fish stew.[4] Plates or bowls were not a necessity; the men would eat from the same pot using their own "shim", a thin piece of wood shaped into a sort of spoon. A cup of tea would wash down the meal. Items used in the preparation of the meal, such as an iron pot, a kettle and a portable stove, would be permanently stored in a small section in the front of the boat called a "cuddy."

This tradition continued in Cape Broyle until the closure of the cod fishery in 1992. In some areas of the province it seems to have waned even before the introduction of the moratorium, as the following narrative from Trinity Bay suggests:

> In the days of my grandfather, it was quite a common thing to have codfish, salt meat, and potatoes cooked while on the fishing grounds. It was all cooked in a pot called a bos' kettle, a corruption of boat's kettle, and thrown out on the gang boards, or a properly made board called a fish board. Each fisherman took his spot on the board and ate away until it was all finished; then he got a mug of tea also boiled on the spot. The fire was made in a large iron pot, or on a large piece of iron shaped like a saucer. My father also cooked like this, but not on a regular basis: it was more or less for special occasions. I can remember sharing such a meal — and was it ever a treat! If you have not eaten codfish cooked in sea water as soon as it is caught, then you don't know the taste of codfish. Just two summers ago when Dad was fishing, we cooked a meal like this for him and the other men; and when they came in to the wharf, I took it down to them. Dad took the boiler and found a large flat stone, threw the contents of the pot on the stone and all began to eat (MUNFLA ms 69-017e: 124).

While the men who made up this particular crew were no longer practicing the boil-up, it is obvious that they still appreciated the custom. The time necessary to reach the fishing grounds from the settlement may be one reason why the custom remained popular in Cape Broyle. Depending on the type of engine,

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community residents decades, and even centuries, ago. Before the introduction of the cod moratorium in 1992, fishing crews would participate in a yearly drawing of berths, which insured the rotation of both favourable and undesirable berths among crews.

4. In Newfoundland, the term "fish" is used in reference to codfish and other species are referred to by distinct titles.

it may take upwards of an hour to steam out the harbour. Upon completion of the grueling process of hauling a net full of cod, fishermen would relish a meal. If the crew waited for a meal on shore, they would first have to see to the responsibility of unloading the boat and preparing it for the next trip. Although one cannot legally fish now, many in Cape Broyle maintain an undiminished desire to boil-up on the water. They continue to frequent the harbour in skiffs and hold boil-ups. The central difference is that you have to buy the fish at a grocery store, unless you are one of the brave who continue to fish illegally under the cover of darkness.

In addition to those times involving work, entertainment and leisure events are also occasions for boil-ups. Such times include trips "around the block," a section of highway on the Avalon peninsula officially referred to as the "Irish Loop Drive," trips out the bay with family and friends, journeys into the woods to catch a few trout and on berry picking excursions. Of course, trouting and berrying picking are often viewed as work and do involve physical labour, but most community members view such events as leisure pursuits. Berry picking in particular contributes a great deal to the supply of winter foodstuffs, but the gender dynamics of this activity may explain its leisure connotations. That is, familial groups, consisting of men and women, adults and children, often partake in trouting and berry picking in locations closer to home, areas designated as "woods". The amount of time and equipment necessary to partake is minimal. Hunting, woodcutting and commercial fishing require capital investments such as firearms, chainsaws or boats, are more gender exclusive to men, demand greater investments of time to secure a return and are admittedly more physically demanding, in terms of the scale of land, water, and time one must traverse. Indeed, many of these labours are also seen as enjoyable, as Gerald Pocius noted during his time on the Southern Shore. He comments that "on several occasions, during a woodcutting trip or while picking bakeapples on one of the marshes, I was aware of the inherent pleasures of the activities to my Calvert friends" (Pocius 1979: 99-100).

Participants may cook food on site or bring ready made cold plates, but a cup of tea always finishes the meal. Boil-up rituals are easily incorporated into Sunday drives. As children, my brother and I would be herded into our car and we would drive with our parents "around the block." We would stop to boil-up at prescribed sites, also known to other residents of the area. In the same way, we occasionally made trips out the harbour to prepare fish

stew on the water. Sometimes we went as a family; at other times, members of larger friendship and kinship circles were included. These occasions functioned as social events — opportunities to relax together.

Others incorporate boil-ups into the gathering of trout or berries. As one student writer noted in the late 1970s, "Sundays, when berry picking was often done, can compare with the Sunday drive of today. While the family enjoyed a sort of picnic, the day produced a good supply of food" (MUNFLA ms 79-309: 26). Pocius observed similar rituals in Calvert where, "Sunday afternoon picnics in July sometimes involve going to one of these islands [in the mouth of Calvert Harbour] to pick berries, while boiling a kettle for tea and a snack" (Pocius 1991: 127). Some outside observers view these occasions as "picnics," while the Newfoundland student in the above example struggles with the word. It generates an image which is foreign to many residents of the province. The "boil-up" essentially describes a component of work related activity and more adequately encapsulates the intent of these leisure gatherings. People do not sit on checkered blankets, produce wicker baskets laden with gourmet food or sip wine with their meal; they sit on boughs or cold ground. The only centerpiece is a roaring fire or Coleman stove. The images many Newfoundlanders associate with picnics evoke a middle or upper class pastoral scene, not the rugged, rough location and associations of the boil-up.

"But some things have not changed..."

Boil-ups are then a means of validating the culture and way of life in rural Newfoundland and presenting it in juxtaposition to life as experienced outside the conceptual boundaries of home. By participating in such an activity a person is incorporated and reincorporated into a community and becomes a tradition bearer. On a more practical level, facilities and services which provide a means of recreation and entertainment in urban areas are not necessarily available outside the metropolitan realm. Unless one prefers to drive long distances to cities and towns, people have to maintain their own particular modes of relaxation.

This is not to suggest that rural residents do not have access to forms of popular culture available in urban areas. Cable television, personal computers, video cassette recorders and other transmitters of mass media are as prevalent in the Newfoundland outports as they are in urban areas. While urban dwellers

can attend movie cinemas and theatres, rural residents have unrestricted access to the amphitheatre of the great outdoors. From a young age, children are informally taught by their parents, grandparents, and neighbours the techniques involved in the boil-ups and in this way the tradition endures. This is especially important for parents who have had to move to urban areas to find employment. They maintain ties with their home community; indeed, many maintain their homes in rural locales as well as in larger urban centres. Outings like boil-ups allow these parents to expose their children to the environment in which they grew up and instill within them a pride for and respect of that place. In a culture in which the family has been "the main socializing agent through which the values and practices of the culture were passed on from one generation to another" (House 1978: 109-110), such practices are an essential part of learning about one's identity as a Newfoundlander and specific community member.

Some rural Newfoundlanders revel in the differences between the life of a "townie" and that of a "baywop."[5] They see themselves as the guardians of an environment untouched by the vulgarities of urbanization and the cultural mainstreaming of Canadianization. They have the opportunity to enter into seemingly untouched wilderness at any time, to rest in places of "quiet seclusion away from everything where the only sounds are the crashing of the waves against the cliffs" (33 year old survey respondent; female). Visiting expatriates often take the opportunity to partake in these excursions. By so doing, they mark a differentiation between life in Newfoundland and life as experienced in other areas. For many, the initial move from home is traumatic and "the separation from friends, family, familiar landscapes and ways of working and living that leaving home usually involves has been a significant experience for many Newfoundlanders" (Overton 1984: 84).

While Newfoundlanders' notions of home are often romanticized and reflect idealized versions of tradition as "places, events, people — become internalized as part of a fantasy producing process" (Overton 1984: 85), they nonetheless are a validation of culture for the emigrants. Many of these people were "reared in seaside villages rimmed by woods and fields, which in summer setting etched pictures forever on [their] minds" (Pollett 1950: 18-25). They were also brought up with the tradition of boil-ups and partake in them when

5. The term "townie" is used by Newfoundlanders to refer to a resident of the city of St. John's, while "baywop" is a potentially derogatory term applied to outport residents by urbanites.

they return for visits. Such occasions have been described as an escape to a "sacred centre," an opportunity to seek refuge from the "profane space" away from home (Overton 1984: 91). The economic forces of tourism have attempted to cash in on this nostalgia. Materials distributed for the province wide "Come Home Year" of 1967 reflect this commodification of culture. A song published in a reissue of Gerald S. Doyle's *Old Time Songs and Poetry of Newfoundland* appeals to this connection to place. One verse of "The Emigrant's Return" reads:

> But some things have not changed since when you left us,
> The Sea Air, Ocean Rote and Northern Light
> The Headlands, Rocks, and Ponds and Brooks and Marshes
> Come Feast on these unto your heart's delight (McGrath 1966: 14).

On a trip "out the bay" this summer, I participated in a boil-up welcoming a man back from Ontario to the community for a few short weeks. It was a rite of incorporation, if you will. While he did not poetically articulate his feelings, his enjoyment was obvious and he frequently exclaimed, "This is great!" He had not forgotten the ways of the boil-up. He could still row a dory with great agility. And he knew the songs being sung. He cannot participate in such activities in Ontario and relishes these infrequent trips home, looking forward to renewing old friendships and experiencing the customs of his childhood.

"They are the boil-up spots..."

Expatriates and current residents have learned the techniques employed during boil-ups through trips to the interior and on the waters which make up the environs of their respective communities. Boil-ups are a key element facilitating the transmission of information about the landscape. This comprehension of the environment, and adaptation of strategies essential to successfully living in harmony with it, has been nurtured as

> outport people have interacted with their environment, among themselves and with outsiders. Through this interaction over time have emerged the patterns of social organization and culture that typify life in rural Newfoundland, and that, with modifications, are passed on from generation to generation (House 1978: 104).

In this inter-generational pattern, parents share work techniques with children and other novices around the campfire. Intermissions during the work

day are necessary for nourishment and the exchange of knowledge, and provide an opportunity for socialization, as in the following example:

> Boil-up time was always a welcome break from the morning's cutting. Several men would gather at the same fire to boil his [*sic.*] kettle. Here was a group engaged in a common task in a subsistence role. The adolescent, or younger fellow in the group, was usually the brunt of jokes, but this was only a part of the initiation ceremony (MUNFLA ms 80-282: 20-21).

This initiation ceremony includes work narratives which define the scope of the task and elaborate on the methods employed:

> [A participant] describes one of the customs of the fly fishermen, the tradition of boiling tea in a large tin can or tea billy. This example effectively demonstrates how customary lore has a cohesive effect on the folk group. The tea billy boiling over the fire brings fishermen in from the river, where they fish in relative solitude, and groups them together on the river bank in a situation of group interaction. This is where the folk group's lore is discussed and defined, stories are told, and secrets are shared. The tea itself, stirred with a pine stick, is spiced with the natural environment the fly fishermen go out in the woods to appreciate. Even the old tin cans or tea billies that are left along the river bank are a form of communication within the group. Fishermen leave them there for the next people to use, knowing that there will always be a few kicking around on the river bank when they want to sit down with their buddies and have a cup of tea....Much of the lore of fly fishing is transmitted by word of mouth in situations of group interaction....Narratives will be performed, for example,...around the tea billy....Narratives are told to educate as well as to entertain (MUNFLA ms 92-414: 13-14).

While such contexts serve to educate and entertain, they also cultivate an emotional connection to the places where boil-ups occur. Often, transmission of the tricks of the trade is not the most important aspect of such an outing. The development of an appreciation for nature takes precedence:

> In winter we often went with Dad on Saturdays to cut wood in the Back Cove. With no danger of forest fires we would light a roaring blaze under the snow laden trees with the aid of blasty boughs. Then we would eat our lunch, washed down with good strong tea flavoured with the added tang of wood smoke and bough pins (Burke 1984: 40).

In the pleasant surroundings of the outdoors, knowledge is transferred along the continuum of time and a sense of the community's cognitive conceptualization of what encompasses the limits of "home" is fostered.

This knowledge does not have to be communicated in narrative form; children learn merely by accompanying older residents and observing their interactions with the environment (Pocius 1991: 65).

Boil-ups therefore are a means of transferring "a knowledge of the properties of the larger spatial domains, the fields or forests, [which] is crucial since they sustain the yearly lives of the people" (Pocius 1991: 99). This familiarity is necessary in isolating those areas which yield particular species of flora and fauna. Certain grounds around the community are recognized as areas where moose, caribou, rabbits, fowl, fish, berries and wood are plentiful. Pocius records this acute familiarity in his study of land use in Calvert:

> Each type of berry is recognized by Calvert residents as requiring specific ecological characteristics for its growth, and therefore is searched for in those areas of the landscape knowing to hold those characteristics. Specific areas around the community are labeled as where certain berry types can be found (Pocius 1979: 104).

The variety of names ascribed to wooded areas and water features is testimony to the use of these environs and the knowledge associated with them (Pocius 1991: 66-68). The meaning of many of these names has been lost to the passing of time (Pocius 1991: 90), but people still tell stories about comical or dangerous incidents which occurred at various spots, ingraining these places in the minds of young novices unfamiliar with the land and waterways.

In geographical terms, the cognitive understanding of land in my community does have its limits. People in Cape Broyle may be acutely aware of the names and uses of coves, points of land and trap berths on the south side of the harbour, but have little knowledge of the land above the cliffs. This area is prosecuted mainly by residents of the nearby community of Calvert. While someone from Cape Broyle may be capable of walking deep into the heart of the Avalon peninsula without feeling disconnected, they may be unsure of the land features on the summit of the Cape, even though they can view this area from their homes every day. Communities along the Southern Shore do not blend into one another; topographical and cognitive boundaries contribute to their autonomy. They are clearly "separated from others by several miles of forests, barrens, or bog, with not a building or field to be seen in these uninhabited stretches. Each community is spatially distinct from the next" (Pocius 1991: 63-64).

Spatial competence is a factor in choosing appropriate boil-up locations. An area picked at random is not always suitable. Only those familiar with the geography and land type can make such decisions. Several factors dictate the suitability of a location:

> Usually a nice dry, shady spot with rocks to sit on. The same spots are usually picked each year. They are the boil up spots (52 year old survey respondent; female).

> Usually you tried to get a comfortable spot near running water, out of the wind; a place where you could sit down or stretch out in comfort and relax while you boiled up, and maybe doze off for a while. Of course if it was spring time and the flies were plenty you would try to get a spot with a draft of wind. Wherever it was, you wanted a place which would be comfortable (54 year old respondent; male).

> The place chosen is near water, usually a river or pond, the place has to be sheltered and a supply of firewood nearby. Most of the places are important to the family because these same boil up areas have been used by family members from one generation to another. These boil ups bring back stories and memories of previous good times in years past (58 year old respondent; male).

Over the generations the same boil-ups spots have been used in the woods and in the coves which dot the harbours. The remnants of the fires — burnt stones, blackened pieces of wood, piles of ash — bear witness to the continued use of the land and sea by the inhabitants of nearby communities. These hearths mark the territory of the community, signaling that these spaces are part of the cognitive mapping system of the people who have sought these sanctuaries in work and play.

While officially these areas may be Crown Land, falling under the jurisdiction of the provincial government, for members of the community the lands fall within the emotional boundaries of what they conceptualize as encompassing home. People within communities assume ownership of these areas but often find themselves helpless in the face of encroaching developments. Companies and agencies wishing to establish businesses and other facilities in these vicinities fail to recognize this form of ownership. They receive permission from Crown Land authorities and begin their developments.

A sense of desperation in the face of such incursion was echoed in a conversation I had with a cousin of mine concerning boil-ups and their role in

the community. She was telling me about a public meeting which was held in our community to discuss the construction of a hiking trail from Bay Bulls in the north, to Trepassey in the south. She feels that much of the trail has been completed without any consultation from community members. Representatives from the trail association have set up meetings in communities with municipal governments, seeking the approval of town councils. Some communities on the Southern Shore have no such representation, as they are unincorporated. In these cases, trail construction has been started without any official consultation from residents. Other areas are outside official town boundaries and are therefore governed from Confederation Building in St. John's. Included in such areas are Freshwater Bay, where members of my extended family pick cranberries annually, and the abandoned village of LaManche. These places can now only be reached after a long trek through thick woods or undergrowth. When the trail extends through these places, they will be open to all.

In addition, the association has plans to alter the landscape by constructing bridges and making other "improvements" to the area. This does not sit well with my cousin who feels that strangers from St. John's and beyond have expropriated what she feels to be her birthright. One fear is that the trails will open the territory to destructive all terrain vehicles, but her biggest concern is that the lands on either side of the route may be handed over to the trail association, as it had been proposed at a consultation meeting that the organization will become the "custodians" of the path in the future. When she voiced her opposition at the meeting, members of the association suggested that people in the district should be thankful because the trail will bring much needed tourist dollars into the region and highlight the area's unique culture. Her response encapsulated her frustration and anger; she asked the representatives if they expected area residents to act like trained monkeys and appear on the trail playing accordion, singing and dancing. Her response also reinforced the dichotomy which has existed in rural Newfoundland for centuries:

> How can someone from St. John's, who has no idea of what it means to live in an outport, come here and preach to me about my culture and my heritage? They are too ignorant to see that by building this trail they are destroying a part of my culture and heritage (34 year old survey respondent; female).

By making remote areas accessible to the general public, the sense of communal and familial ownership or guardianship of land is diminished and the sanctity of these areas disturbed.

This unfamiliarity with the outport landscape and the traditions of the people who live there is obvious when one considers the hunting and camping practices of outsiders. Growing up, I always heard the anecdote that you could immediately tell if moose hunters were from St. John's because they would be the ones driving slowly on the highways, the driver looking out one window while the passenger looked out the other. People suggested that this was the only way they knew how to hunt. A student collector from the 1980s suggests that these hunters are actually lazy:

> Basically, there are two different types of hunters. One hunter, which I will call the lazy moose hunter, will go hunting if the weather is fine. Usually he is there on the first day of the hunt. Most likely, he will not even get out of his car or truck but will drive around any wood road or highway, hoping to catch a moose out in the open somewhere, so he can get out of his car and shoot it. If he is not successful the first day, and usually he is not, he probably will not bother to go hunting anymore unless it is really fine weather or he has nothing better to do. This type of hunter, obviously is not too much in love with the sport. Usually he does not know the woods very well and will spend twenty dollars on a gun and twenty more in gas hoping for some cheap meat and a chance to brag about his big kill (MUNFLA ms 81-101: 9).

Toward the end of the description the collector strikes on the real reason why these people stick to the shoulders of the road; they simply do not know the landscape. If they do enter wooded areas, they run the risk of becoming lost, particularly if the weather changes. To begin with, these "hunters" do not know any landmarks to guide them through the woods. If fog ever descended upon the terrain, they would be completely lost. As newscasts over the past few years show, it is a rare holiday weekend when some trouters from urban areas do not wander astray in their pursuits, relying on various local ground search teams to locate them. Recently, many urbanities have built cabins on the wilderness byroads which network out from the Southern Shore highway. Owners can gain some satisfaction by escaping into the great outdoors throughout the year, but do not run the risk of getting lost. Their cabins are sufficiently distanced from urban areas as to offer solitude and a sense of the outdoors, but are conveniently connected to main highways.

This lack of knowledge also explains the popularity of gravel pit camping in Newfoundland. This practice has been immortalized in a song by the group "Buddy Wasisname and the Other Fellers." They declare that

> It's the twenty-fourth of May and we likes to get away,
> Up in the woods or going out the bay.
> There's all kinds of places, but the place we likes to get,
> Is up on the highway in the gravel pits (Chaulk 1997: 6).

The gravel pits remain an attraction throughout the year, from the time the snow melts until it falls again. Gravel pits around the province are dotted with recreational vehicles, particularly during long weekends, such as "May 24th Weekend" (Victoria Day). This holiday has been observed in Newfoundland for some time and is particularly popular for people in urban areas who take the opportunity "to get out of town, to open the cabin, or to drown a few worms" (Hiscock 1991: 30).

I have never known anyone in my community who has partaken in the ritual of gravel pit camping, aside from some adolescents who organize bonfires in gravel pits on long weekends. Most people who go camping head into the "country," which includes lands deep within the Avalon Wilderness Reserve. Parking on the side of the road would not be considered camping, and one would rarely have a boil-up in such a place. As one respondent declared "There's nothing traditional or natural about that!" (36 year old survey respondent: male). A leisurely boil-up still requires that some physical effort be exerted in reaching one's destination. The gravel pits are niches reserved for those from urban centres who do not feel confident traveling far from main roads, or wilderness byroads, because, simply, "the area is usually known more to the locals than outsiders" (34 year old survey respondent; female). People not familiar with the environs of a community do not possess the skills necessary to navigate in the woods or country. The practice also introduces disparate definitions of wilderness. Outporters do not see gravel pits as wilderness, but urban dwellers may envision them as thus.

"Women's space is the home, men's the woods and water..."

Pocius has suggested that "knowledge of...landscape is divided fundamentally by gender rules" (1991: 91). Men, he says, are familiar with more remote areas which women find alien. In his estimation, "women's space is the home, men's the woods and water" (Pocius 1991: 93). Men must possess an extensive knowledge of these two areas because their seasonal round of

labour necessitates it, while women are conditioned to learn the routines of home and the immediate lands surrounding it (Pocius 1991: 99). My experience, as well as those of the women who completed my surveys, challenges this distinction.

If women are active participants in boil-ups, either while picking berries, trouting or partaking in other leisure pursuits, they have to travel over barrens, marshes, wooded areas and waterways. These excursions give women the opportunity to learn about the landscape and transmit their knowledge. They remark on the features of the landscape, hear talk about place names and learn the paths which must be taken in order to reach a desired location. While women may not participate in boil-ups as frequently as men, this does not necessarily lessen their knowledge of the landscape. And women are not always accompanied by men when they enter wilderness areas. Berry picking, in my experience, is a female pursuit in most cases. Admittedly, when large expanses are covered, in the case of searching for bakeapples or cranberries, men often do come along. But the women I talked with could easily find their way on their own.

Each year my friends, family, and I participate in a trouting trip. We have only one rule — no men allowed. We walk along a foot path into the woods, cross three marshes and one gully. The walk takes about an hour. While this is not a long walk, it is not a straight one either. We would never make it to our destination if we did not formulate some concept of the lay of the land. From my own trips into the woods and out the bay, as well as from heeding the words of my father and grandfather, I have a fairly extensive knowledge of the lands and waterways surrounding my community. I know where the rivers which empty into the harbour originate, I know the names of meadows in the woods and larger divisions of land in the country; I can identify coves and points of land in the harbour.

The same holds true for many of the women to whom I talked, ranging in age from 25 to 85. Some of the younger women had obtained a working knowledge of the woods from trouting and berry picking trips which involved both women and men. Further understanding of the woods, country and waterways was transmitted to us as children when we accompanied men on hunting, woodcutting and fishing trips. For women of my grandmother's generation, knowledge of the woods in particular was necessary as a means of contributing to family subsistence. Women planted vegetables in the woods and often pastured animals there during the summer as lands within the

community proper were used to cultivate hay for winter feed. Young children, both girls and boys, were given a share in the responsibility of tending to the gardens and collecting the animals. Women and children also gathered berries for commercial sale to merchants as a supplement to household income. As most men would be fishing during the summer season, occupied from dawn until dusk in procuring cod fish, women and children thus cared for gardens and animals and gathered berries in the woods as their contribution to family subsistence.

Pocius should not assume that female cognitive maps are confined to dwellings, yards and other family units in the community. While their knowledge of the hinterlands may not be as extensive or utilitarian as men's, it exists nonetheless, in varying degrees, according to the amount of acculturation a woman has had with the landscape. The broad generalization that "during childhood they [women] are taught to focus their attention on domestic spaces" (Pocius 1991: 99) is extremely debatable, especially considering the active participation of female children in family production within the boundaries of the woods even in the early part of this century.

"From one generation to another..."

Boil-ups are an essential component of the way of life in rural Newfoundland, crossing gender and age boundaries. From early childhood a process is initiated through which parents and others from older generations teach the young to recognize features of the landscape surrounding them. Children begin to form their own cognitive mapping systems as their familiarity ripens. The techniques employed during work and play are also transmitted through the ages. The boil-up is introduced through leisure pursuits as families go into the woods to trout or pick berries, travel the harbours on sunny weekend afternoons or go for drives on Sundays. As children accompany parents on woodcutting or hunting trips they became acquainted with another utilization of the boil-up. They learn to make campfires in places their ancestors discovered hundreds of years ago, as they continue the modes of production which were once so crucial to survival. Boil-ups connect people to the past, to the land and to each other in a continuing cycle of rebirth and renewal. In the face of increasing urbanization and migration, boil-up sites stand as testimony to the use of the wilderness and water ways by residents of rural Newfoundland.

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