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**The Social Construction of Subcultures: A
Culturalist Perspective on Three Generations
of Youth in an Acadian Community of Nova Scotia**

by: Betty Dugas-LeBlanc, M.A.

**A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy.**

**Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario**

September, 1993

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The Social Construction of Subcultures: A
Culturalist Perspective on Three Generations of
Youth in an Acadian Community of Nova Scotia

submitted by

Betty Dugas-LeBlanc, B.A., M.A.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Chair, Department of Sociology and
Anthropology

Thesis Supervisor

External Examiner

Carleton University

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Abstract

This research on Acadian youth is designed to focus on the process of cultural formation among male and female youth in a rural Acadian community of Nova Scotia. Within a culturalist perspective, the object of the study is to gain insights into how Acadian youth make sense of their everyday lives. Discussions with grade 12 students, their parents and grand-parents focus on relationships in the home, the school and at leisure. These relationships are explored and reveal ways by which Acadian youth actively influence and respond to their social reality. This thesis argues that Acadian youth are presenting a challenge to traditional and hegemonic meanings of their Acadianness.

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I also wish to acknowledge my debt to the youth, parents and grand-parents interviewed for this thesis. Their candour was much appreciated. An expression of gratitude also goes out to the other adults and teachers who agreed to be interviewed. Thank you also to the school officials who gave me access to the school.

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding how people come to see themselves as different and how they respond to the world around them is fundamental to our understanding how an ethnic group can survive as an entity or become assimilated. As people live through the inequities of class, gender and ethnicity, how is it that a people survives the domination of those in control? This thesis seeks to explore how Acadian youth in a rural community in Nova Scotia live through these inequities and how they construct their own identity as Acadians.

This study seeks to make a contribution towards a better understanding of ethnic persistence by looking at how Acadian youth make sense of their everyday experiences at home, at school and at leisure. Their experiences and perceptions give us important insights into how they plan for the future and how they see themselves as Acadians. This work thus adds to previous research (Davis 1985) which has focused on inter-group contacts in order to understand the processes of acculturation or ethnic group maintenance in the Maritime Provinces. In her study of Acadians in northern New Brunswick, Davis sees four attributes essential to Acadian ethnicity which also hold true for Acadians in Nova Scotia: 1) historical origins of the Acadian

people, 2) Roman Catholicism, 3) the French language and 4) contemporary residence in the Maritime Provinces. (Davis, 1985:164) Results from this work indicate that one can add "strong kinship ties" to this list of attributes. She also points out that although these attributes have remained constant over time, certain conflict issues at particular periods have resulted in the one attribute taking precedence over the others: " In broad terms, the issue of political allegiance was particularly important in the eighteenth century, religion was important in the nineteenth century and language became important in the twentieth century" (Davis, 1985: 174).

This present study shows that, for Acadian youth in Nova Scotia, the French language is still an important part of their Acadian identity. The French language is thus a two edged sword in the sense that while it is an important element of ethnic maintenance it also has the potential for being a source of conflict with the Anglophone majority of Nova Scotia.

The primary data for this study were obtained through personal indepth interviews with grade 12 male and female students. Interviews with their parents and grandparents were also conducted in order to get a sense of how youth relationships may have changed over time. This rich retrospective has helped us to understand

changes in the Acadian youth-parent relationship and its link to changes in material conditions over time. Also it has given us a better sense of key elements of cultural continuity (strong kinship and friendship ties, importance of the French language as well as French instruction) which allow for ethnic persistence in this Acadian community.

The heart of this study is the experience and the words of the youth themselves. What they have to say is important and has been taken seriously and not dismissed as false consciousness. These youth, their parents and grandparents are social agents active in the construction of their Acadianness. As such, this study is framed by a culturalist way of knowing which allows for human agency (Hall 1981; Hall and Jefferson 1976).

Taking Acadian youth's experiences as central to this research has drawn attention to the limits of previous studies on youth culture as to their usefulness to understand Acadian youth subculture. One can be critical of conventional wisdom of youth subcultures (Willis 1977; Hebdige 1979) which has focused on the spectacular activities and meanings of youth in urban settings. Furthermore it is argued in Chapter One that these studies are limited in that their generalizations of youth culture are based on male experiences with very little

attention given to female youth experiences (McRobbie 1975, 1978, 1980; Griffin 1985; Anyon 1983).

Previous studies have also shown that youth, through their experiences, make their future plans in such a way as to reproduce gender roles and expectations (Willis 1977; McRobbie 1978; Stanworth 1983). This research on Acadian youth challenges this view in two important ways. Firstly, although these youth have been exposed to traditional forms of households, the girls place career and financial security ahead of marriage and childrearing and the boys plan to share in the responsibilities of child care. Such future plans challenge the traditional gender roles. Secondly, their understanding of the qualities of a "good mother" and "a good father" are quite similar for both parents and, as such, do not fall within the traditional mother-father stereotypes.

Although these Acadian youth have been continually characterized and portrayed as marginal social beings powerless before the forces of assimilation, they express a sense of pride in who they are . This study indicates the presence of a strong and positive sense of "peoplehood" and a firm commitment to the French language as an important element of their Acadianness. These Acadian youth do not accept the inevitability of assimilation. The power of the

dominant ethnic group is therefore not without its limits. As others have pointed out, domination is a process that is neither static nor complete (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 104). It is, therefore, important to understand the complex ways in which these Acadians link their own experiences with the structures of domination which surround them. Chapter One presents the theoretical framework that guides this research project. It details how a culturalist perspective helps to see Acadian male and female youth as part of an expressive and structured totality. The strength of this framework lies in the fact that it allows for the study of social beings as active agents involved in the construction of the meanings relevant to their own lives. This chapter also provides interpretations and problems associated with some key concepts used in this work such as ethnicity, class, leisure, home, and resistance.

Chapter Two presents a historical perspective as well as a more present-day perspective of the lived reality of Acadians in Nova Scotia. It situates these Acadians within a male and anglophone hegemonic order and also provides insights into mainstream historical constructions of "Acadian" as a passive and powerless people isolated from surrounding anglophone communities. Secondly, this chapter looks at the historical developments of the educational system

in Nova Scotia and how it discriminated against the Acadians and is still a major source of conflict. Finally, Chapter Two provides an overview of the economic, social and political situation of this Acadian community today. It is argued that a diversified economy and a strong political voice have also been important to the maintenance of this community.

Chapter Three details the methodology and research strategy of this study. It provides an overview of the participants in the study including the high school students, their parents and grandparents. Interview guides were used in a way which allowed the individual some control of the interview process. Also in keeping with a feminist approach to research methods the researcher herself is taken into account. The fact that this researcher is an Acadian from this particular community has an impact on the work itself and is seen as an integral part of the research process. This chapter also outlines the way in which this research was conducted. Most of the interviews with the students were done at school and interviews with the parents were done in their own home. A description is also given of the positive and negative aspects encountered during the course of the work.

Chapter Four explores the relationships among Acadian youth,

their parents and their grandparents within the home. Discussions with parents and grandparents reveal, in a retrospective way, some insights into some of the changes in parental relationships from autocratic to more consensual social relations. Compared to previous studies on youth (Griffin 1985; McRobbie 1978), it was found that Acadian youth seem to have more positive relationships at home. This chapter also reveals that although the ideology of gender constructs woman's primary responsibility to be the home and domestic work (Weis, 1989: 144), Acadian youth do not affirm patriarchal relations to the extent found in other studies.

Chapter Five explores the social relations of schooling experienced by young Acadian male and female students today and in a retrospective way the school days of their parents and grandparents. It is argued in this chapter that Acadian youth represent important departures from previous studies of youth cultures which have concentrated mainly on the experiences of urban and working class youth. These Acadian males, regardless of class position, did not place a high value on the male superiority of manual labour. Also these Acadian females' interaction within the classroom is similar to that of the male students with little evidence that these girls use femininity as a means of control or as a tool to reduce invisibility.

Classroom behaviour for males and females is found to be quite similar. This is also reflected in leisure activities where girls seem to enjoy active participation in Acadian mixed friendship groups. This represents a departure from other studies which see male forms of resistance in school as degrading and oppressive to female students (Willis 1977).

While the material conditions of schooling have changed over time, fundamental gender differences still persist within the system. Female students, particularly, are still subject to social constraints which limit their expression (Spender and Sarah 1989). However, what is significant here is that gender divisions are not as well-defined or inevitable for these girls as one might expect. This is reflected in these females' career aspirations which will give them financial independence along with their other plans for the future. Therefore although these youth are participants in a process which still affirms a male anglophone hegemonic order, they appear to see through the "acceptable" constructed message.

Rather than outright confrontation against the injustices and inequalities of the educational system, they choose to stay within the system and engage in oppositional behaviour which is mostly individual and passive in nature. This unfortunately limits their potential for

bringing effective changes to the system.

Chapter Six discusses how Acadian youth spend their leisure time and how this behaviour has changed over three generations. Leisure has been limited and constrained differently over the years, yet simply "getting together with friends" has remained the central feature of having a good time.

This chapter reveals how friendship groups among Acadian youth are often composed of both males and females. While these groups do provide space for the personal, in being supportive and understanding for the participants, these Acadian friendship groups were not strictly structured in order to produce and reproduce traditional female gender roles and meanings. For example, in mixed groups girls initiate and suggest activities which would indicate that they are active group participants comparable to their male counterparts. While there are female friendship groups and male friendship groups these do not seem to create the isolation and the alienation for females as found in other studies (Griffin 1985). Thus, it would appear that some Acadian mixed friendship groups are not significant mechanisms in which gender roles are reproduced.

While gender inequality persists, these youth are presenting a challenge to traditional conceptions of gender. Although these youth

were conscious of the "femininity" and "masculinity" ideologies they did not accept their inevitability but rather displayed the confidence to change them in their own lives.

Finally, a summary of the research and conclusions are provided. The analysis again restates that conventional wisdom in the field of youth subculture (Willis 1977; Hebdige 1979; McRobbie 1978 and others) must be questioned and reexamined in order to understand the meanings of rural Acadian youth. Over time, the link between Acadian youth subculture and the "parent culture" has remained positive and strong. These youth's experiences and conceptions of who they are as male and female Acadians at different class locations play an important part in the production and reproduction of their subculture. Strong kinship and friendship ties, the link with their ancestors who were deported in 1755 and the French language remain for them the central features of their Acadianness today. The link with their past is part of their strength for the future.

Chapter One

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The very presence of Acadians in Nova Scotia today is in itself a remarkable phenomenon. A glimpse at their history - being deported in 1755 and dispersed throughout France and New England, having returned to find their lands taken over by the English loyalists, then having been forced to settle down on less fertile not to say barren land along the shores of Nova Scotia and having transformed this area into a thriving community - demonstrates their resilience.

While they had lived as farmers in the Annapolis Valley before the deportation, when they returned, they learned to make their living primarily from the sea by fishing, shipbuilding and commercial trade. Furthermore, the existence of legislation which denied them education and religious expression in their own language certainly decreased their odds for cultural survival. Acadians in Nova Scotia have been virtually ignored by social scientists who have written them off as a people doomed for extinction.

Acadians in this part of the Atlantic region have not disappeared but rather are maintaining their own in spite of many social pressures

for assimilation. It is argued in this work that the key to understanding this Acadian presence today must start with the investigation of the social relations of these Acadians themselves and the interrelationships of their everyday experiences.

How do Acadian youth make sense of their everyday lives? What are the material conditions in which they live their culture? What does culture mean for them and how do they live it through? Such questions can best be addressed by adopting a sociological perspective having its strength in a cultural analysis. A culturalist perspective allows for examination of the active processes of the social construction of difference (gender, class, ethnicity and generation) and the social relations within a particular context.

This dissertation will focus specifically on the experiences of three generations of Acadian youth. At the start however, we must keep in mind that the concept of youth as a separate social category has itself changed over time. Such changes have an impact on the way one looks at the social relationships amongst youth themselves and with the adults around them. The various meanings attached to the notion of youth may be traced back to the effects of industrialization. According to historians (Aries 1972) childhood was a discovery rather than a natural and inevitable status. As societies became more

complex, the segregation of youth became planned and seen as progressive and functional to society. The concept of youth as a social category, has thus been subject to the impact of occupational, educational and economic changes at particular times in history.

The literature abounds with work which treats youth as problems and delinquents. Focusing on youth as problems resulted in various attempts by American sociologists to explain the "youth problem". Biological explanations attributed behaviour to some mechanism internal to the individual. Psychological approaches mostly influenced by Freud tried to link intellectual capacity to delinquent behaviour. Finally social disorganization theories looked more toward the social context in which youth lived. Unfortunately these theories tended to downplay the significance of ethnic and cultural factors. Still an altogether different approach to the study of youth was one that encompassed what was referred to as "lower-class based theories of delinquency" (Shoemaker 1984) with different researchers each adding modifications and extensions of sociological perspectives. The two major assumptions were that delinquent behaviour occurred within a "gang" setting and that the phenomenon was mostly a male phenomenon.

Cohen (1955) advanced his "middle class measuring rod theory" which explained how delinquent behaviour could be due to the lower class boy's failure to measure up to his middle class cohort. This was criticized by others who found that dropping out of school may be in fact a delinquency-reducing solution to school problems rather than the starting point of a delinquent career as Cohen's theory had suggested (Shoemaker, 1984:107).

Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) theory of "differential opportunity structure" explained delinquent behaviour as being the result of blocked economic aspirations causing poor self concepts and general feelings of frustrations. As a result alternative solutions were to be devised in order to go up the "ladder of success". These solutions, Cloward and Ohlin suggest, fall into three subcultural solutions which result in the creation of the criminal, the conflict and the retreatist subcultures. Others have been critical of this theory because their findings did not reveal many significant differences between the expectations of the lower and middle classes strong enough to generate different behaviour.

Miller (1958) had still a different account. While others have concentrated on delinquent values as a reaction to or a substitution for middle-class norms and values, Miller drew attention to the existence

of "focal concerns" found within the working class culture itself.

Therefore, he guards us against seeing the delinquents' value system as simply the inversion of middle class values.

Much of the earlier work on youth subcultures in effect tended to lean toward a concept of youth as a classless phenomenon or at least a movement in which lower-class and middle class youth came together on unigenerational bases (Downes 1966). Material artifacts of the subculture were seen to be quite classless such as the pop record, the bike and the coffee shop. In Britain, this notion of classlessness was also present in the literature and hinged on the appearance of affluence in society and the increased importance of the market and consumption as well as the growth of youth oriented leisure industries. The social context of the 50's and 60's (mass communication, secondary education for all, massive extension of higher education, distinctive styles in dress and rock music) and a general rise in the standard of living critically obscured the fact that the relative positions of the classes had remained virtually unchanged. As Hall puts it:

It was the mystical aspect of affluence, concealed under the persistent and insistent 'never had it so good' ideology, which gradually emerged when poverty - and not just pockets of it - was rediscovered, from the early 1960's onwards. (Hall and Jefferson, 1976:22)

Therefore, with the persistence of great inequalities of wealth despite the few changes in working class life styles, the increased expectations of workers were viewed as a potential source of unrest rather than one of stability. More and more rebellious youth were seen as a threat to the system and thus generated interest into how youth see the world around them.

How we arrive at an understanding of youth and the social world in general has itself been the subject of critical analysis¹ (Fay 1984; Halfpenny 1982; Benton 1977). Furthermore, the control over what is be considered as "knowledge" has too long been based on the male experience of the world. Feminists have questioned the exercise of producing the social forms of consciousness at all levels. Smith states:

1. Halfpenny himself identified twelve "positivisms" each being different proposals as to what is to be understood by the term "positivism", supported by different people at different times.

....Women have been deprived of the means to participate in creating forms of thought relevant or adequate to express their own experience or to define and raise social consciousness about their situation and concerns. They have never controlled the material or social means to the making of a tradition among themselves or to acting as equals in the ongoing discourse of intellectuals (Smith, 1975: 353).

In order to understand better the social relationships of Acadian youth we also need to address the sexism found in a particular "acceptable" paradigm. What is clearly needed is a complex analysis which allows for the fundamental position of class relations in society but which also places equal importance on other social divisions- age, gender, and ethnicity. These social divisions should be treated as being interrelated and not wholly determined by class at any given time.

The analytical framework used here for the study of youth experiences relative to inequalities of class, gender, ethnicity and generation is one that is informed by the work done at the Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies in Britain (Hall and Jefferson 1976; Hall 1980; Hall 1981; Hebdige 1979; McRobbie and Arber 1975; McRobbie 1978; Willis 1977; Parmar 1982; Murdock and McCron 1976; Mungham 1976; Clark and Jefferson 1976; Jones 1988) and

Feminism (Smith 1974a,1974b,1975; Benston 1982; Eichler 1983, 1988; Griffin 1985; Jaggar 1983; Roberts 1981; Stanley and Wise 1983; McRobbie 1978, 1975, 1980; Spender and Sarah 1989; Stanworth 1983; Campbell 1981).

It is important to keep in mind that the work done at the Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies has had many influences over time. In fact, one might say that there has never been a rigidly imposed unitary theoretical position at the Centre (Hall 1981). Yet, a culturalist perspective, as referred to in this thesis, draws especially on the influences at the centre which have roots in critical ethnography and Gramsci's notion of hegemony and historically specific forms of resistance. It is a perspective which allows for the recovery of the experiences and understandings of people as social actors.

By questioning the premises and assumptions of both functionalism and orthodox marxist economic reductionism, scholars at the Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies offer a way of knowing that is reflexive and interdisciplinary. The strength of this perspective lies in that theory is linked with methodology in a relationship which is fluid and calls for research methods that are adapted to the study of human beings. Methods are needed that also allow for the possibility

of "being surprised", that is, the possibility of discovering knowledge that was not foreseen from the starting point (Willis 1977).

With reflexivity as a central feature, culturalists encourage researchers to get away from the "Ivory Tower" of the academic setting in order that the knowledge obtained through research may be returned to the subjects themselves and perhaps contribute to real social change. Social beings are thus viewed as active human agents involved in constructing their own lives at various levels and not passive objects overwhelmed by social structures or merely limited to the economic or the ideological.

The culturalist perspective stresses the necessity of looking at the social world in its "totality" where there is a balance between structure and agency neither one being overdetermined by the other and each one having legitimacy. For Hall, determinacy would be attributed to class along with other levels as well. In Hall's words:

We must therefore "think" a society...or social formation as ever and always constituted by a set of complex practices; each with its own specificity, its mode of articulation; standing in an uneven development to other related practices. Any relation within this structured complexity will have its registration; its effects; at all the other levels of the totality-economic, social, political, ideological; none

can be reduced to or collapsed into the other...The principle of determinacy...must be therefore thought of, not as the simple determination of one level (e.g.the economic) over all the others, but as the structural sum of the different determinations, the structure of the overall effects. (Hall, 1977: 327)

Culture, within the culturalist perspective, is the central unit of analysis used in order to understand how people make sense of their own lives. Although the concept of culture itself has often been plagued by ambiguous and at times contradictory meaning² it is now considered to be the mediating link between hegemonic interests and everyday experiences. In this way, culture is the key to the analysis of cultural production and reproduction. Cultural production is the "whole process" by which meanings are socially constructed and historically transformed. Within a culturalist perspective, culture is thus defined as:

the practice which realizes or objectivates group-life in meaningful shape and form...a distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class,

2. Raymond Williams (1978) drafts a historical outline of the various uses of the term "culture": From being interchangeable with civilisation as opposed to barbarism in the 18th century to being seen as a process of inner or spiritual development and as such separate from its material ground. Following Williams' lead the culturalists would come to see culture as "practices" rather than strictly values and ideals.

the meanings, values, and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life. (Hall and Jefferson, 1976:10)

A culture thus includes the " maps of meaning" (Hall and Jefferson, 1976: 10) which make things intelligible to its members. These " maps of meaning " are grounded in the actual, historical material conditions in which these groups understand themselves as social beings. The notion of culture, therefore, not only makes us look at the structures of social relations but also the way these structures are experienced, understood and interpreted. In other words, culture provides a link between social structures and human agency. In this way, people are actively involved in the processes in which they create themselves notwithstanding the fact that they are constrained by the historical and material conditions in which they live.

As different groups produce their own meanings, it follows that there are many cultures and that each culture is not necessarily a homogeneous or monolithic phenomenon. Cultures are complex and composed of factions or sub-cultures which, depending on their social and material conditions, express the contradictions and divisions

existing in society such as age, gender, class and ethnicity that are socially constructed.

Within this theoretical framework, subcultures are a part of a larger cultural formation and are defined as: " sub-sets smaller, more localised and differentiated structures, within one or other of the larger cultural networks...this relationship between a subculture and the culture of which it is a part we call the latter the 'parent culture'" (Hall and Jefferson, 1976: 13). According to Hall the concept of youth subculture is more than an ideological construct in that it provides cultural space for the young in the community and in social institutions as well as time for leisure and play.

Subcultures are often seen to have a distinct shape and structure along with its particular activities, values, artifacts, and territory. However, this is not necessarily the case for every subculture. Hebdige adds to Hall's definition of subculture by stressing that subcultures need not have clearly visible and distinct shapes or necessarily be in opposition to the parent culture. As Hebdige explains subcultures need not be spectacular:

The relationship between experience, expression and signification is therefore not a constant in subculture. It can form a unity

which is either more or less organic, striving towards some ideal coherence, or more or less ruptural, reflecting the experience of breaks and contradictions. Moreover, individual subcultures can be more or less 'conservative' or 'progressive', integrated into the community, continuous with the values of that community, or extrapolated from it, defining themselves against the parent culture. (Hebdige, 1979: 126)

According to Hebdige, although subcultures may have tight boundaries and distinctive shapes, they may also be loosely bound. Here Hebdige provides theoretical space for the conceptualization of Acadian youth as a subculture even though they do not exhibit the colour and flair of urban youth in other parts of the world. The task of this research project is to seek out how Acadian youth react to their own economic and social conditions and to see the form and meaning of their resistances. In so doing, this research will go some distance towards an understanding of how Acadian youth are active in constructing their own subculture.

As was stated earlier, subcultures are linked to the parent culture. However, this link is not one of complete dominance but rather one in which the differences and the values which they do have in common are negotiated (Hall and Jefferson, 1976: 53).

Furthermore, not only should subcultures be linked to the parent culture but also these must also be analyzed in relation to the dominant culture as it benefits from its power over subordinate cultures generally.

The interrelationship between dominant and subordinate groups is complex and cannot be reduced to a one way process of domination. The presence in Nova Scotia, today, of Acadians with their own language and culture forces us to see that the transfer of dominant anglo ideology is not automatic or complete. Gramsci's notion of "hegemony" helps us to understand the dynamics of those groups who are dominant and in control. The concept of hegemony, according to Gramsci, refers to the capacity of an "alliance of class strata" to systematically tie the interests of other groups to the realization of its own interest. Gramsci's analysis addresses the project of the controlling group in obtaining the consent of the other groups. Hegemony becomes the indissoluble union of political leadership and the intellectual and moral leadership which goes even beyond the idea of a simple class alliance (Mouffe, 1979: 179).

Conceptualized this way, we begin to grasp the complex nature of the relationship between the subordinate and the dominant or hegemonic elements of a society. While it would appear logical to

assume that subordinate groups would lose their culture to the hegemonic order, the negotiated nature of the relationship between the two, does allow room for the cultural survival of a subordinate group. The hegemonic has its limits and must be continually fought for in order to be maintained whether it takes place in the schools, workplace, or informal leisure sites. Acadian youth are active social agents involved in the struggle for cultural survival. Their experiences within the home, the school or at leisure must also be understood in relation to and often in conflict with the anglophone hegemony of Nova Scotia.

The construction of Acadian youth subculture is thus linked to Acadian culture generally. Phil Cohen has argued that the function of subculture is to .. " express and resolve, albeit magically, the contradictions which remain hidden or unresolved in the parent culture" (Cohen, 1972: 26). Acadian youth live their ethnicity grounded on a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, it rests on traditional notions of "Acadian-ness" (Acadian flag, national anthem- "Ave Maris Stella"), its place is typically a rural setting and its language is French although there are distinguishable Acadian accents from different Acadian regions. On the other hand, it rests on the denial of territory (Where is l'Acadie?) and therefore bound to a Nova

Scotian anglophone hegemonic order where many have argued Acadians have no favourable future (Roy 1978; Joy 1972). Joy predicted no future at all for Acadians living away from the borders of Quebec: "Outside Quebec, French will continue to be spoken in the border counties of Ontario and New Brunswick but will virtually disappear from Southern Ontario, the Atlantic region and the Western provinces" (Joy, 1972: 135-136).

It is important to look at the kind of solutions Acadian youth create for themselves. Unfortunately, those who have studied youth subcultures have concentrated on the "magical solutions" of males in spectacular subcultures (Mods, Skinheads, Punks..). As these subcultures' stylistic innovations attracted media attention so too did they attract the attention of social researchers. Later in this chapter, we will see how feminists have rightfully criticized the male bias prevalent in these studies.

Human agency is mediated through resistance. For culturalists, it is the way in which subordinate groups relate to and disfigure the symbolic order which gives the basis for subculture as a mode of resistance (Hebdige 1979: 165). Resistance here is thus a key concept in the attempt to link social structures and human agency and the dialectical manner in which they interact. While the concept of

resistance provides a very interesting way of understanding the complex ways subordinate groups respond to various elements of domination, theories of resistance have been plagued by theoretical problems (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 96-113). In order to distinguish resistance from oppositional behaviour or general deviant behaviour, Aronowitz and Giroux suggest that it is important to think of resistance as the complex ways in which people mediate and respond to the structures of domination and constraint. Added to this, resistance also must reveal an underlying interest in freedom from these constraints and an implicit or explicit hope for social transformation (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 105).

In his reflections on the school-student dynamic, Richer argues that in order for resistance to contribute to emancipation, two principles must be recognized : " the conception of a collective agent and the student's connection to the wider society" (Richer, 1990: 93). Acknowledging a link between the student's relationships in the school with their lives outside the school will help us gain insights into the resistances of Acadian youth. Acadian youth share common cultural space with their teachers and the school personnel.

When oppositional behaviour fails to challenge the logic of domination and merely serves to suppress the social contradictions,

this type of behaviour is not resistance but rather "accommodation" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 105). There are others, Genovese (1972) and Anyon (1983), however, who see the two concepts of resistance and accommodation as being part of a single process by which people can respond to contradiction and oppression. In her own research, Anyon (1983) found the presence of the dialectic of accommodation and resistance in the girls' responses to the contradictory situations which they faced. Anyon states:

Most females neither totally acquiesce in, nor totally eschew, the imperatives of "femininity". Rather, most females engage in daily (conscious as well as unconscious) attempts to resist the psychological degradation and low self-esteem that would result from total and exclusive application of the approved ideologies of femininity..(Anyon, 1983: 23)

This way of conceptualizing resistance and accommodation reveals the complex ways people react to their social context and thus appear to be more useful for the study of the everyday responses of human beings.

Aronowitz and Giroux also argue that some acts of resistance reveal quite visibly their radical potential, while others can be rather

ambiguous. When considering youth, they argue that students are capable of resisting school-constructed relations of domination. In this way, students' various forms of rebelliousness may give them the power to reject the school system in a way which will not render them powerless in the future:

They have not renounced access to knowledge and skills that may allow them to move beyond the class-specific positions of dead-end, alienating labour that most of the showy rebels will eventually occupy. (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 102)

It is therefore important to think of resistance to include a whole range of activities not limited to action alone. Resistance must be seen as a concept that articulates both actions and thought - ways of doing and ways of thinking - and the relationships between the two. Harder suggests that in certain situations forms of resistance vary according to the real or perceived possibilities of affecting the balance of power: "...the instances of 'off-stage' resistance, of slander, gossip, breaking of tradition and conventions must be apprehended as forms of 'popular' and everyday resistance that sometimes blend with and at other times overshadow 'organized resistance' " (Harder, 1989: 9).

While in the past Acadian youth have successfully engaged in organized political resistance³, their everyday resistances whether active or passive and formal or informal (Richer 1990), must also be taken into account.

Although the culturalist perspective on youth subculture is a useful analytical tool for the study of Acadian youth in rural Nova Scotia, fundamental elements remain problematic. Firstly, much of the research on which the conceptualizations of subcultures are made has completely ignored gender as a social division. Feminists (McRobbie 1975, 1978, 1980; Griffin 1985) working in the culturalist perspective have stressed the importance of making girls' experiences more visible. This in itself is no easy task considering the fact that the whole discourse is written from the male perspective which tends to draw us away from those areas in which the girls and women experience their everyday lives. As Dorothy Smith explains:

3. In 1969 the students of University Ste. Anne in Pointe-de-l'Eglise went on strike to protest the province's plans to move the university campus forty miles away to Yarmouth. They managed to mobilize the whole community for their cause. By using all the resources at their disposal, they won the fight. Unfortunately, this event has not been documented. However, some of the key people involved in the strike are active community members today and obtaining their detailed accounts of the event would give us insights into this important instance of resistance.

We learn to live inside a discourse which is not ours and which expresses and describes a landscape in which we are alienated and which preserves that alienation as integral to its practice.(Smith, 1980: 264)

Male researchers have, with few exceptions, tended to impose on their work, normative male views about the subordinate and sexually defined role of females and therefore assert that girls play a minor part in "gang" activities. The dance scene is often the only way that girls get introduced into the surveys (Mungham 1976). What is implicit in these views is that girls can only relate to others from a horizontal position. Opportunity for girls is perceived as being linked directly with matrimony. In Campbell's words:

It has been taken as axiomatic that the acquisition of a man is the only legitimate goal of females, and that subcultural support can come only from members of the same sex.(Campbell, 1981: 79)

The model of the "gang of lads" so prevalent in the subcultural literature is not appropriate for the study of girls' smaller friendship groups. More important we need to address the fact that emphasis on the "street" side of life experiences has created a theoretical vacuum

which has left the personal life experiences occurring in the home ignored. McRobbie argues that placing too much emphasis on the cohesion of the tight-knit male groups, tends to blind us to the fact that expressions of working class culture happen as much around the breakfast table and in the bedroom as in the school and in the workplace:

The lads may get by with and get off on each other alone on the streets but they did not eat, sleep or make love there. (McRobbie, 1980: 40)

Secondly, concentrating on spectacular, tightly formed groups and their "focal concerns" neglects those elements that subcultural groups do share with the "parent" culture. In other words this results in imposing an approach to subculture as a rejection of the parent culture and ignores the continuities that do exist between the youth subculture and the parent culture as well as the dominant culture (Murdock and McCron 1976). Also, by continuously portraying the gang as a self contained entity, this seriously underestimates the extent of its connections with the wider working class culture. We should also keep in mind that the great majority of working class youth never enter a tight and coherent subculture and that an individual may

move into and out of one or several subcultural groups (Hall and Jefferson 1976).

Thirdly, by concentrating on the experiences of youth in urban settings, they have given very little attention to the experiences of youth in rural settings. Gaining insights into the lived practices of Acadian youth in a rural community of Nova Scotia where these youth have very little access to 'street culture' demands that more emphasis be placed on the negotiations and mediations of class, gender, ethnicity, and age. It would appear that Acadian youth subculture is a negotiated rather than an oppositional form of subculture. Instead of creating a radical break with their "parent" culture, Acadian youth (Dugas-LeBlanc 1987) and Canadian youth in general (Bibby and Posterski 1985) have rather held conservative attitudes generally. Looking to find the interconnections rather than oppositional forms between their everyday lives and their "subcultural life" will be more useful in order to understand what culture is like for them.

While Acadian youth subculture may not be spectacular, it does remain important if we are to understand cultural production and reproduction in a rural community of Atlantic Canada. Cultural reproduction is actively engaged in by Acadian youth which live

through their ethnicity as classed and gendered social beings. This in turn is complicated by regionality (a region on the periphery).

CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Gender

Feminists and others have insisted on the processes involved in the social construction of gender. Sex is thought of as a set of fixed biological characteristics, whereas gender is constructed as a set of variable social norms about the proper behaviour of sexed individuals. It is commonly accepted that all societies promote identities and roles taken to be appropriate to the genders. Often, what is appropriate to genders is presented as the natural results of sexual difference.

Gender relations are fundamental to the analysis of all social relations. Fox-Genovese (1982) argues for the need to recognize the interrelatedness of the characteristics known as male and female and the need to see these as integral parts of a dominant gender system: "The dominant gender system in any society delineates the authoritative versions of masculinity and femininity, the socially

legitimated opportunities for living one's life as a male or a female" (Fox-Genovese, 1982: 15).

What comes to be seen as "masculine" and "feminine" are themselves meanings which are historically, not biologically, determined and which are historically specific. This thesis seeks to see how Acadian youth are involved in the construction of their own gender identities.

Ethnicity

Canada takes pride in being a country open to diversity. A country where different ethnic people can live as free and equal citizens while keeping alive their own ethnocultural traditions. Within an ideology of multiculturalism, policies are supposedly in place to help maintain and promote ethnic minorities. In Canada there is extensive research on the relations between anglophones and francophones especially the Québécois, research on immigrants and immigration policies as well as research on the aboriginal people of Canada (Elliott and Fleras 1992; Fleras and Elliott 1992).

Despite the apparent openness toward different ethnic groups, there is substantial evidence that practices of social and economic exclusion of certain groups along ethnic lines exist in Canada (Porter 1965 and 1975; Clement 1985; Moore 1980). Porter's insights have drawn attention to the ineffectiveness of Canada's multicultural policies in that these were merely a process of manipulation of ethnic and cultural differences to the advantage of the British in Canada. In reality, it would appear that multiculturalism is an acceptable framework for federal social policy insofar as it does not change the existing structures. Recently, researchers have argued that Canada's multiculturalism policy is planted firmly within a realm of symbolic ethnicity: "Multiculturalism in Canada is not concerned with the preservation of ethnoracial groups as social or political entities...The promotion of ethnic identity at situational or symbolic levels is perceived as relatively harmless since the political and economic status quo is left intact (Elliott and Fleras, 1992: 149).

Acadians in Nova Scotia are francophone and thus are considered to be part of one of Canada's charter groups. While this may accord Acadians with some linguistic rights, it does not eliminate the struggle necessary for their survival as an Acadian ethnic community. Within this anglophone province, Acadian youth live

through their social relations in specific cultural circumstances which are linked to their ethnic identity. How they see themselves as Acadian has an impact on how these youth make sense of the world around them. Therefore, when trying to understand the social relations of Acadian youth, it is important to clarify what is meant by the concept of ethnicity.

For the purpose of this dissertation, it is useful to sift through the confusing and often contradictory definitions of ethnicity in order to arrive at one which is satisfactory and which can serve as an operational definition.⁴

A major problem with the concept of ethnicity is the number and variety of criteria used to define it. Many references are often made to distinctive cultural traits and religious traditions when defining ethnicity. Others focus on the functions of a group, that is to say its goals and objectives. A definition based solely in terms of structures or in terms of appearance does little to help us understand the complexity of both the internal and external aspects of ethnic identity. Frank Vallee captures the objective and subjective elements of the

4. Isajiw (1970) has identified twenty seven (27) definitions of ethnicity taken from sixty-five (65) theoretically oriented works. The variations among these definitions depended on the level of generalization, the methodological approach used and the types of variables included.

concept of ethnicity in the following definition of ethnicity and of an ethnic group:

...ethnicity refers to descent from ancestors who shared a common culture or subculture manifested in distinctive ways of speaking and/or acting. This common culture may have been carried by many different kinds of groups such as religious, political, geographical but in all cases the kinship networks are crucial bearers of the culture. (Vallee, 1982: 128)

Thus... an ethnic group is made up of people who share ethnicity (as previously defined), who share some sense of peoplehood or consciousness of kind, who interact with one another in meaningful ways beyond the elementary family, and who are regarded by others as being in the one ethnic category. (Vallee, 1982: 130)

By referring to "descent" we can better distinguish what makes Acadians youth different from other youth. This definition will help us to understand the ways in which their particular cultural elements are used for the establishment of their social networks and the reproduction of their culture. But we must also keep in mind that important elements of a culture are not only located within the culture as such.

We should also focus on the maintenance of ethnic boundaries and not only on the cultural traits within the boundary (Barth 1969). The focus on ethnic boundaries has encouraged a more dynamic study of ethnicity and has shown itself to be especially useful for the study of ethnic groups in the process of change. Danielle Juteau-Lee (1979) in her study of Franco-Ontarians, argued that although cultural and structural factors are empirically interwoven, they are not only analytically distinguishable but are mutually irreducible. For her the survival of an ethnic group can best be understood in terms of the maintenance of cultural and/or structural boundaries. From this perspective we can say that in the case of Acadian youth, what is important to discover is not whether they are Roman Catholic, whether they eat "rapure" [an Acadian dish made with grated potato, onions, chicken and chicken broth(sometimes clams or lobster are substituted for chicken)] or speak French but the ways in which these elements are used to maintain group cohesiveness and to establish social and socio-economic boundaries.

Class

Class relations also play an important part in youth's way of seeing the world around them. Yet we must not think of class in a reductionist way. These Acadian youth live their social relations affected by ethnicity and gender as well as class. It is more useful to look at class as it affects people along with other forms of divisions in society. The interconnections of gender and class for example make a lot of sense keeping in mind that sociologists have often noted the change in "acceptable" female behaviour as a function of the economic climate. Under conditions of high unemployment women are squeezed out of the work force and back into the home (Connelly 1978; Luxton and Rosenberg 1986; Armstrong 1984).

Traditional marxist definitions of class based on ownership versus non-ownership of the means of production as the source of conflict and social change has been the source of much debate. Ultimately these traditional categories have proven to be insufficient criteria for the assessment of class positions today. Not only are these gender blind, but they also fail to account for and explain the very real differences between the social characteristics and the political behaviour of different levels existing among salaried

employees. Efforts have been made to come to grips with the nature of intermediate classes ⁵ in capitalist society (Wright 1988; Burris 1988).

Others such as Brenner (1988) present a concept of class that is more in line with the notion of looking at social relations in the formation of an "expressive totality". Brenner is critical of Wright and argues convincingly that the decisive feature which locates managers and professionals within the structure of capitalist exploitation and which differentiates them from the working class lies in the nature of the daily experiences generated within the process of production that shapes their identity:

Defining class location in terms of exploitation interests and measuring exploitation by income, Wright is forced to assert an overly abstract connection between objective interests and consciousness. There is nothing in his definition of class location that theorizes the process through which workers' develop their world views. Work relationships are....a

5. See an interesting debate in Critical Sociology vol.15,no.1 Spring 1988 in which Wright's theory of contradictory class locations has been attacked for incorporating notions of domination and subordination in class analysis. Such a move, it is argued, obscures the distinctiveness of class oppression by placing it on the same level as numerous other forms of domination- sexual, racial, national etc. Unfortunately, Wright takes a reductionist stance and keeps in line with the marxist claim which gives the explanatory primacy of exploitation and class relations in the analysis of social conflict and change.

significant structural dimension differentiating experience and thus leading to different ways of understanding the world. (Brenner, 1988: 88-89)

More empirical research is needed which looks at the daily experiences and practices of workers in various locations in the class structure.

One location that has been regrettably neglected is that of the home and of the relationship between home and the market place. It has been much argued that traditional marxist analysis is weakened by its too narrow definition of productive versus unproductive labour.⁶ Socialist feminists have drawn attention to the economism of the domestic labour debate which resulted in focusing on ways by which highly varied emotional ties and power relations are made to fit in categories which negate these realities and reduce them to look at how domestic labour contributes to capital accumulation (Harder 1989). Essentially, feminists have argued that we need to draw attention to the inadequacy of a framework which ignores gender

6. Marxist feminists used the analytical tools of classical marxism to show that the work women do in the home is in fact socially important work which contributes to the maintenance and reproduction of capitalism. This sparked a series of discussions that were to become notoriously known as "the domestic labour debate". The debate itself has been widely critiqued for its economism within the feminist literature.

inequality and which holds a narrow conceptualization of productive work in order to determine class relations.

Therefore the culturalist perspective that will guide this research will also be informed by socialist feminists who look to a more inclusive notion of production, work and the economy. According to Jaggar (1983) productive activity should take into account all those activities that contribute to the societal production and reproduction of goods, services and people. It will be important to look at how Acadian male and female youth from different class locations engage in specific practices that enable them to make sense of their gender identities and future plans.

Three sites of social relations

In order to study the choices and aspirations of Acadian youth, it is very important to study the milieu within which their future plans are made. In Paul Willis' attempt to deal with the complexities of youth's choices, he tries to understand how a group of working class lads "chose" working class jobs. In order to do this, Willis incorporates a careful structural analysis of the school and the society in which the choices emerged:" The difficult thing to explain about how working-

class kids get working-class jobs is why they let themselves...It is much too facile simply to say that they have no choice...There is no obvious physical coercion and there is a degree of self-direction" (Willis, 1977: 1). We must, therefore, look at the social relations present at different sites.

For the purpose of this research, three important sites of social relations were chosen through which the experiences of Acadian youth could be examined: 1) the home or family; 2) the school; and, 3) leisure. There is nothing particularly new about looking at these areas but when gender, class and ethnicity are taken into account, concepts that were taken for granted become problematic.

Home

The conceptualization of " the family " as a social phenomenon, has become very problematic in recent years. While traditional Marxism has virtually ignored the family, functionalists have used it as a tool against women. Feminists have been very critical of the structural functionalist view of familial relationships and have pointed out its inconsistency with the social realities of today. Eichler (1983) has argued that the functionalists view of the "family" is unacceptable

because of its static model of society, its ahistorical methodology and its treatment of the sexual division of labour in terms of biological reductionism.

Undoubtedly, relationships linked to the family with the male as breadwinner and his wife as homemaker and mother at home need to be reconceptualized. The "domestic labour debate", as already noted, generated much discussion in an attempt to rethink the notion of domestic labour itself in relation to the process of capital accumulation. However, many critiques have pointed to the economism of trying to apply Marxist categories of production which are in themselves gender blind and by failing to deal with the emotional and power relations involved in the processes of domestic labour relations (Miles 1985).

More recently, feminists have rejected the concept of the "family" altogether and opted for what is considered to be a more fluid concept known as the "household" (Harder 1989). In her research on the relationship of work and home in industrial Cape Breton, she argues against the use of the concept "family" because of its ideological baggage while also calling into question the romantic notions of families as a safe place of retreat from the harshness of the world. We must, according to Harder, recognize the dynamic and

complex nature of these relationships as these may change over time: "... relationships among people in households have many dimensions; economic, emotional and cultural, and that the relative significance of these dimensions will vary over time and under certain economic and social conditions" (Harder, 1989: 24). Harder stresses the importance of seeing these relationships as having the potential for power struggles as well as the potential for solidarity and consensus among household members.

Harder's rejection of the use of "the family" as an operational tool in the study of the relationship of work and home has much merit. This dissertation will focus on the home as a research site for Acadian youth experiences and relationships and how these are linked with their future aspirations. There are, however, indications that traditional family values could still be strong in this particular rural community. A recent survey on Acadian youth in Nova Scotia has shown that in 97% of the homes the mother was present and in 91% of the homes the father was present (Dugas-LeBlanc, 1987: 29). These figures are considerably higher than those of a national youth survey in 1985 of 3600 participants where only 82% of Canadian youth came from homes where both parents were present (Bibby and Posterski, 1985: 105). Also a survey funded by the health promotion

directorate in 1985 showed 80% of youth in Queen's county Nova Scotia belonged to traditional two parent families (Corbin and Whitelaw, 1985: 38). It will be interesting to see how notions of motherhood and fatherhood are understood by Acadian youth and to see these in relationship to their occupational aspirations.

School

There is an increasing body of research which describes how the school draws upon and contributes to the formation of sexual stereotypes, sexually differentiated activity and gender identity (Weiner 1985; Walker and Barton 1983; Deem 1983; Mitchell and Oakley 1976; Stanworth 1983; Prendergast and Prout 1980; Spender and Sarah 1989; Spender 1982; Rich 1979; see Coats, Evans, Moskowitz in Walker and Barton (1983) for bibliographies of European, Australian, and American Studies on gender-class -education).

It has been argued that the school curriculum presents not a reflection of society but a highly selective and distorted image of it (Prendergast 1980) and that the school system plays its part in the production and reproduction of social inequalities. Feminists have done much to expose the sexism of the educational institution which is

dominated by males. They have argued that having a proper understanding of the expectations of adolescent girls, as well as boys, involves looking at the transmission of particular norms as well as the repression of other experiences which the girls and boys have available to them.

Still others have argued that the school system has never adequately engaged in the education of children from homes at the lower end of the class structure. As Shoemaker puts it:

The school system helped to make the prospect of the less pleasant jobs more pleasant by making education itself an irritant for children from culturally different and academically unsophisticated families.(Shoemaker, 1984: 262)

By placing the pivotal point of this research on the experiences of the Acadian youth themselves, this dissertation looks at how Acadian youth make sense of school practices and relations with teachers, the principal and the guidance counsellor and how these practices affect how they see themselves and the formation of their occupational aspirations.

Leisure

Leisure is an important part in the lives of young men and women. However, the meaning of "leisure" is problematic because of the ongoing problems surrounding the conceptualization of the notion of leisure itself. Shaw (1987 and 1985) has been critical of the discrepancy between the various definitions of leisure in the theoretical literature and the actual operational definitions used in empirical research. By using a symbolic interactionist framework, Shaw sought to discover what leisure meant for people during the course of their everyday experiences. While leisure can be experienced during almost any type of activity, her research demonstrated that there was considerable consensus with respect to the perceptual factors associated with leisure situations. According to Shaw, the factors that best differentiated leisure from non-leisure were enjoyment, freedom of choice, relaxation, intrinsic motivation and the lack of evaluation (Shaw, 1985: 1). This approach leads us away from a concept of leisure which has traditionally been seen in relation to waged work. It goes beyond the traditional narrow interpretation of leisure which

leads one to the false idea that only those working for pay deserve to have leisure time.

More specifically, with respect to generation, youth are seen to have nothing but leisure because they are not supposed to be doing "real" work. One can surely argue that schoolwork is in fact "work" for youth and that there is a distinction to be made between schoolwork and what can be called "time out" experiences.

Research on youth sub-cultures has looked at young people's leisure activities, but these have concentrated on the experiences of white working "lads" (Willis 1977; Hall and Jefferson 1976; Hebdige 1976). Feminist critiques of this work have shifted the focus towards young women's leisure and have led to a debate on young women's relatively marginal position on the edges of male dominated youth cultures (McRobbie 1980; Griffin 1985). It has become evident, at least to feminists, that to ignore girls' use of leisure time is totally unacceptable. In Griffin's work, leisure was the area in which pressures to get a boyfriend were most intense: "Getting a boyfriend was seen as proof of young women's "normal" heterosexuality and more 'grown-up' femininity" (Griffin, 1985: 59). Historically, the Roman Catholic church exerted great control over the Acadian community to the point where exogamy was not tolerated. This meant

that marriage outside the Roman Catholic church and marriage with someone outside the community was not tolerated. For many years practically everyone living in the community was Roman Catholic and French speaking. Thus, it was very common to associate language with religion. Chances were that if a person was anglophone that person was also protestant. An Acadian marrying a protestant was unacceptable. It has often been said that this intolerance was crucial to the survival of Acadian culture in the past. How Acadian youth choose their mate today has impact not only on their individual lives but also on the collective strength of their Acadian identity.

This research project will seek out how both young Acadian males and females engage in leisure activity as an important part of how they act and react to the ideological and material conditions in which they live.

As people live through the inequalities in their social relations, the social construction of concepts such as Acadian or youth has both material and ideological reality which interact in producing their social experiences. Mannette in her study of the subordinate position of Blacks in Nova Scotia frames her analysis in terms of expressive and structured totality and alerts us to look at these social constructs as they exist within a hegemonic order: " Thus, class, age, ethnicity and

gender are social constructs which lie partly in the groups to whom they are attributed and partly in the maps of meaning of those who have come to view them as different/same and unequal/equal."

(Mannette, 1984: 20)

The lived reality of Acadians in Nova Scotia is situated within the hegemony of an English, male order. It is important to look historically (Chapter 2) at the relations of domination and subordination in which Acadians and Acadian youth in particular have been actively engaged in the struggle of resistance, negotiation and accommodation. Also, their own accounts (Chapters 4,5,6) of how they make sense of their social realities will give us a better understanding of what these mean for them.

In summary, by focusing on the interconnections of inequalities based on class, gender, age and ethnicity the culturalist framework guides this research process in order to gain insights into the lives of Nova Scotian Acadian youth in a way which respects their experiences as being part of an "expressive and structured totality". Ultimately, this researcher is interested in the social construction of Acadian culture of which class, gender, age and ethnicity are component parts. Also, discussions with the parents and grandparents of Acadian youth, help gain insights into how cultural production is altered and

transmitted over time.

Although much of the work on youth subcultures is about male youth and is focused on traditionally male concerns in male settings, insights drawn from a feminist critique are useful in order to get a more complete understanding of the experiences of Acadian youth. In trying to understand the construction of Acadian youth subculture, a feminist approach demands a methodology that is qualitative and reflexive. This researcher's own experience as an Acadian is an integral part of the research itself. In essence, one can never be totally detached from the reality under study.

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF ACADIAN CULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF NOVA SCOTIA 1880-1990; THE COMMUNITY STUDIED

In order to get a better sense of the life experiences of Acadian adolescents today, we need to take a step back in order to gain insights into the historical and material conditions through which these young Acadians (in the municipality of Clare situated in southwestern Nova Scotia) have had to live. When trying to understand the social construction of Acadian youth subculture it is important to consider the link between the actual experiences of these youth and the lived experiences of the parent Acadian culture. The resistances and accommodations of Acadian youth and the construction of their own Acadian identity is contingent on the historical and material conditions through which they have had to live their lives.

In order to understand how youth make sense of their everyday lives as Acadians we need to look at their social relations in the context of an English (male) hegemonic order. The struggles and resistances as well as the advances Acadians have had in the past have influenced how they have come to see themselves today. We

need, therefore, to take into account the context in which they lived the social divisions of class, gender ethnicity, especially with respect to the Acadian youth generation.

Historically Acadians have shifted from the status of one of the founding nations of this country to the status of one of many ethnic groups. Dominated by the English Canadian establishment, this has translated into a constant struggle for Acadian cultural survival. As Canada passes through its constitutional crisis, it is critical that we gain insights into the way Acadians have had to live through and be subordinate to a patriarchal British hegemonic order⁷ and still survive as a people. Cultural survival in a minority situation is never easy.

Acadians have lived relations of subordination and domination by which British "maps of meaning" have passed as the legitimate meaning. However, they have lived these relations not just as passive victims or mere recipients of British culture but have worked out their particular accommodations and resistances in order to survive as Acadians. The very presence of Acadians in Nova Scotia today is in itself testimony to the effectiveness of their resistance.

7. By hegemony I am referring to the definition used by the authors of Resistance Through Rituals and inspired by the work of Gramsci as meaning total social authority. Hegemony is "...the power to frame alternatives and contain opportunities, to win and shape consent, so that the granting of legitimacy to the dominant classes appears not only spontaneous but natural and normal."(p.38)

This chapter will deal specifically with three aspects. Firstly, it will be important to develop a historical context of Acadian experiences. Traditionally, in historical documents written to fit the British hegemonic mode, Acadians were portrayed as an ignorant and simple people quite content to be isolated from English society and the rest of the world. However, recently social historians have gone beyond the official documents to personal letters, memoirs, local newspapers etc. to get a better understanding of how Acadians saw themselves at the time and the actions they undertook in order to struggle for a way of life that they wanted to have (Griffiths 1973; Daigle 1980; Boucher 1993) . A struggle which, in essence, meant their very survival.

Secondly, because the school is one of the key sites of youth social relations in this study, particular attention is given to the historical developments of education in Nova Scotia and its effects on the Acadian population of the province and particularly the Acadians of Clare. This, as we shall see, is very closely linked to the existence and continued development of Université Sainte-Anne in Pointe-de-l'Église.

Thirdly, we will look at the economic, social and political situation of this Acadian community in order to understand the material conditions in which Acadian youth live their everyday lives

and which provides the present context in which they construct their own culture.

"History" and Acadians

A detailed historical account of the events which followed the arrival of French settlers at Port Royal in 1605 is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, consideration of a few key events will provide enough insights in order to grasp the circumstances in which Acadians have had to live and continue their struggle.

From a feminist perspective the point also needs to be made of the partial and limited nature of what has stood as official history of the Acadians of the Maritimes and more specifically of the Acadians of Clare in Nova Scotia. The contributions and experiences of Acadian women have been excluded from the official historical text whether they be written by historians of the dominant English group or of historians within the Acadian community. There is a need to rethink the way historians do history which traditionally has produced a text that reflected the male experience. In the historical texts therefore the Acadian has overwhelmingly been male. As feminists have correctly insisted that gender is a social construction, so too must historians

see gender identities and roles assigned to males and females as historical facts which are interrelated and integral parts of one system. We cannot ignore that the domination of women by men is an integral part of the domination of particular ethnic groups and other inequalities of class and generation.

As Elizabeth Fox-Genovese argues, it is important to grasp an understanding of gender construction as a critical feature of all social relations. We need also to restore women to the historical process:

Understanding the gender system as a critical feature of all social relations simultaneously inaugurates the essential restoration of women to historical process and moves us beyond the deadend of attempting to establish sexual difference as an agent of historical causation. It enables us to understand women as full participants in the human struggle to survive and to triumph over nature in the senses of creating a distinctly human world. (Fox-Genovese, 1982: 15)

As one reads through Acadian history, it comes as no surprise that as with history in general, Acadian women were actively excluded from the nerve centres of decision-making and were limited in their access to education. The public place was reserved for men. The active processes of subordination and exclusion at work in the social

relations experienced by Acadian women need to be addressed. In order to get a clearer understanding of women's experiences it is therefore necessary to reject the functionalist natural fit of women in familial roles. As Fox-Genovese puts it: "...placing women's history within history forces a substantive reinvestigation of the nature of family relations as gender relations- possibly gender conflict - within the context of social, economic and political relations." (Fox-Genovese, 1982: 17)

Also, we must refrain from engaging in a romanticism of bygone days which saw the rural Acadian family as a refuge from the trials and tribulations of the outside world. A refuge where Acadian women seemed to be at the helm even though "papa" was the public voice of the family.⁸

We cannot deny the events of recorded mainstream history as these have had an impact on the experiences of Acadians over time. As we try and grasp the context for the study of Acadian youth the objective is not to emphasize or substitute the female youth experiences at the expense of the male youth experiences. What is clearly needed is to explore the varied and unequal terms upon which

8. Raymond Williams (1975) The Country and the City argues that the vision of the family of the country or rural community as a retreat was nothing but a myth.

gender, class, ethnicity and generation work in creating social relations.

We need to go back to the historical texts that were written to correspond with dominant ideologies which served to mask Acadian structural inequality and to socially construct Acadian identity in dominant terms.

There are many historical texts which recount, albeit in various and sometimes contradictory ways, the experiences and events that mark Acadian history.⁹ With very few exceptions the experiences and voices of Acadian women have remained silenced and neglected in order to concentrate on the recounting of diplomatic and political events. Most of the histories written about Acadians are about "logical" men and the reasons for their actions. There are definite silences in regards to the experiences of families and women.

9. See A. Doughty's *The Acadian Exiles* 1916, J.B. Brebner's *New England's Outpost: Acadia before the conquest of Canada* 1927, A.H. Clark in *Acadia: The Geography of early Nova Scotia to 1760* 1968, N.E.S. Griffiths in *The Acadians: Creation of a People* 1973. Also there now exists a very detailed collection of works on Acadians to be found at the Centre d'études acadiennes at Université de Moncton entitled: *Inventaire général des sources documentaires sur les Acadiens* Moncton 1975, also at the centre "Bibliographie acadienne, Liste de volumes, brochures et thèses concernant l'Acadie et les Acadiens des débuts à 1975, Moncton, Editions d'Acadie 1976; and *Bibliographie Acadienne - Liste des articles de périodiques concernant l'Acadie et les Acadiens des débuts à 1976* Moncton, Editions d'Acadie, 1977. Also a very good reference work is *Les Acadiens des Maritimes* edited by Jean Daigle, Moncton, 1980.

Settlement to 1800's

The first permanent settlement in America that would give roots to Acadians was established along the Annapolis Basin and called Port Royal by Sieur de Monts and Samuel de Champlain around 1605. At first the pioneers relied on the support from France which in turn expected to profit from a lucrative monopoly of fur trade or the wealth of the fisheries. However, these settlers soon came to rely on their own resources. Griffiths summarizes well the elements that helped forge the uniqueness of early Acadian community by pointing to four main elements: 1) a mixed economy of fur-trading, fishing and farming; 2) friendship with the local Indians; 3) little precise instruction from France on the actual organisation and government of the community; and, 4) the tradition of individual effort as opposed to action supported by the strength of France. (Griffiths, 1973: 1-10)

The territory known as Acadie¹⁰ was seen as a source of profit for politicians and businessmen of England and France. During the seventeenth century l'Acadie changed hands fourteen times. Despite

10. Although the exact boundaries have been the subject of much debate among historians for all intents and purposes "Acadie" refers to what is now known as Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

this political turmoil Acadians developed an attachment to the immediate realities of their families, farms and villages such that the links between both England and France became secondary: "...the political demands of both France and England became of minor and almost insubstantial, account to the Acadian" (Griffiths, 1973: 12)

In view of the fact that neither England nor France could be counted on to insure effectively their safety during political instability, the Acadians' strategy became one of neutrality. Allegiance to one country was acceptable to them only as long as it did not mean taking up arms against the other. For a considerable time this approach served them well. However, despite all efforts to assure the British of their neutrality and all attempts to work out an agreement with the British that would allow them to remain in Nova Scotia, the Acadians were deported. In 1755, over 6,000 Acadian men, women and children were deported from their lands in the Grand-Pré area to Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia and Georgia. Some Acadians managed to make their way back to France and then eventually made their way to Louisiana.

There is much debate over who actually gave the order for the deportation and who was really responsible for the tragedy: Winslow the chief officer or Lawrence who was governor of Nova Scotia at the

time. According to historical documents it is officially recorded as a decision from Britain, however historians such as Griffiths (1973) reveal that in all probability, the officials in England were made aware of the deportation only after it actually took place.

For the purposes of this dissertation, it is important to point out that the Acadians of 1755 and those living prior to the deportation were already a "people" who struggled against the powers which tried to rule over them. This struggle took various forms such as letters to officials explaining their position of neutrality and insisting on their right to freedom of religion and to work their land. On more than one occasion, they sent delegates to meet with officials in order to make their position clear while still refusing to take the qualified oath of allegiance to Britain. Neutrality was a position from which Acadians adjusted to the changing political conditions in which they had to live. It was not merely a passive stand.

History also reveals that, immediately after landing in exile, Acadians made their case to colonial administrators because they believed the deportation to be unwarranted and unjust. They also did everything possible to find family members despite the official prohibitions against doing so.

Yet the manner in which some historians have recorded this tragedy reflects the Acadians' subordinate position. In various texts, the Deportation is recounted in ways so as not to threaten British hegemony. For example, Campbell preferred to write about the hardships that the Acadians had suffered by leaving these events to the realm of folklore and poems. This brought him to mention the Deportation just in passing:

It is not necessary here to tell the story of the tragic dispersion of the Acadian people... We are concerned with it now as an incident in the Seven Year's War. (Campbell, 1948: 99)

Others have used a language that minimizes the event by describing the events of the deportation as the Acadians "having sailed away"¹¹ or as "having been sent away".¹²

Essentially, what the English had accomplished through the deportation of the Acadians was access to the rich fertile soil of the Annapolis valley. By dispersing and fragmenting the Acadians over New England, it was expected that they would eventually disappear

11. See George Frederick Clarke, Too Small a World, Brunswick Press, Fredericton 1958. His chapter on the deportation is entitled 'they sailed away'.

12. See Will R. Bird, This is Nova Scotia, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., Toronto, 1972 (first printed in 1950: seventh printing)

as a people. Although the British did succeed in taking the Acadian lands and their basic civil rights, they failed to destroy Acadians as a people. Instead of disappearing, Acadians did in fact resist and develop their own sense of "acadienité".

After the deportation, Acadians came back to settle in the Maritimes. Although today the majority of Acadians live in the bilingual province of New Brunswick, where they form about 30% of the population, those that came back to Port Royal and eventually along the shores of Saint Mary's Bay are the Acadians that are the focus of this dissertation.

In 1768 Joseph Dugas, his wife Marie-Josephte Robichaud and their four year old daughter Isabelle were the first to settle in what is now the municipality of Clare. Around 1771, there were 24 families in this locality enjoying a relatively comfortable subsistence economy.¹³

Once the Acadians were driven off their lands, Nova Scotia confiscated the rich Acadian farm lands in the Annapolis valley. After the war, however, the province offered other land grants to those returning Acadians who wished to resettle in Nova Scotia. The deportation had, if nothing else, demonstrated the tragic consequences

13. See Figure 1 for a map showing the areas where the Acadians live in Nova Scotia.

of the subordinate position of Acadians within the social formation of Nova Scotia.

Although they had shown much courage and determination by coming back, their subordinate position became even more pronounced. One must not ignore the courage and determination of these men and women as they made homes for themselves in the wilderness along the rocky shores of Nova Scotia. According to historical evidence, Marie-Josephte was pregnant when they arrived and in fact gave birth to a baby boy only twenty days after their arrival. At a time when they had only their own determination to rely on, they managed to survive and would eventually have seven children. This Acadian community was built on the strength of such women.

These Acadians turned mainly to the sea for subsistence although some did engage in the farming of crops and animals. Trees were cut for house building and heating and the making of their own furniture. They would also make their own clothing by carding, spinning and weaving wool. In essence these Acadians became self-sufficient and received very little help from Halifax let alone from either England or France.

Although they would have very little schooling, Acadians developed a strong sense of independence within their community. As Boudreau states:

Même si les Acadiens n'étaient que des paysans illettrés, ils étaient peu à peu devenus un peuple indépendant de toute autorité et protégeant jalousement cette indépendance. Ils affichaient même une forte volonté, voire même une sorte d'entêtement, conscients d'être un peuple à part et évoluant en un sens vers une certaine forme de communauté autarcique. (Boudreau, 1989: 121)

It would appear that missionaries often complained to their superiors in Quebec of the "severe and very troublesome Acadian mission".

The missionaries had problems controlling the adults of the parish as well as the youth. In these early settlements, there were many children. Most Acadian households were composed of five or six children with some having as many as eighteen or twenty children.¹⁴ References were often made to the lack of discipline and

14. A case in point is found in my own family tree. Claire Bourg had eight children with her first husband Joseph. While she was pregnant with her ninth child, she became widowed and married her brother in law , François, and went on to have twelve children by this second marriage. Having had four children of my own, seeing women having these numbers of children and the domestic labour connected to it

the explosive nature of Acadian youth of the time. In an attempt to control their "bad" ways, missionaries would ban social gatherings such as dances altogether. In Père Sigogne's words:

La jeunesse m'a paru bien dissipée et même débordée, s'abandonnant aux danses, aux folies, à des veilleries, à la débauche. J'ai défendu la danse absolument à cause des excès qui s'y commettaient. (Sigogne in a letter dated january 26, 1800 to Denaut: quoted in Boudreau, 1989: 140)

The power relations which ensured the subordinate position of Acadians in Nova Scotia were met with resistance although the image of a passive, simple and content people was projected in mainstream historical texts. This constructed image in turn helped to hide the structural subordination of Acadian men, women and youth in Nova Scotia.

It is in the social relations of society that subordinate groups live their subordination and respond to it. The construction of difference and inequality is a product of these social relations. As social constructions, divisions such as ethnicity are formed by the way the

leaves no doubt that there was just no time for other pursuits.

groups see themselves and by the maps of meaning of those who have come to see them as different within a hegemonic order.

Recently, Acadian scholars have questioned the image of the passive and the unprogressive Acadian who wished only for social isolation. Boucher (1993) convincingly argues against the stereotyped image of nineteenth century Acadians which modern Maritime historiography has portrayed. In his work, Boucher demonstrates the vitality of Acadian entrepreneurs especially in the primary sectors of fishing and farming. Boucher states:

Although the effects of total uprootedness had nurtured cautious and moderate attitudes among Acadians these were giving way to a growing desire to participate in the region's development...by the end of the 1800's the desire to participate became coupled with the desire to participate as Acadians as well as Maritimers. (Boucher, 1993: 58)

However, this desire to be active was opposed by those in control. In 1758, Nova Scotia had passed a law making Acadians practically outlaws in a land that used to be their own. This law stated that no Roman Catholics would be allowed to organise parishes or to open schools. Furthermore, this law clearly took away their

rights to own land in the province. (Statutes of Nova Scotia 1958, Chapter VII, Section II, p. 46-47)

One must not underestimate the importance of religion in the lives of Acadians at the time. Mason Wade describes Acadian resistance to English rule as being guided by their priests frequently confusing religion and patriotism (Wade, 1955: 31). This will hold true for many years. In an interview with a grandfather in his 80's one can get a sense of the interrelatedness of religion and secular life as he recalled that in his younger days "there was a Saint for every need people might have " which could be called upon for help.

Certainly a driving force in the early days of this Acadian community was the influence of the Eudist priests. While it can be argued that many of these French priests knew little about the particular mentality of Acadians their contribution to the Acadian communities is unquestioned. Some priests, Leloutre for example, were accused of antagonizing the British. According to Laplante (1986) others such as Pierre Maillard played a major role in influencing Lieutenant-Governor Franklin to ignore Nova Scotia Statutes of 1758 in order for Acadians to own land along Saint Mary's Bay.

Influenced by l'Abbé Bailly, Nova Scotian officials reconsidered giving freedom of religious expression as a way of controlling or appeasing the Acadians in the province:

His (Abbé Bailly) conduct has been hitherto irreproachable and to all appearance bids fear to be of great benefit to this province, by quieting the minds of the Indians who began to be very uneasy, and his mission has this further good tendency of reconciling the consciences of the Acadians who have lately taken the oath of allegiance to his Majesty's government. (Quoted in Laplante, 1986: 11)

Religion has been a fundamental organizing process in the social construction of Acadian identity. Within the community, the Eudist priests would provide a source of educational instruction for the youth in French. They would also help in the preparations of various delegations that would meet with English officials in Halifax. But regardless of its importance in the maintenance of their language, the Church also had the potential for being another structure through which the Acadians could become assimilated. For example, although the French missionaries who founded Université Sainte-Anne were convinced of the importance of Acadians being taught in their mother tongue, anglophone priests had other plans. For the Irish Catholic

establishment, education could be a means of assimilating the Acadians once and for all.¹⁵

Although the historical documents abound with the details encompassing the contribution made by these male priests, there are obvious silences with regard to the work and the contribution made by Acadian women and children to their community. In fact, there are very few references which mention their presence at all, yet they must have made a strong contribution to community life. Edith Comeau-Tufts in her collection of biographies of Acadian women points out the work they did as mothers having many children, as housewives, and as companions to their husbands: "Ingénieuse dans son foyer, vaillante auprès de sa famille, courageuse face aux obstacles qu'elle doit vaincre quotidiennement, cette brave femme, Marie-Josephite, mérite d'être reconnue." (Comeau-Tufts, 1977: 27)

One of the rare moments when historical documents record a woman's contribution relates the story of a young woman named Madeleine LeBlanc. After the deportation, having been reunited with her family in the United States, she and her family sailed back to Nova

15. Nova Scotia passed the Education Act of 1864 which made education accessible province wide. Archbishop O'Brien gave permission to the Eudist priests to open Université Sainte-Anne but insisted that along with "le cours classique" there would be an "Academy" which would ensure the teaching of the English language. (Laplane 1986, p. 16)

Scotia in 1771. When they landed along the shores of Saint Mary's Bay, they were naturally very tired by the long voyage and terribly discouraged at the sight of the uncleared wilderness. According to the accounts, seeing the tears in her brothers' eyes, she took an axe and cut down the first tree and told them that enough tears were shed, it was time to build a shelter. At nineteen years of age this young girl had shown the courage and determination needed to keep the family going. Regrettably, history tells us very little more of this young woman except that she had many children and lived to be 98 years old. Her remains are buried in Pointe-de-l'Eglise cemetery. (Comeau-Tufts: 1977: 28)

As well as presenting us with biographical notes on the lives of contemporary Acadian women, Comeau-Tufts also presents us with insights into the importance of the Catholic church for these women. Madame Charlotte (Gaudet) Comeau, in particular was honoured by having seven of her twelve children enter a religious order: "la mère acadienne ne peut connaître le plus grand honneur que celui de voir naître chez les siens une vocation religieuse." (Comeau-Tufts, 1977: 34).

Women were very skilled at weaving and were responsible for making their family's clothes. Some such as Monique (Comeau)

Deveau were very skilled and knowledgeable of natural herbal remedies for practically every ill possible. There were midwives that were very skilled at their task. It is important to point out that the infant mortality rate for Acadians in Southwest Nova Scotia was not higher than other regions of the province which had more doctors and resources.¹⁰

Despite their contribution to the well being of their community, these midwives faced sexual discrimination from their own clerics. For example, when baptisms were performed by mid-wives, these had to be "redone" by the missionary making his rounds while baptisms performed by any male would only need the missionary's blessing (Boudreau 1989). This custom, acknowledges Boudreau, was obvious discriminatory behaviour. He goes further and points out that women had a second class status in the administration of the parish. It is interesting to note that Boudreau condones such discriminatory behaviour by arguing that, after all, the social foundation of Acadian society had been shaken enough with the deportation. In his view, equal treatment of women would have only served to disrupt this

16. Muriel K. Roy reveals that the infant mortality rate in the Acadian communities of New Brunswick was much higher than that found in the English communities of that province. Deveau found that the infant mortality rate in the municipality of Clare in Nova Scotia was lower than in the surrounding English communities. (Deveau, 1984: 190)

Acadian community. The following passage shows Boudreau's sympathy for the missionaries:

"Sur ce point, il ne faut pas trop s'étonner ni en vouloir au courageux missionnaire, car s'il avait agi autrement il aurait mis en péril la base traditionnelle et stable sur laquelle la société acadienne s'appuyait. Et Dieu sait qu'à cette époque, cette société avait été suffisamment ébranlée!" (Boudreau, 1989:159,¹⁷

Despite their second class status, Acadian women struggled along with their men for the survival of their families and their community. Unfortunately the sexism incorporated in most of the historical texts render them incapable of recognizing Acadian women's contribution to the development of their culture and community. When women are mentioned in historical texts it is often to describe the gendered division of labour where women took care of the home and men engaged in public events while keeping the position of "head of household."

17. Some tolerate sexual discrimination today on the grounds that equality for women would be too disruptive to the economy. These people would argue that pay equity, for example, would place too much strain on the economy. The Nova Scotia government recently tried to put pay equity "on hold" in order to help balance the provincial budget. Women must continually struggle against systemic discrimination which is supported by male political, social and economic mismanagement.

The effects of a gendered division of labour was also reflected in youth's attendance at school and the type of responsibilities given to both female and male students. According to Belliveau, everyday life for Acadian youth meant coping with the task of survival which meant sometimes staying home from school and doing the chores which needed to be done. Tasks were given according to gender which meant that boys would stay home to help with the planting, the cutting of firewood and lumber or go out fishing. The girls would stay home to help with cleaning the house and taking care of the younger children. Even the chores at school were assigned according to sex such that girls would have to sweep the school floor while the boys had to bring in the firewood for the next day. Belliveau explains that the fact that their labour was needed at home along with a lack of interest in school resulted in many Acadian youth leaving school at a very early age:

Puis ceux qui n'aimaient pas l'école trouvaient toujours des excuses pour rester à la maison et pour quitter l'école et s'en aller travailler aux Etats dès l'âge de 13 ans, et des garçons quittaient l'école même plus jeunes pour travailler dans les chantiers de bois.

(Interview with Mrs. Belliveau found in Clare, La Ville Française Tome II, by Les Historiens d'âge d'or de la Baie Ste. Marie, 1985: 438)

While the home was their main workplace, mothers and daughters also played an important part in the actual execution of work outside the home. In the following words of Père Dagnaud, we see that women (even young women) also went to sea and often inspired courage in their men:

Les jeunes filles et les femmes partageaient les travaux de leurs frères et de leurs maris, dès que les soins sommaires du pauvre ménage leur en donnait la liberté. Plus d'une fois on les a vues sur la baie, s'associant volontiers aux durs travaux de la pêche et à la manoeuvre du bateau. Aucun travail, aucune difficulté ne les rebutait, et là où l'homme était tenté de s'avouer vaincu, la femme se redressait plus forte et plus confiante, et finissait par triompher. (Dagnaud, 1905: 22)

Such passages are rare in Acadian historical documents in that while it does point to domestic labour as being the prime responsibility of young and not so young women, it shows them as active and effective outside the home as well.

Acadian women's place was not at the pulpit or at the orator's block and so their voices have not been officially recorded and thus have not been heard. This silence reflects their subordinate position in the Acadian community in spite of attempts to mask this subordination

with a special status of "saviour of Acadian culture". This can be seen in the following passages:

Ce fut pourtant la force motrice de toutes ces activités et la principale planche de salut pour notre peuple avec la religion et le berceau de nos mères. (Médard Léger dans Hautecoeur, 1975: 50)

...la nation comme la femme acadienne c'est avant tout une âme...On n'y accède que par le sacré. Il suffit de croire... (Hautecoeur, 1975: 144)

Marc-Adéland Tremblay, is perhaps the individual who did the most anthropological research on Acadian society in the 60's and 70's. The following passage (one of the very few where women are even mentioned) gives us a good indication of the position of Acadian women in the Acadian community. Although he acknowledges that the position of women in the household is changing as the structure of the family itself is changing from an extended to a more nuclear form, the husband is still the head of the household:

The breakdown of such a family system has brought about numerous changes. The patriarch has lost his former prestige in the family as the sole repository of power. The authority is now in the hands of the head of the restricted family and, since he has to be

away from home for varying periods of time, his wife has acquired new power privileges.

The Acadian mother has always been highly regarded in the household, for she is responsible for teaching the children ethical values. Because of the frequent absence of the father, her new role in the household appears mainly to be bringing up the children, setting up the networks of social relations, and defining the needs and aspirations of the family. (Tremblay and Laplante, 1971: 27)

More recently, Sealy (1979), in assessing socio-economic change in an Acadian village of New Brunswick, has argued that the power and prestige of Acadian women have been eroded and that regional development has contributed to this erosion. By comparing an Anglo-Canadian outpost in Newfoundland with an Acadian village, Sealy demonstrates how ethnicity does affect local life and women's status. She points out the fact that Acadian women, who are responsible wives and mothers as well as active in community affairs, are accorded a measure of respect. This respect seems to be absent for women in the Newfoundland outpost where women have little authority within the household and the community. This makes sense when one considers that in the private/public split power falls on the side of the public.

Sealy also sees religious affiliation as a contributing factor resulting in a higher status for Acadian women in so far as these villages are regularly exposed to sermons and celebrations honouring the Mother of God, motherhood and women's role in local domestic life.

It is important to keep in mind that at the national convention of 1884, Acadians deliberately chose 'the mother Mary' as their patron saint rather than the suggested Saint Jean Baptiste who had been selected by the Québécois. The Acadian national anthem 'Ave Maris Stella' also sings about Mary, the mother of Jesus and protector of her people. Therefore it is important to note that Acadians chose to distinguish themselves as a people separate from Quebec with symbols that were female and which they felt reflected their own identity.

It was H. W. Longfellow's poem "Evangeline" written in 1847 which gave the Acadians their first popular heroine¹⁸. While

18. This poem is about Evangeline an Acadian girl who lived in Grand-Pré and her love for Gabriel. They were about to be married but their plans were crushed by the deportation. Having been separated from her Gabriel, she spends her life caring for the sick and trying to find her lost love. Finally after many years, she sees him again only to have him die in her arms. In St.Martinville, Louisiana, there is a monument to Evangeline and Emmiline Labiche the lady who inspired Longfellow to write the poem. There is also a plaque which marks the spot where Emmiline and Louis Arseneaux, the counterparts of Evangeline and Gabriel, were eventually reunited.

Longfellow had expected to appeal to the Americans, what he actually did was write a poem that would become a rallying point for Acadian nationalism. In Boucher's words: " the poem became the most powerful cultural tool available to those constructing an Acadian identity in the late nineteenth century". (Boucher, 1993: 59)

However, despite the appearance of special status for Acadian women within their community, one must not ignore the fact that special status does not necessarily translate into a position of power.

As Sealy states:

Though women are elected to serve on various administrative bodies in the parish, a man is traditionally chosen to be the president or the chairman of that body. Thus, differential treatment is not equivalent to the possession of power, and women's roles remain subordinate to those of men. (Sealy, 1979: 129)

Clearly we need to go beyond the symbolic expressions of status in order to gain insights as to how Acadian women, men and especially youth live through the practices of difference and subordination.

1800's and Acadian revival

By using Vallee's (1982) definition of ethnicity we come to an understanding of ethnic groups as a group with common ancestry, having consciousness of and expressions of group affiliation. Acadians share a common culture and have developed a sense of "we feeling" that forms the basis for meaningful interaction and solidarity.

It is generally accepted among historians that this collective identity became strong around 1860 with the first national convention held at Miscouche on Prince Edward Island. Keeping in mind the means of transportation at that time, it is striking to see that thousands of Acadians from the three maritime provinces attended this convention and at least two subsequent conventions.

The time was ripe for such manifestations. Economically Acadians had prospered. Unlike other communities of the Maritimes, the Acadian fishermen owned much of their fishing equipment. They were entrepreneurs. Pascal Poirier in a speech delivered in 1880 talked of an "aristocracy of Acadian fishermen in the Saint Mary's Bay area" and noted how these people were "living in financial ease if not in wealth." (Quoted in Boucher, 1993: 29) Shipbuilding was also an

important part of the economy and, according to Boucher, their skills were well known in the Maritimes and abroad.

Politically they were ready to make themselves heard.

Enfranchised in 1789, it would take 47 years for the Acadians of Nova Scotia to elect their first member to the provincial legislative assembly in 1836.¹⁹

Educational institutions, such as Collège Sainte-Anne helped develop a professional middle class which took a leadership role in the Acadian communities in the various regions of the Maritimes.

As Boucher states:

By the end of the 19th century, Acadian society in the Maritimes had adorned itself with a new tool of survival; it had an elite.
(Boucher, 1993: 76)

This new middle class, or intelligentsia was composed of lay and clerical people who would strive to construct an ideology which would mediate the social reality in which they lived. Analysis of the convention documents reveal that the leaders would emphasize two

19. Before the 1830's, Nova Scotia forced every MLA to take a Test Oath which went against the Acadians religious beliefs as Roman Catholics. This was obviously another way by which the English tried to keep Acadians in a powerless, subordinate position.

aspects of "Acadianness". Firstly, in a retrospective way they would emphasize the historical tragedy of the deportation and the strength of their ancestors. Secondly, they would place emphasis on seeking prosperity that was rightfully theirs within the existing structures of government and society.

As Richard (1960) points out, they perceived themselves as different from other ethnic groups and called themselves "le peuple acadien", "la race acadienne", "la nation acadienne" all of which reflected the existence of a separate national identity in the absence of a state or a political structure to support it (Richard, 1960: 16).

There were three principal themes to Acadian ideology which would carry through in the 1950's and 1960's. First, the survival of the nation was seen as not only a possibility but perceived as a sacred mission for Acadians. Elements such as the French language, Roman Catholic church, endogamy within the Acadian community, a certain fear of "les anglais" (perhaps a remnant of 1755), and a belief in social equality were all part of this theme. Secondly, there was a spiritualist vision of the world in which the spiritual dimension took precedence over the material dimension. Religion was seen as the most important part of life and, in essence, everything could be explained by religion. It was thought that hard work would bring happiness, self-respect and

prestige. Thirdly, there was the presence of feelings of inferiority, both of political and of economic inferiority. (Tremblay and Laplante, 1971: 33-40)

In the 1960's a new discourse on Acadian identity began to appear to be articulated by professors and students at the Université de Moncton. Acadian youth called for new Acadian symbols and a new Acadian identity. In the eyes of Acadian youth, the Acadian establishment known as the organization called "La Société Nationale" was seen as having lost touch with the ordinary Acadian people, "la masse". According to Hauteceur (1975) it was a sense of history or rather of continuity which was at the centre of the battle between the "old guard" of Acadian ideology and the youth uprising calling for a new Acadian identity which would rather forget events of 1755 and look to the future. The uprising is seen to have failed in that the old guard maintained the traditional symbols of Acadian identity: the Acadian flag and the national anthem (Ave Maris Stella).

Isolation from Anglo-Canadians is also considered as an important factor in the survival of Acadians as an ethnic group. Nanciellen Davis (1985), in her anthropological study of an Acadian village in northeastern New Brunswick focused on the ethnic persistence of the villagers. She contends that the cultural processes

which bring together villagers in reinforcement of bonds and which minimize contacts between other villages and Anglophone Canadians are responsible for this persistence.

The maintenance of ethnic boundaries and retention of Acadian ethnicity has thus been attributed to the absence of interaction between Acadians and Anglophones. However, attributing isolation from anglophones as an important factor in the maintenance of Acadian identity can itself be contested when one looks at Acadian economic activity over time. Jean Daigle (1975) argued that historically Acadians have had strong economic ties with the English in New England and that the desire to maintain this economic activity was an important factor in wanting to remain neutral in the war between England and France. Unlike the traditional image of Acadians as poor, ignorant and timid, Daigle portrays them as being shrewd entrepreneurs very active in international trade.

How people come to see themselves as different is contingent on the material conditions in which they live. It is therefore, very important to keep in mind that Acadians are not a monolith but rather live through different material circumstances depending on their location in the Atlantic region whether it be in the Clare area of South Western Nova Scotia, northeastern New Brunswick, la région

Evangeline of Prince Edward Island, or Saint George, Newfoundland.

Recently Léon Thériault (1986) has argued that while historical events such as the Deportation of 1755 and their consequences are still part of the arguments used by Acadians to support their presence as a collectivity, it has lost some of its importance.

Depending on the size of the Acadian population and the participation of Acadians in key institutional sites, political discourse tends to vary from region to region. In New Brunswick where Acadians make up approximately 30% of the provincial population, the discourse is characterised by a sharing of power with the anglophones while in the other parts of the Maritimes the focus is on linguistic rights (Thériault 1986).

In a time when official bilingualism in Canada is under scrutiny, the linguistic character of Acadian culture needs to be recognized in a way that reflects the importance of the French language to the survival of Acadian identity today. Although there are some who would argue that French origin should also be considered as an indicator of Acadian status, mother tongue remains the most important.

In this section we have shown that, historically, Acadians in the Clare area and in the Maritimes in general have struggled both privately and publicly to survive as a people. Far from being passive before the

structural constraints and blocks that led the path toward assimilation, Acadian men, women and children have resisted the English hegemonic order. Laws were passed and decisions were made which struck at the heart of their Acadianness whether it was laws prohibiting Acadians to own land, to open their schools or to practice their religion in their own language. But these laws and decisions were met with resistance that took many forms whether it was refusal to pay taxes, petitions to officials, editorials in local newspapers, people going to Rome to meet with the Pope, or physically coming to blows with church officials. These resistances were certainly not the reaction of a passive people wanting only to be left alone or isolated from the rest of the world.

In the context of Canadian multicultural policy it has been argued that multicultural policies were nothing more than a process of manipulation of ethnic and cultural differences to the advantage of the English in Canada (Porter 1965; Moore 1980; Elliott and Fleras 1992). In the 1970's, the government of Canada greatly increased financing of cultural celebrations. Festivals and heritage celebrations were encouraged provided there was no political content. Dorothy Moore held very little hope for minorities in Nova Scotia and questioned the usefulness of institutions such as education to remedy the situation of

2

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

Acadians in Nova Scotia: "A few individuals of course may "win", and this is actually to the advantage of the dominant group " (Moore, 1980: 17).

As long as some concessions are made, peace and harmony are maintained. In this way, it does make sense that the construction of Acadians as passive yet hospitable people continues to be useful to the perpetuation of the English hegemonic order. Emphasizing a harmonious relationship between Acadians and the English majority free of conflict helps to keep Acadians content in their subordinate position and the English securely in control. Nevertheless, concessions which were fought for and won do empower Acadians within their own communities and do contribute to their survival as a people.

Since the 1800's, English and French relations have been very positive in Nova Scotia. There have been no major clashes to compare with the militancy of Quebec nationalists, the crisis over French status in Manitoba in the 1980's, or the problems of Mayor Jones and "la tête de cochon" in Moncton in the early 70's.

In Nova Scotia, the advances that have been made have mostly occurred quietly through negotiation. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that in Clare, as in many other Acadian communities, it has been possible to be pro-Acadian without necessarily being anti-English.

Generally among the nationalists, the idea was to assure the survival of Acadians but not at the expense of the English population.²⁰

In Clare the biggest demonstration against the provincial government came about in the late 1960's when it was announced that the decision had been made to move Université Sainte-Anne from Pointe-de-l'Eglise to Yarmouth. Although the university was very important economically to the region it had also become a strong symbol of Acadian identity for the people in the area. It must be stressed that it was the students themselves who rejected the proposition to move the university and it was they who managed to mobilize the community in a common front which would ultimately win and keep the university in Pointe-de-l'Eglise.

Acadian community life

How Acadian youth make sense of their everyday lives is contingent on the material conditions in which they live. How they live simultaneously the social divisions of inequality known as class,

20. Neil Boucher has found that at the large national conventions prominent English people were invited to attend as a cordial gesture but also to prove to the anglophones that Acadians were not engaging in any clandestine activity. (Boucher, 1993: 84)

gender and ethnicity depends very much on where they live and the social organisation of their community. Let us now look at the conditions of Acadians in Clare in recent years.

While celebrating the past can be an empowering experience for Acadians we ought not concentrate on what Williams referred to as "residual culture" (Williams, 1975: 3-16). That is to say those observable vestiges of Acadian culture which in the end romanticize the Acadian life as it used to be. Acadian culture, as any other culture, is not frozen in time no matter how hard one tries to keep the past alive. Changes, however, do not necessarily call for the rejection of the past, but the possibility of building on the past to reproduce a culture that is adapted to modern circumstances and material conditions. Williams' concept of emergent culture helps us to see the notion of cultural adaptation and the possibility of a cultural regeneration from within. In a very real and grounded way, this Acadian community is more than a community which comes to life only during the Acadian festival. For the most part, Acadians in Nova Scotia live in rural communities along the coast. The five major Acadian regions of the province are: Clare, Argyle, Pomquet, Richmond and Chéticamp (Figure 1). The areas of Halifax and Sydney have more population generally but also a greater percentage of non-Acadians or

francophones having come from various parts of Canada and of Europe. Having joined in the struggle for linguistic rights, these francophones have organized and form a small part of the structure or network of the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Éccsse. It should, therefore, be kept in mind that this part of the French population have particular characteristics in that they live in an urban community and are mostly non-Acadian.

Figure 1

Les régions acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse

Source: Aperçu des éléments économiques des régions acadiennes,
F.A.N.E., 1983

The French language is definitely a key element in the formation of Acadians as an ethnic group. Although there are many people of Acadian descent who for various reasons do not speak French, for the purpose of this dissertation, we will consider as Acadian those of French origin who have kept and still use the French language. For the 1986 census, the definition of "mother tongue" used to compile demographic information is "the first language learned in childhood and still understood at the time of the census". Also, for the first time in 1986 the census permitted an individual to report that they had both French and English as their mother tongue. Close to 40,000 people claimed either French or French/English as their mother tongue. This constitutes 4.5% of the province's total population.²¹

In Nova Scotia however the highest concentration of population whose mother tongue is French or French/English is found in the municipality of Clare (73.4%). Argyle municipality has the second highest concentration at 60.3%. Richmond county which includes Isle Madame is next in line at 57.4% followed by Inverness which includes

21. These figures were taken from the report entitled "The First Step - Adult Literacy, Basic Education and Academic Upgrading for Acadians in Nova Scotia" written by Carmelle d'Entremont for the department of Advanced Education and Job Training, May 1990, p. 16

the village of Chéticamp have 48.0% of its population of French or French/English mother tongue. See Table 1.

TABLE 1
SUBDIVISIONS WITHIN NOVA SCOTIA WITH POPULATION OF 250 OR MORE WHOSE MOTHER TONGUE IS FRENCH OR FRENCH/ENGLISH*

County	Sub-Division	Population	French	French/English	Total	%
Digby	M. Clare!	9740	6105	1040	7145	73.4
	M. Digby	9540	260	105	365	3.8
Yarmouth	M. Argyle	9055	4615	835	5450	60.3
	M. Yarmouth	10,380	640	265	905	8.7
	T. Yarmouth+	7620	495	275	770	10.1
Inverness	Inverness-A (Chéticamp)	7037	2845	500	3345	48.0
Richmond	Richmond-A (Louisdale)	4700	665	290	955	20.3
	Richmond-B (L'Ardoise)	2275	295	185	480	21.1
	Richmond-C (Île Madame)	4645	2125	540	2665	57.4
Cape Breton	Sydney-C	27,755	325	125	450	1.6
	Cape Breton-B (New Waterford)	24,625	265	116	375	1.5
Antigonish	Antigonish-B (Pomquet)	6575	445	210	655	10.0
TOTALS		123,947	19,080	4480	23,570	19.5

* Does not include Valley and Halifax Regions

! Municipality

+ Town

Source: Statistics Canada, 1986 Census

A striking feature of the population of the municipality of Clare is that it has remained steady at about 9,500 for over sixty years. It has remained steady despite the rate of assimilation, a drop in birth rate and a continued process of out-migration of young adults leaving to more urban areas. This could be explained, at least in part, by the higher percentage of older people in Clare (16%) compared with 12% for Nova Scotia. Although many leave the area, many come back for their retirement.

The type of location in which Acadians and particularly young Acadians find themselves is obviously of great relevance to their employment chances. It is also obvious that Acadian regions have been situated away from what are the more industrial areas of Nova Scotia.

Economy

The economic base of Clare lies in the primary sector, particularly in the fishing and the fur farming industry. Among the other major industries we find shipbuilding and repair, furniture manufacturing, hog farming, woodlot and lumber industry. Many of the jobs existing in the region are related to the fishing industry

particularly in fish processing. Data from Statistics Canada, on the occupational structure for Clare in 1986 reveal the importance of fishing (numbers 8 and 9 of Table 2) as well as the diversified nature of the occupational structure.

TABLE 2
TOTAL LABOUR FORCE 15 YEARS AND OVER, BY SEX AND
OCCUPATION MAJOR GROUP FOR CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

	Men	%	Women	%
1. Managerial, administrative	200	7.1	80	4.5
2. Teaching and related occupations	100	3.6	110	6.3
3. Medicine and health	15	0.5	100	5.7
4. Technological, social, religious, artistic and related	105	3.7	80	4.5
5. Clerical and other occupations	110	3.9	425	24.2
6. Sales	120	4.3	80	4.5
7. Service	75	2.7	260	14.8
8. Primary	605	21.6	65	3.7
9. Processing	405	14.5	495	28.1
10. Machining, product manufacturing, factory workers	355	12.7	25	1.4
11. Construction, trade	425	15.2	0	0.0
12. Transport, equipment operating	145	5.2	15	0.9
13. Others	140	5.0	25	1.4
Total	2800	100.0	1760	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada (Catalogue # 94-106, 1986, p. 45)

One can see by these figures that Acadian women remain predominantly in the traditional work areas of secretary or office worker, commercial services, and the processing of goods.

Recent cuts in fish quotas, depleting fish stocks and changes in unemployment insurance policy are creating concern in Nova Scotia and particularly in the Acadian areas where fishing is so important. Service industries, construction, carpentry, boat building, welding and a host of other businesses will also feel the pinch of a declining fishing industry. This problem is compounded by the problems faced by the animal fur-farmers of Clare with the prices of fox and mink fur hitting an all time low on the world market.

Nevertheless, the general economic picture of Clare in 1992 is not all that bleak compared to the rest of Nova Scotia. Although the annual average salaries for Acadians in Clare are lower than for Nova Scotians (Table 3), unemployment rates are lower than those of Nova Scotia and Canada (Table 4).

TABLE 3
ANNUAL INCOME, MALE AND FEMALE,
15 YEARS AND OVER

<u>Place</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Clare	15,459	8,756
Nova Scotia	20,429	11,017
Canada	23,265	12,615

Source: Statistics Canada (1986 Census, Catalogue #94-106)

TABLE 4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES(3 MONTH AVERAGE ENDING JUNE 1992)

<u>Place</u>	<u>% unemployment</u>
South West Nova (region 240)	10.6
Nova Scotia	13.4
Canada	11.2

Source: Statistics Canada (Labour force, Cat. # 71-001 Table 37)

Although it would seem that there is less unemployment in the area, these low annual income levels show nevertheless the absence of a specialized and well paid working class.

In a survey²² on industries in Clare, 223 businesses were identified of which 106 were privately owned by one person and 76 were small corporations. One could say that Clare has been able to produce a small business class of its own. Although there are three successful "credit unions" the cooperative style of doing business has not been popular in Clare as it has been in other Acadian communities such as Chéticamp.

The fact that this economic base is composed of many small businesses has been a major strength of Clare especially during the recent crisis in the fishery. As opposed to big businesses such as National Sea or Clearwater Fisheries, the fish factories in Clare can operate effectively with small quotas of fish. When quotas of fish catches were too small to be profitably processed by big plants, some of those fish catches could be processed in Clare. In this way, Clare benefitted by the squeeze of lowered fish quotas.

22. Found in "Aperçu des éléments économiques des régions acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse", Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, février 1983.

The fact that many of the Clare fishermen own their own boats also makes a big difference in the stability of the industry and lowers the danger of major shut downs as was seen in other parts of Nova Scotia such as Lockeport and Canso.

Another strength lies in the diversity of the fishery in Clare. There is a variety of fish caught such as lobster, scallops, haddock, and cod. They are all very important catches in the area. The processing of herring roe is also a lucrative enterprise with major markets as far off as Japan.

Unemployment rates are rather weak indicators of what is actually happening on the labour market because they tend to focus on those which are "actively" looking for work. Actual percentages for Clare are very difficult and expensive to obtain. The situation is made more complex by the fact that an individual may file for unemployment and keep his/her file active even though he or she may go back to work for a certain amount of time. Official rates, however, are available for the region of Southwest Nova Scotia. But discussions with the director of the Canada Employment Office in Clare revealed that generally speaking, the unemployment rates for Clare are lower

than other parts in this region.²³ In his opinion the unemployment rate in Clare has risen only slightly and remains quite stable.

Interestingly, he saw the death of the Japanese Emperor Hirohito as having a greater negative impact on the fishery in Clare than any other domestic regulation or quota.²⁴

Although the fishery is the major source of employment in the area, recently there has been a greater demand for jobs and training outside the fishing industry. According to Mr. Deveau, these are people who, while still working in the fish plants, foresee harder times ahead and are already looking for other options.

Union activity in Clare for all intents and purposes is rather low if we limit ourselves to formal organized structures. Researchers working within a political economy perspective (see for example Clement 1985) have argued that the organization of labour especially in the fishing industry is ultimately shaped by state regulation and subsidization and the market itself. As such these organizations can be understood to

23. Interview with Richard Deveau, Director Canada Employment Centre, January 10, 1991, Pointe-de-l'Église.

24. The Japanese are the major buyers of herring roe and they will pay a good price for it. However it is considered a luxury food. Indulging in a luxury food while the country is in mourning is considered inappropriate. During the mourning period of one year which followed Hirohito's death, the Japanese bought very little of the roe and the little they did buy had to be of the best quality. The result was that the smaller and newer roe processors in Clare went out of business.

represent strategies of class resistance to political and economic domination.

With respect to the Atlantic area, such studies of formal organizations have revealed that unionization in Southwest Nova Scotia has not been very successful and have gone on to suggest that "resistance" was very low. Apart from the obvious sexism of focusing on the formal/public organizations and structures, critical forms of resistance and political actions may go unrecognized if we look only at formal institutions.

For example a few years ago when it was discovered that the federal government had allocated lobster licenses to four large off-shore fishermen, the small in-shore lobster fishermen got together and successfully mobilized the support of the men and women of the community to force the federal minister to withdraw the licences. Problems with American fishermen can serve as another case in point. Two years ago the American lobster fishermen won their lobby in Congress to increase the minimum size of Canadian lobsters shipped to the U.S. The Canadian federal government agreed with the American decision. However, lobster fishermen especially in Clare refused to buckle down to what was for them unfair demands. According to Graeme Gawn, the president of the Clare local of the United

Fishermen's Union²⁵, the fishermen again got together to bypass this obstacle:

We could see no reason why we should increase the size of our lobsters because we take care of our stocks and these are still very good. We decided to look for other markets in Europe and Japan so that we would not be so dependent on the Boston distributors...it worked. There is a good demand for the one pound lobster ... There are even Boston brokers setting up shop in Nova Scotia in order to be able to handle our lobsters. In a way this problem turned out well for the lobster fishermen of the area because it forced us to look at the markets ourselves. (Personal interview with Graeme Gawn, May, 1991)

Resistance does exist outside the parameters of formal unions and associations. To understand this resistance, is to understand that among the people involved in the fishery of Clare are many men and women²⁶ who are independent business people for whom this independence is very important. Most of them process and sell their

25. It is important to note that the Maritime Fishermen's Union is stronger in New Brunswick where there is legislation permitting it to operate as a trade union with collective bargaining and mandatory dues etc.. The Clare local, although it is composed of about 80% of the small inshore fishermen, is considered more of a loose association of fishermen which is completely voluntary with no mandatory dues.

26. There are at least two women in Clare who own and operate herring roe factories.

catch on their own and as such are very suspicious of any attempt to control or regulate collective pricing agreements. These men and women in the fishery know what it's like to rely on the sea for a livelihood and to be ready for the good and bad times. They not only have to struggle against nature but also against a system which imposes a management strategy conceived by experts from Ottawa in whom they often have little confidence.

Apart from the fishery, there exist organized formal union activity in Clare for example the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and the Union of Government Employees. Very recently secretaries within the school system have begun to organize formally in order to be recognized within the Canadian Union of Public Employees (C.U.P.E.). According to the leader of the group, the organizing process was an uphill battle from the very start. In an interview she describes "fear" as being the main obstacle:

Many of the secretaries were afraid of losing their jobs..it was really scary...like if we were asking them to join the mafia or something...(Personal interview with E.M., January, 1991)

Another obstacle was the school superintendent who tried everything to prevent them from organizing. According to E.M. his attempts at appeasing them only increased her resolve to organize:

Imagine.. he said that he would treat us fair if we didn't join the union.. His idea of fair treatment was to offer us the same salary as janitors. I was so insulted...I would like to see our janitor do my job...The janitor is not left in charge of the school while the principal is away..is he?..We have more responsibility and our salaries should reflect it. He even said that it was ok for him to be a member of a union, but that he didn't want us to join one....Is that fair.?..no way!(E.M., 1991)

Acadians in this rural area of Nova Scotia are actively involved in the decision making processes which affect them and their community. While the material conditions in which they live through their day to day lives are different from other areas and other times, these resistances and accommodations are not less real and not less important.

While it has been argued that ethnicity as a social construction, has been one of the fundamental organizing processes of Canadian capitalist society (Cassin and Griffith 1981),(Mannette 1984) on a certain level, within this particular community, Acadians have held

their own. The presence of small family businesses passed on from generation to generation as well as the diversity of the Clare economy has helped to give economic stability to this rural community.

Businesses are owned and operated by Acadians. In the context of Nova Scotia it appears that economic subordination along ethnic lines is less than obvious in this Acadian community.

Education

1800-1900

Historically, within the Acadian community, education and religion have been closely linked. The first school along the shores of Saint Mary's Bay was actually the residence of the first missionary priest in the area, Père Jean-Mandé Sigogne. His first students to which he gave basic instruction were two parishioners, Maximin Comeau and Frédéric Armand Robichaud.²⁷ With few resources at

27. On a personal level, this is very interesting because Frédérick-Armand Robichaud was my maternal great great grandfather who became the first Acadian to be elected MLA in Nova Scotia in 1836. Born in Meteghan in 1785, he sold his land in Meteghan in 1832 and founded the village of Corberrie. According to historical documents he was active in reorganizing the electoral constituencies of Nova Scotia as well as limiting the duration of legislative sessions from 6 to 4 years.

hand early education for Acadians was quite selective: "Clerics opened their doors to a few "protégés" and with the catechism serving as reader, grammar and theology text, they proceeded to transmit to their select audience the basics of education " (Boucher, 1993: 48).

Despite the province's attempts to discourage French instruction (Tupper Act 1864) clerics such as Sigogne were convinced of the importance of opening a facility where the French "cours classique" and religious instruction would be given. Père Sigogne is credited with having done the ground work needed to permit the founding of Collège Saint-Anne (now Université Sainte-Anne) in 1881.

Although the leadership given by the Eudist priest remains very important for the survival of Acadians in Clare and the Maritimes in general, what the Acadians themselves thought and did was also very important. Their reactions and perceptions are less known than the records kept by the clerics, but nevertheless what is known shows a people that is actively involved in trying to control their everyday lives.

Although historical records show that Acadians of Clare were intent on having their own resident priest, they were not willing to have one at any price. The following quote demonstrates the "Acadian" reaction, their form of resistance, to an authoritarian priest who demanded absolute submission on the part of his "flock". They

simply and quietly didn't see to his everyday needs. In a time when the parish priest's only means of support came from the parishioners he would have no other recourse but to leave:

Les Acadiens, malgré leur désir d'avoir un curé résident, ne purent le supporter trop longtemps et sans se révolter ouvertement, le forcèrent à s'en aller en refusant de contribuer à son entretien. (Deveau, 1982: 152)

Not all Acadians believed in the necessity of higher learning let alone the expense of building a college. Most of the people had lived quite comfortably without being able to read and write: "J'ai vécu sans savoir lire, mes affaires n'ont pas marché plus mal; que mes enfants fassent comme moi." (Laplane, 1986: 15)

But for the most part records show that Acadians did work towards the building of the college. Although the Eudists donated much of their personal fortunes into the building of the college, it would not have been built without the labour of volunteer workers and the construction materials donated by the community itself. In one of the few references to Acadian women, we are told of how women also contributed by raising funds for the cause: "Des femmes

parcoururent le pays suscitant partout un admirable élan de charité et de dévouement." (Laplane, 1986: 27)

Although they lacked formal instruction, these Acadians were indeed a skilled people. Calculations for the construction of huge buildings for the college and churches in Clare were done by local carpenters who knew well what was needed to withstand the winds and harsh weather conditions of the area.

The construction of Collège Sainte Anne did contribute to the survival of Acadian culture in Clare. By providing French instruction, it helped form the future Acadian leadership.

1900 - 1990

In 1902, as a way of responding to strong lobbying, the province of Nova Scotia created a commission to study the situation of Acadians and French instruction in the province. In 1939, French was officially recognized as the language of instruction in Acadian regions (d'Entremont, 1990: 19). Although the "public" face of the province of Nova Scotia showed a willingness for French instruction in the province practically no funds or resources were allocated to make it possible. Very little headway was made until the 1970's when the

federal government passed the Official Languages Act and injected a sufficient amount of financial resources to permit the creation of structures which could help in the development of educational programs for the Acadians in the province. With federal money 1) a French section in the Department of education was formed; 2) financial assistance was given for school boards to hire more staff and teaching materials; and, 3) it encouraged the development of French programming in the schools of the Acadian regions. (Gaudet, 1983: 22)

In 1981, Nova Scotia passed Bill 65 which for the first time gave official status to the Acadian school. At the present time there are nine schools in the public school system designated as Acadian schools. Clare has four (three elementary and one secondary) schools. Also in 1988, the province created the Nova Scotia Community College system and called for the creation of Le Collège de l'Acadie to meet the training needs of Acadians in their own language.

With these educational structures in place as well as the presence of Université Saint-Anne the future holds promise for Clare and the Acadian communities of Nova Scotia generally. However, structures are only as effective as the people who make them work. The actual state of affairs in the every day lives of Acadians show us

that all is not perfect and that there are considerable hurdles to overcome in order to assure the survival of Acadians.

A recent study on adult literacy and basic education indicates that 17.1% of Nova Scotians have less than grade nine while 26.5% of Acadians have less than grade nine. The number of Acadians who have difficulty reading and writing in French is estimated to be as high as 50%. Furthermore it is estimated that there are proportionally twice as many Francophones (30.1%) as anglophones (14.7%) who have low literacy skills (d'Entremont 1990).

While we might regret the low literacy rates among francophones generally, I would argue that using schooling levels and standardized tests hides the complexity of the French language itself for the Acadians and ultimately their continued subordination as an ethnic minority. While Acadians are listed as francophone, there is a great deal of difference between the French which is taught in school and the French which is spoken at home and in informal settings.²⁸ In essence Acadians could be said to have three languages: Acadian, French and English. This is similar to Boissevain's study of the Italians

28. Language specialists have become increasingly aware of the existence of simultaneous levels or layers of language usage even within the supposed unity of a simple tongue. Bumsted(1986) explains that there is "a vehicular language of politics, business and work; a vernacular language of home and family; and a mythic language of literature and tradition."(Bumsted, 1986: 70)

in Montreal in which he claims that they speak four languages - French (at school), English (at work), Italian (with others) and Italian dialect (at home) (Boissevain, 1970: 45-50). In Nova Scotia, standardized ways of testing and recording literacy rates do not take the Acadians' situation into account. By using an English yardstick to assess the literacy levels, Acadians are viewed as very weak while ignoring the richness of Acadian language experience.

The presence of Acadian schools in theory is a very positive element in the Acadian community. In practice there are still elements that remain problematic which have to be addressed if it is to become a strong link in the chain of Acadian survival. While an assessment of Acadian schools is beyond the scope of this dissertation, one can point to a few weaknesses which influence the effectiveness of Acadian schools in a fundamental way.

Firstly, at the administrative level, the lack of a clear definition of who is permitted to attend Acadian schools coupled with the unwillingness to offend the English in the area creates confusion. The presence of anglophones on school grounds results almost

automatically in Acadians speaking English during recess and sports and even in French class.²⁹

Secondly by offering different options to accommodate the English students and those students who wish to obtain their instruction in both French and English, the school resources are stretched to the limit and ultimately the options in French are weakened.

Thirdly, while the province of Nova Scotia seems to accept the presence of Acadian schools at the present time, students wishing to graduate from the Acadian schools need to pass an extra language credit (one more than is needed for the English students) in order to obtain their high school diploma. This is undeniably unfair differential treatment and a clear example of the secondary status of the Acadian school in the province.

29. It is interesting to note that this problem brought about by the presence of English on the school grounds was also expressed as far back as 1880 in a letter of Father Biron to Rameau de Saint Père (cited in Boucher 1993) and Père Dagnaud (1905). It seems to be a never ending problem for Acadians. Despite the advice of linguistic experts that 75% or more of the courses should be in French, many Acadians still hold the opinion that the solution for bilingualism is to have 50% of the courses in English and 50% in French. The control of English hegemony is alive and well in Nova Scotia.

These problems make Acadians particularly vulnerable to the transmission of negative assessments of Acadians in the school system and help keep the hegemonic order intact.

Politics

Contrary to the stereotyped image of a passive people, Acadians did not shy away from political confrontation despite the English control over them.³⁰ Over time, their resistance took various forms. They would publish various articles in the local papers to protest the sad state of Acadian education and they pressed for reforms, sometimes by refusing to pay their taxes. They wrote memoirs, petitions and participated in debates about the conditions of Acadian affairs.

Recently, Acadian resistance is also found in organizations which exist as pressure groups which struggle for the continued development of Clare as well as the other Acadian communities of Nova Scotia. These are the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, l'Association des Acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse, the

30. Despite the fact that they came back to Nova Scotia in the 1760's, Acadians had to wait until 1789 to be enfranchised.

Conseil Jeunesse Provincial, the Conseil Culturel Acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse and the Fédération des Parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse. These organizations debate all kinds of questions, they write briefs to government and publish reports on various aspects of concern to Acadians. These form the pivotal structures for those that struggle for the cultural survival of Acadians in Nova Scotia. Some of the strongest leaders within these structures are men, women and youth from Clare.

Although youth play an active role in all of these associations, they particularly voice their concerns through the Comité jeunesse de Clare. In a brief presented to the National Commission on Assimilation called "Vision d'Avenir" they voiced their concern for the preservation of their language and culture. They spoke of the exodus of Acadian youth from the area and called for more resources to curb it. They also called for access to more French music and better programming for Radio Canada television and radio. They went as far as to recommend that school officials should implement school regulations that would force the students to speak "le bon français" at all times on the school grounds.

Prior to the election held on May 25th 1993, there were three Acadians elected MLA's in the province of Nova Scotia: Guy LeBlanc

(Clare), Leroy Légère (Yarmouth) and Neil LeBlanc (Argyle).

Furthermore, all three were Cabinet ministers in the Cameron government. While these three MLA's were a small minority among the fifty-two MLA's in the provincial legislature, they did form the strongest representation Acadians have enjoyed in the history of the province.³¹

While the province is not officially bilingual as in the province of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia has adopted a bilingual policy which provides services in programs directed to the public, in the Acadian regions of the province, in English and French.³²

While statements of policy do not necessarily assure action, it remains the task of the Acadians themselves and their associations to be vigilant and be constantly applying pressure in order to obtain and maintain French services in Nova Scotia.

Despite the appearance of progress the subordinate position of Acadians in a depressed part of the province is still a source of concern. Political manoeuvres at times create "catch 22" situations

31. In the May 25th election all three conservative Acadians lost their seat in the Liberal sweep of the province. There are now two Acadian MLA's in the legislature: Wayne Gaudet (Clare) now Minister of Agriculture and responsible for Acadian affairs, and Alister Surette (Argyle).

32. Bilingual service policy, Policy Board, Government of Nova Scotia, 1987.

for the Acadians in Clare and the other regions of Nova Scotia. For example, within the past year, there have been openings in top administration jobs critical to the development of the Acadian communities. While this can be viewed as positive for the Acadian community, these positions are located in the metropolitan region of Halifax. This raises a dilemma for those Acadians that would be well qualified for the position. Should they leave Clare to try and advance the "cause" from Halifax or should they remain in Clare and strengthen the cultural community from there? They must also ask themselves if it's worth the sacrifice of changing lifestyles that is from an rural to urban, and particularly from a French to an English community.

It could be argued that the insistence of having top positions situated in Halifax is one way of keeping Acadians in a subordinate and weakened position in the province. Although the public face of the provincial government displays a positive attitude to Acadian development, government strategies such as these serve to limit the growth of Acadian leadership and its effectiveness in the advancement of the Acadian community.

In this chapter, we have argued against the socially constructed image of an Acadian as a passive and simple people in order to locate

them as they experience reality within an English Nova Scotian hegemonic order. While the dominant culture has managed to successfully instill the sense of individual success and failure among Acadians, we have seen that there are structural barriers which tend to keep them in an ethnic subordinate position.

The complexities of class, gender, ethnicity and generation are the cultural material from which identities are constructed. In order to gain insights into the social construction of Acadian youth subculture we must now pay particular attention to how youth themselves make sense of their own lived experiences.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY: THE RESEARCH STRATEGY

As we have seen earlier (Chapter 1) the experiences of adolescent females have virtually been ignored in the studies of youth (Eichler 1988; McRobbie 1980; McRobbie and Garber 1975; Spender 1982) This research is an attempt to explore how youth, both males and females, make sense of their lives in this particular rural Acadian community. It is also an attempt to get a sense of how they define, interpret and process the elements of culture that are important to them.

It is through the social relations within the home, the school and at leisure that these Acadian youth are actively involved in the construction and the reproduction of their "Acadianness". Informed theoretically by the culturalist perspective (chapter 1), this research project seeks to gain insights into the processes involved in the social construction of these Acadian youth's own subculture. How these youth see themselves is an important part of how Acadian culture can be maintained.

Also this research is an attempt to explore not only their attitudes on different aspects of their lives but also the

interrelationships of their lived everyday experiences. This was done through personal interviews with Acadian grade 12 students themselves. In order to get a sense of possible changes over time and a better grasp of the context in which these youth live, their parents and grandparents were also interviewed.

In order to understand the information received during these interviews, it was important to situate these youth and their parents in the historical, material and political conditions in which they live. That is to say the conditions which provide them with possibilities and constraints as social actors. (Chapter 2).

Working within a research strategy which is also feminist, it is obvious that an abstract and quantitative methodology is inadequate as a means of gaining insights into these meanings. For some time now feminists have been very critical of the overall production and organization of knowledge as well as the structure of the social sciences itself. (See Smith 1974a, 1980, 1974b ; Benston 1989; Eichler 1988; McCalla Vickers 1989; Oakley 1981; Roberts 1981; Stanley and Wise 1983; Harding 1987).

In Jill McCalla Vickers' insightful discussion of feminist methodological rebellions she questions the masculine worldview of

reality and invites us to ask questions that will allow one to see beyond the masculine perspective:

In rejecting the masculine usurpation of universality and masculine appropriations of reality, feminists have also been forced to reject many of the methods and norms that seem so sacred to others. In general . . . the criterion for our methods is productivity in the sense of answering the kinds of questions the project posits as important. (McCalla Vickers, 1989: 53)

The questions that are important for this research project are those questions that help increase our understanding of Acadian youth as gendered members living the social relations of class in a particular ethnic community of Nova Scotia. In order to do this, feminist ways of seeing and doing have guided every stage of this research process.

Previous work done on Acadian youth has been quantitative in nature (Dugas-LeBlanc, 1987). While it did provide a glimpse or general overview of their situation, it left many questions unanswered. Very little information as to how the respondents really felt about various matters was captured. Therefore, in order to go beyond just scratching the surface, more flexible methods were needed to allow for these Acadians' experiences to be central to the research process. This qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews with

20 high school students during which they could talk about their relationships at home, at school, at play and/or in informal settings. All the interviews were conducted in French/Acadian and were translated for use in this dissertation.

At the time the interviews were done there was a total of 86 grade 12 students at École secondaire de Clare. This high school is designated as an "Acadian" school which in principle means that Acadians have the opportunity to take all their courses in French. In practice, however, there are many problems especially those concerning the allocation of resources needed to insure the availability and the quality of the courses offered in French. Although the researcher knew personally many of the students found on the grade 12 class lists, a quota sample technique was used to select ten (10) female students and ten (10) male students. It was important to have in the sample students that were in the more advanced academic class, the mainstream and the general class as well as students living in families at different class positions. These youth's past and present position in the school system whether academic or general as well as their class position or the material conditions in which they live, affects the way they assess not only their present experiences but also their future plans.

TABLE 5

**INTERVIEWS WITH ACADIAN HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH, THEIR
PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS AND OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY
1990-91**

	YOUTH	PARENTS	GRANDPARENTS	OTHERS*	TOTAL
FEMALES	10	14	13	2	39
MALES	10	6	7	6	29
TOTAL	20	20	20	8	68

*Others include teachers, the principal, guidance counsellor, manpower officer, cafe owner, union representatives.

It is also important to note that this research does not take into account the lived experiences of Acadian youth who have dropped out of school and have not reached grade 12. According to statistics obtained from the Nova Scotia Department of Education, the retention rate³³ has increased over the years from 33% in 1965 to 82% in 1990. In the same report one can see that the withdrawal rate of students in the Clare Argyle School Board district was 7.48% in 1990/91 which was somewhat higher than the provincial rate of

33. Grade 12 enrolment as a % of Grade 7.(Report of the Select Committee On Education, volume II, March 31, 1992)

6.25% for the same year. While most youth do stay in school, including in the sample youth who have dropped out would provide a more complete account of Acadian youth. However, because of limited time and resources, the decision was made to concentrate on those who have made it through the system.

In order to be as open as possible, it was important for the interviews to be as unstructured as possible while insuring that these interviews would touch on these youth's experiences at home, school and leisure. Using the information obtained in a previous work on Acadian adolescence (Dugas-LeBlanc 1987) as reference, an interview guide was drafted with initial questions that would help elicit discussion of their experiences in these three distinct areas. (see Appendix A, also see Appendix B for interview guides for teachers and Appendix C for interview guide for parents and grandparents.)

Although access into the school and to student lists was facilitated by the researcher's good reputation among school authorities, arranging meetings for the interviews was no easy task. With only one exception, however, everyone approached consented to be interviewed.³⁴

34. This was the case of a grandmother who refused to speak to anyone, let alone consent to an interview. Her silence was her form of resistance. Unable to care for herself in her own home she was recently forced to move to a home for special care

Several problems were encountered with respect to finding a time and place for the interviews. It was discovered that most of these students have part-time work after school or extracurricular activities (i.e. team practice) which cuts into their "free time". Also, their school day is filled with classes except for one spare hour per week. Fortunately, the cooperation of the French teacher was obtained so that his students were allowed to leave his class in order to be interviewed. This was a great help to the interviewer both in time and energy.

It should also be pointed out that the family responsibilities of the researcher had an impact on the research process. It often happened that the interview time which was more appropriate for the students and adults conflicted the researcher's own time needed for her domestic responsibilities as principal caregiver. Having four active children did, in fact, complicate matters.

Those involved in community studies and more recently feminist scholarship are concerned with the distribution of power in society in

despite her objections to do so. At the time of the visit, the nurse stated that this particular grandmother had been silent since she moved there approximately three weeks earlier. Although she did look at the researcher, there was no verbal reaction from her. In a conversation with her sister, it was discovered her silence is motivated by the fact that she wants to go back to her own home and refuses to accept any other arrangements. According to her sister, she is particularly angry at her children for not making arrangements so that she may stay in her home.

general. These people advocate a methodology which is concerned with and conscious of the distribution of power in the research process. For this reason the interview guide was used simply as such, a "guide".

All the interviews started in approximately the same way. Short introductory remarks about the research were made and everyone interviewed was assured that the information would be confidential and that quotes used would be attached to initials. No one seemed to have a problem with this.

Next, the following general question was asked: "I would like to know something about yourself and how things are at school and at home. We can start with whatever you want." It was also pointed out that this was not a test or exam and that there were no correct or incorrect answers. It was also important to make clear that what they had to say was of particular interest for the purpose of this research.

While this would help to put both the interviewee and the interviewer at ease, in most of the interviews, the topic of conversation which got the interviewee talking were the details of his or her family background (mother, father, siblings).

In general, the interviews were relaxed and open lasting approximately 60 to 90 minutes. The participants (with the exception of one grandmother) agreed to have the interview audio-taped.³⁵ The experience with the grandmother who refused to have her interview audio-taped emphasized the extent to which the taking of notes can hinder the exchange or flow of information during an interview. In this case extensive notes were taken during the interview. It was important to write down her ideas as accurately as possible especially when these could likely be used as a quote. During this time she would nervously look at her watch. This tended to make the interviewer anxious about taking too much time and to detract from the conversation. The researcher was relieved when the grandmother volunteered that she had enjoyed the interview and invited the researcher to come and see her again. Generally speaking, however, it was an exhausting experience. This interview, more importantly, made one very conscious of the importance of using methods in the research process that are conducive to an easy flow of information.

Some of the interviews with the students were conducted in a private area in the school that is to say in a small room situated

35. One of the interviews was lost because of technical difficulties.

adjacent to the principal's office. Other interviews were done in the interviewee's own home. Practically all of the interviews done with the parents and grandparents were also done in their own home.

It is interesting to note that in five cases (four students and one parent) they offered to come to the researcher's home for the interview. While two of these students simply wished to make it easier for the interviewer, the others openly stated that they preferred not being interviewed in their own home. At the beginning of the interview they were thanked for having taken the trouble to come but assured that the interview could have taken place at their home, if they had so wished. In this way it was hoped that we could learn more about why they would not feel comfortable at home. One of the students said: "My father would just embarrass me. . . He sits in a corner of the room and just stares at those who come to see me. . .Doing the interview here is much better." This negative attitude toward her father was also reflected in other parts of the interview. The parent who preferred to meet away from her own home responded by saying: "My mother has sensitive ears. . .but she doesn't always understand things. . . coming here is much better, believe me." These comments were also noted and linked to what was said with regards to their relationships within their homes.

The interviews with the students and teachers were conducted in the spring of 1990 while those with the parents and grandparents were conducted in the spring and summer of 1991. This time lapse had positive consequences for this research project in that it allowed one to keep track of the students who had been interviewed and also to be informed of whether the students had kept to their plans. While this was not initially intended, this information helped us to know what actually happened to these students after they had graduated and in so doing provided insights with regards to the link between what was said by these youth during the interviews and what they actually did.

Before the end of every interview, the interview guide was checked to make sure that all the topics had been discussed and the interview always ended by the following question: "Is there anything else you would like to add?". Once again this gave the person being interviewed the option of giving some direction to the interview (Oakley 1981).

The task at hand was to gain insights into how these Acadian youth feel about their life experiences rather than our own construction of what their experiences mean for them. The intention was not to make them "fit" previous conceptualisations of what youth

are about (Willis 1977) (Hebdige 1976). Stanley and Wise (1983) insist on the feminist belief in the essential validity of personal experience. How these youth see themselves and feel about themselves must be just as central to the research process as the general theoretical notions of youth culture. In other words, their own constructed explanations of what they experience in their everyday lives must be central to a process which attempts to understand their social reality.

It follows also that the researcher's constructions of social reality should go back to the respondents as a means of validation of the data. Thus, it was very important to share, as much as possible, the information obtained through the interviews with the youth, parents and grandparents who had participated. Many have expressed an interest in reading the final draft of the thesis. It is the intention of this researcher to do this as soon as it is reasonably possible. With this in mind it is important to write as clearly as possible because doing otherwise would be counterproductive as Helen Roberts states:

There is little point in congratulating ourselves on the fact that the validity of interpretive data can be checked by the subjects answering back, if we are to present our work in such a way that it can only be understood by a coterie of sociologists. (Roberts, 1981: 26)

This researcher did not hesitate to answer questions about herself (Oakley 1981) and her family as well as questions about her interest in doing research on Acadian youth. There is no doubt that being Acadian, that is my own biography, had an impact on the whole research process. This researcher was also a member of the cultural community on which this study is focused. Having been born and raised in this community and having experienced social relations from within its boundaries as a child, teenager and parent undoubtedly affects the way this researcher sees this community today. However, being conscious of this in the research process, helps to deal with this factor in a positive and constructive way. It would be ridiculous to ignore it, as Stanley and Wise see it:

Our consciousness is always the medium through which research occurs; there is no method or technique of doing research other than through the medium of the researcher.
(Stanley and Wise, 1983: 157)

Being an Acadian and being female continually proves to be a positive factor in the research process because it allows this researcher to communicate with these subjects in their own language and also to have a first hand knowledge of their cultural context.

As in many small communities, it was found that many of the parents and grandparents were acquainted with this researcher's own parents and grandparents. Some knew them personally. This led to very interesting discussions about my personal history and in a sense the researcher became a part of the subject of this investigation.³⁶ Contrary to the often superficial sympathy displayed by many contemporary social scientists, there was a sharing of information which placed this researcher "within" the research process. Traditionally, standard texts on sociological research methods focus on the reliability of the methods. That is to say, to what extent can the same results be obtained by other researchers. Clearly insights obtained through the use of more flexible methods such as indepth interviews outweigh the goal of maximum reliability. In this research project, historical secondary data (Chapter 2) were also used to provide insights into the material conditions of this community. While each source of information has its limits, this may be partially overcome by the combination of these two types of information.

36. During an interview with a grandmother, she brought out a photo album in order to show me pictures of her family. Quite unexpectedly, she fell upon a picture of my own father as a young boy sitting with my grandparents. She gave me this old photo and talked about her friendship with my grandmother and how they used to have fun together.

As it has already been noted, the personal history and experiences of the researcher is an essential part of the research process. Not only did being a member of this Acadian community facilitate access to the school, that is to say the teachers, lists of student enrolment, the students themselves, timetables etc., it also helped in approaching the parents and grandparents as well.

In this Acadian community, it is customary to know a person by their parents' or grandparents' name. For example a person may be named Betty Dugas-LeBlanc but commonly referred to as "Betty à Pierrot à George à Ambroise à Etienne". Again, an individual named Gilles Le Blanc will be known as Gilles à Etienne à Eusèbe. Very often in this community, a person is known as much by who he or she is in terms of family history as by what he or she actually does in life.

During the initial contact with parents and grandparents, it was only after the researcher had established who she was that permission was given for the interview. It was quite evident to her that being an Acadian from this particular area was an important factor in getting permission for the interview especially among the older people approached.

By means of a simple coding system, it was possible to keep track of the parents and grandparents of the individual students. This,

however, was not always possible. In a few cases the students' grandparents were deceased. In order to help compensate for this older people, who were capable and willing to talk about their youth, were approached by the researcher. These interviews went very well.

Along with the information obtained through the interviews an interview journal was kept which contained personal notes and observations of events experienced by the researcher during the interview phase of this research. This journal was essentially a record of impressions on how the interview went and reactions to questions or ideas which may have "surprised" the researcher in some way. In some cases, it was possible to link certain answers that were given with the personal history of the person being interviewed.

Having completed the interview phase of the research, it was necessary to listen to all the tapes and rather than transcribing them in full certain quotes were chosen and filed under the categories or general headings of home, school and leisure. Next, these quotes were again subdivided from these general categories into various sub-headings. For example the quotes that dealt with the home were divided into categories such as, relationship with parents, discipline, relationship with siblings, work around the house etc.

In keeping with a feminist approach to research methods(Oakley 1981) (Eichler 1988) (Stanley and Wise 1983), this researcher continues to feel a sense of commitment toward this work and a sense of obligation to this Acadian community especially its youth so that this research reflects as closely as possible their life as it is.

This researcher's interest in Acadian youth especially young Acadian women is influenced by a continued involvement in women's groups over the years and also by the fact that she is herself now the mother of four children. As the principal care giver of two girls and two boys, one can develop a very real and personal interest into how teenagers make sense of their everyday experiences as Acadians, as well as their involvement in the social structures in which they live.

In this section on methodology, an outline was drawn of how this research was conducted by describing the positive and negative aspects encountered during the course of the work. Because all scholarship is value-oriented (Eichler 1988), it was important to account for this researcher's interest in Acadian youth as a subject of research. Thus a link was made between the role of the researcher as an observer of Acadian youth and as an Acadian living within this particular Acadian community. Being Acadian was an asset in gaining the confidence of the school authorities and thus facilitated access to

the school and to the students. Being of the same culture also helped put the parents and grandparents at ease. However, one cannot ignore that being of a different generation could have hindered the flow of communication. Perhaps the students would have spoken more openly to another person of their own age. Also, perhaps the boys would have been more candid with a male researcher. Undoubtedly, there are no perfect conditions when interviewing people. In this case, the cultural background of the researcher was the positive aspect that could outweigh the negative aspects.

In the following chapter we will look specifically at what youth have to say about their relationships at home. This is done by keeping in mind the parents' ways of seeing also. Furthermore the grandparents' contributions will give us a sense of the changes that have occurred over time with respect to these relationships at home.

Chapter 4

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

As stated earlier, this research project is designed to focus on the process of cultural formation of both male and female youth in a rural Acadian community of Nova Scotia. It is an attempt to gain insights into how Acadian youth make sense of their everyday experiences especially the social relations in which they engage at home, at school and at leisure. In order to do this it was important to understand the context (Chapter Two) or the material conditions in which they live and produce their own culture. We have also argued that cultural analysis offers a way of knowing which helps us to gain insights into the active processes involved as youth construct their own meanings of the world around them.

Most studies which have set the standard for the study of youth subculture (Willis 1977 and Hebdige 1979, Hall and Jefferson 1976) have been focused on the male youth experience. For the most part, male researchers have concentrated on male youth experiences in mostly public places, "on the street". Because girls are often not "out there", this male bias has translated into a virtual disregard for girls'

experiences especially with regards to their relationships in the home and the sexual division of labour generally.

As noted earlier in Chapter One of this dissertation, feminists have drawn attention to this fact and have attempted to influence and redress the situation in order to obtain a less partial view of reality. Feminist researchers such as McRobbie (1980 and 1978), McRobbie and Garber (1975), Griffin (1985) and Weis (1989) have emphasized the importance of a commitment to the analysis of girls' culture. This has resulted in more and more information being gathered on the cultural forms of both males and females of various social classes and racial backgrounds.

Earlier, we have drawn attention to the specific material conditions in which these Acadian youth live. The fact that they reside in a rural area provides a particular context in which culture production is carried out. Most of the earlier studies and most studies generally focus on youth and the process of cultural formation occurring in urban settings.

Undoubtedly, the rural youth experience is just as important as that of urban youth in understanding Canadian cultural production and reproduction, although it is perhaps less spectacular. In this chapter we will see that in some important ways Acadian culture formation

contrasts significantly with that of other youth presented in other studies.

Previous studies for example Willis (1977), Hebdige (1979) and Hall and Jefferson (1976) offer very little commentary on what happened to "lads" or "hippies" after they went home. They practically ignore a fundamental dimension of human experience, that is the dynamics involved in the social relations of the home or the household. It is not only what happens on the "street" which matters but how relationships are created and maintained in the privacy of the home. For too long studies have ignored those relationships where there can be intimacy or, unfortunately in many cases, lack of intimacy.

In order to understand what home life is for Acadian youth today, we must stand back, as it were, in order to get a historical perspective which can help us grasp the changes that have occurred over time. Youth's perceptions of the social relations in which they engage and how they reproduce their future does not occur in a vacuum but is influenced by the material and social relations of the past.

Discussions with parents and grandparents help us understand what home life was for Acadians of this particular area in days gone by. These discussions allow us to grasp the historical and material

context in which this Acadian culture is produced and the social relations involved in the reproduction of this culture. Retrospective accounts of parents and grandparents allow us to get a sense of cultural continuity as these people engage in the social relations through which some cultural elements are retained and others are changed over time. Their descriptions of how life was for them in Clare is possibly not atypical of how life must have been for the Acadians in all the Acadian regions of Nova Scotia. The processes of change in this Acadian community are arguably quite similar to those which might have occurred in other rural areas.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the economic conditions in which these grandparents lived was one of a subsistence economy. As one grandmother put it:

E.R.(grandmother): "You didn't talk of money in those days. . .there just wasn't any. . .When you got one cent, it was worth something. . .you would save it for a long time. . .we could make our own wool. . .and knit socks to sell for 15¢ a pair. . .that was a lot of money. . .With 10¢ you could buy a yard of material. This was enough to make yourself a dress. . .we'd rather exchange things in those days. . .there was no money. . .but you didn't worry about it.

N.L.B.(grand-father): In the old days you had no money but you got by OK...you really didn't feel poor...I remember one day we had only 39¢ in the house...imagine with six children...but we planted a garden...that helped...my wife made their clothes...now there's too much waste.

Each family had a garden to grow their own food and many raised farm animals for milk, eggs and meat for the table. In this type of economy, money was very scarce and so goods could more often be traded instead of being bought and sold.

There were tradesmen who engaged in wage labour. Most common were carpenters, blacksmiths and loggers. One grand-father recalls that blacksmith was the best job you could have, repairing sleds and farm machinery. Another recalls her father was a teacher in the area earning \$200 a year, that is to say, \$100 in cash and \$100 in the form of vegetables and dairy produce. Other labourers included railroad workers and sailors. Very often, the fishermen in the area would do some logging in winter when the weather was too bad for fishing and cut firewood for their family needs as well as some for sale.

Reminiscent of Williams' (1975) discussion of the people's nostalgic recollections of the past, the emotion with which the grandparents remembered their childhood experiences in their parents' home was striking. They certainly remember the hard times yet they also remember that there were strong ties as well as a special togetherness. As one grandmother recalls:

E.C. My father was a fisherman...in winter he would do some logging...cut our firewood and cut some for sale too...he would sell salt herring to Barbados and come back with molasses and tamarind...in fall we harvested a big garden...had enough to sell some potatoes...we had chickens and two milking cows...Mother lived to be 87 years old...my father died when he was 84...we made a good living (tears in her eyes)...they both worked hard.

The internalisation of sexist ideology which expects women to be defined as wives and mothers begins in the home. Once girls accept that their primary role will be one of homemaker and mother, the continuation of the existing sexual division of labour is ensured. Discussions with these grandparents revealed that within this Acadian community there was a gendered division of labour which, for the most part, affirmed patriarchal relations. The mother was the

principal caretaker of the household and the father worked "outside" and was the one most likely to engage in wage labour. Each member of the family had a job to do. The following words describe the chores children had to do after school, as one grand-father recalls:

F.T.(grand-father): When you came home from school you each had your chores to do...the girls would cook and clean inside the house and the boys would be outside...fetch water from the well...tend the animals in the barn..there was wood to bring in, either in the house or in the barn...in the spring and fall there was the garden to look after.

This gendered division of labour, however, did not always translate into the father's total control of the home. In reality the father would often be absent from the home for considerable lengths of time. Very often the mother was the one to make many of the decisions with regards to the household. Many of the grandparents recall that when both were at home, they believed that both parents were involved in the decision-making.

In many homes especially where the husband was often absent, women would find ways of making money. The tactics used in this community were similar to those used by women in other areas. This

study concurs with Luxton's findings which showed that this work was usually a logical extension of the domestic work women already did. It complemented and intensified their domestic labour without running into conflict with it (Luxton and Rosenberg, 1986: 173). One way which proved to be lucrative was taking in boarders. These women had to be resourceful to make ends meet:

R.B.(grandmother): My father was a captain on a sailship...he was away a lot...it depended on the winds you see...sometimes they were away for quite awhile...

M.T.(grandmother): My father was a sailor "un rigieux"...and was away a lot. In those days women didn't really work outside the home because they had too much to do...tending the children...preparing food and clothes and all that...but my mother did take in boarders...during the war she's the one who started a boarding house here in Meteghan...they were training soldiers around where Louis à Johnny lives today...

A.D.(grandmother): After my father died, we moved to my uncle's home for one year...you see he owed my father some money...so to repay that debt he supported us for one year...when we moved back in our home my mother would sell a piece of land...that would keep the family going for a while...

Widows, despite the permanent absence of their husband, would not escape the clutch of patriarchy. If she was fortunate enough to own some property, this would provide a certain amount of independence but for those poorer widows with no land possessions times were bleak indeed. There was no general welfare program at that time and only a little help could be expected from the municipality. People in the community had to be charitable amongst themselves. A grandmother recalls the plight of a widowed mother who was subject to male control over her life imposed on her by the municipality.

E.T.(grandmother): There was no welfare at that time like there is today but a poor family with nothing at all could receive about \$3.00 per week...I remember one time a neighbour of ours, a widow who was receiving not more than this \$3.00 from the municipality...One day she wanted to give a treat to her children so she put a handful of raisins in the bread she was baking...another neighbour reported her to the municipality arguing that she was wasting her money...this is true!...the municipality responded by giving the \$3.00 in trust to the man who had reported her so that he could administer the money for that family...I remember that very well.

Traditional conceptions of the family with the husband as bread winner and the mother caring for the many children in the household have had to adjust to fit reality. Eichler (1988) argues that it would be more appropriate to talk of "families" in Canada today rather than "the" family taking into account the increase in one parent families and the increase in divorce and common law arrangements.

One may wonder if the image of the traditional family was indeed more often a myth rather than a reflection of reality even "in the good old days". Discussions with the grandparents reveal that the "normal" family, of nuclear form, was often not what existed in this Acadian community. It often happened that as a result of the death of a spouse some of the children were given up for adoption or placed in the homes of neighbours or relatives. Also it was a common practice that aunts and uncles with no children of their own would take in children to help out a sister or a brother. This practice probably helped create a greater sense of community or collective cohesion. Not only did they have to rely on each other's help for food and shelter, this practice also created a network of blood ties in many of the households of the community.

E.R.(grandmother): At home we were a big family...there were 4 children from my father's first marriage and 7 children by his second wife...so we were 11 children in all and we were poor...so my aunt Déremène, my mother's sister came to visit and said she was going to take the baby and that she would bring her back when she could walk...but she kept her for 18 years...I don't really think she ever intended to bring her back...she had no children of her own and they really loved children...

A.L.B.(grand-father): We were 10 children at home...my father died in 1936. When mother died in 1942, there was no welfare at that time...my sisters had come from the States to get my three younger sisters...my other brother took in my younger brother...he was his god-father you see...and I took care of the two other ones Lionel and Cecil. I was not married at the time so I would board them at Leonard à Basil...I paid their board.

Another important feature of these Acadian homes was the presence of elderly relatives. For the most part, those interviewed believed this to be a positive thing for the household although there was practically no alternative course of action. As was expected, almost all the grandparents and parents interviewed had taken care of their own fathers and mothers. It was, however, surprising to find

that 9 of the 20 students interviewed were living or had lived with a grandparent. Furthermore, in three other cases the grandparents live just next door from them. The presence of grandparents in these homes attests to the strong family ties still existing in this Acadian community. In most cases, these youth lived with both their parents and also saw as "normal" having grandparents living with them or close by.

In this Acadian community it is common practice that older persons maintain households as long as their health allows. Their last years, however, are lived out in their children's homes or in senior citizen's homes or homes for special care. Discussions with children and their grand-children (the grade 12 students which are the focus of this research), reveal that older persons are respected and appreciated and exert, albeit in a reduced way, their influence over the household. In most cases grandparents accepted the "changing times" and left the discipline of the children to their parents. Although their influence has diminished over time, it did happen as could be expected that grandparents get caught up in their children's and grand-children's relationships. One parent recalls how, as a child, she could use her grandmother to get her own way with her mother.

J.T.(mother): My grandmother became blind...she was like my best friend in a way...she was 98 years old when she died but she was very young in spirit...I remember once around Christmas time my mother was baking...I had the habit of sitting on the counter to watch...this particular day she said that she needed all the counter space and that I should pull up a chair instead...Well I decided I was going to sit on the counter regardless...I started to cry...I cried and yelled that my mother had hit me with a hammer...it wasn't true...but my grandmother started to cry...mother had so much trouble convincing her that it wasn't true.. and I got my way...I knew that if I didn't get my way with my mother, I could have it with my grandmother.

Three generations ago, parents appeared to have more control over the lives of their children. Obedience to one's parents would be demanded and expected of them without question.

Generally, grandparents remember their own parents and grandparents with the greatest of respect and admiration for their hard work. This indicated the presence of strong parental ties in this community. As one grandmother recalls:

E.C.(grandmother): My own grand-father came from France...he died with us...he stayed six months in our home and six months at my uncle's house...He was a kind man...he wasn't any bother at all...if you were sweeping the

floor, he would move long before he had to just to make sure he wouldn't be in the way (tears in her eyes)...he would never complain...my mother often said don't sit at the table before grand-father...we learned young to have respect for our elders and we did as were told...

Although most of those interviewed had very fond memories of the "old folks", in some households parental relationships were stressful, especially in cases where in-laws were concerned. As one grandmother recalls:

M.T.(grandmother): When we were first married, I really wasn't very happy...we came to live with his mother and father...well I'll tell you, she wasn't my mother! It didn't feel like my home at all..but it's funny when she got sick, I was the only one able to take care of her...I think she was out of her mind a lot of the time...but what could you say...in those days you took what was said and you shut up...but I tell myself today that if there's a heaven...I think I earned my place in it...

More recently when the students talked about their grandparents, not all of them had had positive relationships with them. In one case the relationship was in fact strained and abusive. This

particular female student made the best of a bad situation despite the fact that she received little support from her own parents.

L.S. My grandfather lived with us but he is no longer here.

B.D. I'm sorry...What happened?

L.S. That's o.k....I don't really remember what was wrong with him...he was bleeding inside...he was 89....I didn't really like my grand-father...he liked to go after young girls...and I didn't like that...if it happened that I was alone with him in a room, I would just go somewhere else...I tried not to be around him..

B.D. Did you talk to your mom about this?

L.S. I did not talk about those things with Mom...I just didn't...My grand-father didn't make much noise...he would get mad very easily...but there were no real big arguments because my parents never said anything...

While it was clear that grandparents and parents had specific chores to do at home when they were younger, Acadian youth today have fewer "chores" to do at home. Most of the students, however, stated that they did not mind helping out. In these households most domestic labour was the responsibility of mothers and daughters. In two of the households a housekeeper would come in once a week to clean up.

Generally both boys and girls "helped out" with domestic work but to all intents and purposes very little of their time was spent doing housework. However, this did not appear to be a source of conflict within the household as with youth in other studies (Griffin 1985). In fact, some youth felt that they could be doing more while some parents felt that it was not something they had stressed too much with their children.

B.D. Did your children have to do chores at home?

J.T.(parent) Not really...I don't know why but we always seemed to have trouble making them do things...one day it would be fine but not the next...well now she works part-time so she doesn't have time for chores around the house.

G.T.(female student) Mom does most of the work around the house sometimes I'll start supper....and sometimes they bug me about doing the dishes...sometimes I'll do them, other times after we argue about it, I'll just go to my room...It's really not a big problem...

R.G.(male student) We don't argue about chores like washing dishes. . .it's usually my parents who do it but if they ask me. . . I'll do it. . .

Patriarchal relations and wage labour

As noted in Chapter One, the purpose of this research was to acquire greater insights into the material conditions of working class and middle class Acadian youth which form the basis for the construction of their social identity. It is by sifting through the details of their everyday lives, the ways in which the household is organized and is changing that we come to know more about these material conditions.

People spend a great part of their lives in the home. This is where labour power is reproduced. The care and nurturing as well as the most basic needs of food and shelter are met within the home. Yet the home has often been ignored by social scientists and the social relations which occur within have frequently been overlooked for the more public and the more "visible" social relations of the "street". Feminists have rightly drawn attention to the importance of domestic labour as one of the central labour processes of industrial capitalism and a key site for the construction of cultures.³⁷

37. See works such as More Than a Labour of Love by Meg Luxton 1980; Through the Kitchen Window by M. Luxton and H. Rosenberg 1986; Hidden in the Household - Women's Domestic Labour Under Capitalism, Bonnie Fox (ed.) 1980; Settling Accounts with Subcultures - A Feminist Critique by McRobbie 1980.

Theoretically, we draw on the basic assumption that patriarchy and capitalism are related and that this relationship varies over time and varies with regard to specific cultural contexts as well. While patriarchy is not static it is remarkably resilient and enduring. Although it has undergone some changes as a response to women's specific struggles, there is little doubt about the continued centrality of the roles of mother, wife and housewife in defining women's social identity. Domestic labour in its broadest sense is still seen as women's primary responsibility and it is also often exclusively their responsibility (Fox 1980). The sexual division of labour has been based on the powerful myth that women's place is in the home because their biological capacity to bear children makes them the best care-givers and thus makes them "naturally" inclined to cook, clean and manage a household (Luxton and Rosenberg 1986).

Previous studies on youth subcultures have demonstrated that basically white working class male youth affirm patriarchy (Weis 1989). That is to say, the majority of them speak of future wives and families in highly patriarchal terms.

This contrasts, however, with the current reactions of Acadian youth. Their statements did indeed differ from the more expected traditional views on marriage, raising children and housework. Two of

the male students interviewed said that they probably would get married sometime and one said that he would rather not get tied down. He wanted to be "free". Eight(8) of the ten(10) male students expected to be married. They also expected that their wife would work outside the home, that they would do their share of the housework and that children would substantially change their lifestyle. There was the tendency to attribute child-care to their spouse, however, they expressed it in terms of bearing the children. According to their rationale, because the mother bears the children, she would have to take some time off from work for the actual birth. Surprisingly, they seemed to see their involvement in childrearing after that initial stage.

BETTY: Do you expect to get married? When?

M.T.(male student): Yes...after my training and I have a good job...in about ten years.

BETTY: What type of person would you like to marry?

M.T.: A nice person...well dressed...can joke around...a person who likes a good time and can share the work around the house.

BETTY: Do you expect to have children? How will this affect your life?

M.T.: I don't know about kids...I haven't really thought of it...if I marry and have kids it will be ok...if we don't have kids, it won't hurt me.

BETTY: Who would take care of the children?

M.T.: It would depend on our hours at work...we'll probably share the work...I like to cook...washing dishes

doesn't bother me...I'm not good at making deserts...I tried baking a cake once but it turned out really flat (laugh)...I had to throw it out...

BETTY: Do you expect to get married?

E.L.B.(male student): Yes, one day when I finish my studies.

BETTY: How about children?

E.L.B.: Yes...I like children...I like doing stuff with them...if I could find a woman who wants to work, I would stay home and keep the house going...It wouldn't bother me to do the housework...I do some now...I love to cook...if my wife worked and I got home before her. I would have supper on before she got home...stuff like that...I cook, wash dishes...vacuum...wash toilets no problem. My dad doesn't understand...he's a quiet person who never did that kind of thing but I tell him that times are different now...it's ok.

C.C.(male student): Yes, I would like to get married if I can meet the right girl.

BETTY: What kind of girl would you like to marry?

C.C.: It really doesn't matter...one that is good with children...who'll take care of them when they're sick...She should have a job.

BETTY: If she has a job, who will take care of the children?

C.C.: Well, I like kids...If I had to stop working I would but other than that my parents might come and take care of them.. (laugh).. or I would put them in a day care centre...whatever is the cheapest...I would take my kids out often and have fun with them...

BETTY: What do you expect married life will be like?

T.C.(male student): Well I guess I'd work all day...I don't know if she'll work or not...if she does that's good but if she doesn't I guess it's ok...but when both work outside, it makes twice as much money coming in. But if she works all day it only leaves the evening to wash the clothes and that so I'd have to help too...because she'll have worked all day...

BETTY: If you both work outside the home, who will take care of the children?

T.C.: We'll probably have a baby sitter...but maybe at least at the beginning maybe my wife will stay at home...I don't think I'd have enough patience...

BETTY: Would you like to marry someday?

M.L.B.(male student): I'm not sure...if I find someone...I don't want a wife that always says "yes" to her husband...I want one who can stand on her feet...she'll have to love sports...

BETTY: How about children?

M.L.B.: I don't know...that's something I'll decide in the future...children are a big responsibility...I don't know...I guess my wife would have to take maternity leave and all that...It would change things a lot...

It would not appear that Acadian male youth expect their spouse to stay at home unlike the "lads" who display a clear sense that men have a right to be waited on by the wife (Willis, 1977: 45). These Acadian males also distinguished themselves from the American youth in Weis' study in which she discovered their wish to see their own

income sufficient to "support" a family and enabling their spouse to take care of their children (Weis 1989).

Feminists have drawn attention to the processes by which the physical characteristics of male and females translate into the socially constructed personality and behavioural characteristics known as "masculine" and "feminine" (Barrett 1984). Furthermore, the socially constructed notion of "feminine" is one that holds less social value than what is seen as masculine. Smith argues that this devalued status stems from the fact that the definitions of what is male or female are themselves traditionally controlled by males and constructed on the basis of the experiences of males (Smith 1987). Maleness is attributed the positive qualities of independence and aggression while femaleness is understood as dependent, passive and weak (McRobbie 1978). Feminists seek a society where gender identity is not constructed in such oppositional terms and where people can integrate both mental and manual labour as well as the rational and emotional. Among the Acadian youth of this study it is significant to point out that their conceptions of gender do not seem to follow the traditional dichotomy. It appears that these Acadian male youth do not think of the "wage packet" or manual labour as important qualities of masculinity to the extent that the "lads" in the Willis study. When asked what they

believed were the qualities of a good father at no time was there reference to being able to "support" the family. Instead, qualities such as being respectful, kind and understanding were the qualities most often cited as important to being a good father.

M.T.(male student): He understands his kids and respects them...he listens to them and all that...to encourage them..like if they're in trouble he'll help them out...but the child has to respect too.

T.C.(male student): He's someone who takes the time to play with his children...who works during the day...and he takes the time to talk to his wife...spend some time with her and not always with his friends...help around the house...

Also it is very important to note that, in practically all cases, they attributed the same qualities to mothers as they did to fathers. Although we should guard ourselves against premature optimism, these findings indicate that perhaps the strict traditional sexual stereotypes of what is a "mother" and a " father" are possibly wearing away.

In Chapter One, we discussed McRobbie's objections to the study of youth subculture that ignores the specific experiences of female youth of different class positions. McRobbie's work along with other studies of working class high school females suggests that female youth elaborate a culture that places home life at the centre. For many girls the privacy of the home held consequently more importance than wage labour.

McRobbie found that working class girls construct and operate within an "ideology of romance" which in essence serves to keep females in a secondary position both in the home and the market place (McRobbie 1978). She argues that "getting a man" and setting up a family is as central to girls' culture as opposition to authority is to boys' culture. Girls in Gaskell's study also stressed the role of domestic labour in career planning and course choice (Gaskell 1987). Wolpe also found that by the time young females graduate from high school, they articulate their future in terms of family responsibilities (Wolpe 1978).

A very striking point about Acadian female youth culture at this particular high school in this Acadian community is that there is very little evidence of the centrality of marriage or the "ideology of romance" in their social identities.

Although only one of the girls interviewed questioned the possibility of eventually getting married, those that wished to get married were clear about the time of marriage. They saw marriage as occurring only later on after they were settled in a good job or career. One girl rejected the idea of having children altogether. It is quite evident that these girls do not construct "fantasy futures" in order to escape their everyday world. Perhaps urban Acadian girls would have meanings closer to those found in Gaskell's work although one would expect to see the more conservative and traditional views expressed in rural areas. Although the situation of Acadian urban youth goes beyond the scope of this dissertation, these findings indicate the need for more research in this area.

BETTY: Do you plan to marry someday?

M.L.B.(female student): Yes I guess so...but not for a while yet...until I'm about thirty...with a guy from around here.

BETTY: How about children?

M.L.B.: No, I would not like to have children...I don't have the patience for it...with children too you have to take care of them when they're sick...get babysitters for them...it's expensive and all that...I'd rather not have any.

BETTY: Would you like to marry someday?

L.A.: I don't plan on getting married and doing housework all day...that's not for me...maybe I'll get married...it probably would be nice sometime later on.

BETTY: How about children?

L.A.: Not right away...maybe one or two...later on when I'm about 40...I mean I wouldn't like to be tied down...I like kids...but I've never changed a diaper in my life.. (laugh) and I can wait for that...I want to establish myself...I'd like to work for a police department...I want to get organized before I have kids.

BETTY: How about housework?

L.A.: He'll have to make his own wash...that's what I want...he should do his share of the work to be fair...I know it's going to be tough...but I'm not used to doing work around the house either so we'll just have to learn together...I know that there are a lot of those guys who think that housework is woman's job but there must be some others out there ..somewhere...

BETTY: How about marriage?

N.L.B.(female student): Well...maybe when I'm thirty...like...I want to have my own business before I get married.

BETTY: Would you like to have children?

N.L.B.: I don't think so...I really don't think so...but if I want some later or I can always adopt...there are so many children who don't have parents...

BETTY: What would married life be like?

N.L.B.: It would have to be a sharing of things. He would go to his work and I would go to mine...when it comes to kids...there it should be rally shared you know...if I want to go out one night he'll have to stay home with the kids...

BETTY: When would you like to get married?
L.T.(female student): Well I'd like to finish
university...then when I have my career and a
little money...maybe my own house to live
in...then I think I would be ready...

Their attitudes towards marriage did not seem to be affected by negative aspects of marriage as reflected by the high divorce rates in present-day Canada. This is not surprising in view of the fact that many of these students lived in two parent families. In a recent survey of over 400 Acadian youth, 97% said that their mother was present in the home and 91% said that their father lived with them (Dugas-LeBlanc 1987). Among the youth in this study, only two girls lived in families where the parents were separated. In other words, 90% of these Acadian youth lived in two parent families. These figures are considerably higher than the statistics for Nova Scotian households in general. According to the 1986 census profile of family characteristics, 81% of families with children were husband-wife families. Furthermore of the 19% one parent families, 17% of these were headed by males and 83% were headed by females. This is clearly an indication that women are still responsible for most of the childcare in this province.

It is very probable that the presence of two parents as well as grandparents in these households are factors contributing to the

cohesiveness of this Acadian community. However, as stated earlier, two of the twenty students interviewed had parents that were separated. In both these middle class households the separation had been difficult for these female students and although they lived with their mother they still remained quite close to their father. In the case of another female student, while she did not experience her own parents' marital problems, she made reference to an aunt who had lived through a bad marriage. This resulted in these students' more cautious outlook on marriage.

BETTY: How about marriage?

G.T.(female student): Yes...when I'm about 27...when I finish my education and I've found a job...when I'm independent...I have an aunt that couldn't leave her husband even if she wanted to...I'm not getting into that mess...

BETTY: Would you like to have children?

G.T.: Yes I'd like to have children but I've not worked it out yet...you know...I wouldn't like to quit my job but I wouldn't like to stick them in day care...so I don't know exactly how it will work out.

BETTY: Do you plan to get married?

C.T.(female student): Well for awhile I thought I would never get married.. you know when mom and dad divorced...but now I think I want to get married to have a child like my baby

sister...but only when I'm much older...I don't want to get married and have to give up my job to stay home with my children...when I'm thirty something I might get married...

BETTY: How do you expect marriage will be like?

C.T.: Well he can cut the grass ok...but I want to handle the bills...I want to know what's going on...all the bills that need to be paid and stuff like that...as much as him... I don't want to be more than him...but I want to know just as much...equal you know...I can see sometimes he would wash dishes and sometimes I mow the lawn...we would divide the chores...switch these around.

Clearly these girls are aware of the traditional sexual division of labour in the household, however they anticipate doing things differently. Although it is not always clear to most of them how they will reconcile their job and childrearing it is certainly not taken for granted that they will automatically be responsible for domestic work. Only one middle class female student described a scenario that fit the traditional mode although she could still see herself in paid employment.

L.T.(female student): I think both should share the chores...like on Saturdays, washing the floor...both should do it together...if we both have a career I guess I should still wash the dishes and he should do the work outside...I don't know...he should help out...

It is clear that all of the girls interviewed asserted the primacy of a wage labour identity over that of the home and marriage. Although most of these girls lived in two-parent households their attitude toward paid employment was very positive. While there was acknowledgement of work done in the home, it was clear that they placed a higher value on paid employment. These girl's positive attitudes towards work indicate that the transfer of traditional gender roles are being challenged.

It is also important to note that the subject of marriage only came up in the discussion after the researcher had initiated the question. When asked about their future plans, the topic of marriage did not surface but rather expressions like "be independent", "find a good job", "make lots of money" qualified their future plans. As already noted, marriage was discussed when the researcher specifically asked about it. Again this indicated that the private home/family dimension is not as central in the formation of cultural identity for these female students as found in previous studies.

This also holds true for both the girls of working class families and middle class families. While working class girls tended to look towards working class jobs such as secretary or store clerk and middle class girls tended to aspire towards university, they all

expressed the desire to be financially independent before getting married. None of these girls envisioned a male breadwinner stereotype of individual on which she would be financially dependent.

These youth's expectations of their future household contrast significantly with their parents' households and that of their grandparents. While it is generally accepted that grandmothers had no "choice" but to be responsible for childrearing and "no time available" to engage in any work other than domestic chores, most of the mothers of these students did engage in paid labour. Of those interviewed there were only three mothers who did not work for wages after they were married. Five engaged in working class jobs as fish plant workers, textile worker or cook while seven of the mothers had middle class professional work such as teachers, nurses and bookkeepers. Five of the mothers worked with their husbands at their own company doing general secretarial and bookkeeping work.

The point needs to be made that although these women referred to the company as their husband's company, they were all aware of the importance of their work for the success of the company. In many of these small businesses the work done by the spouse meant the success or failure of the company. In most cases also working for the

company did not alter their responsibility of principal caretaker of the home. Rather than expressing a feeling akin to being oppressed, these women saw themselves as working for themselves and did not question the fact that they still had to be responsible for the home. These mothers were pleased to have been able to arrange their work hours in order to be home when the children came home from school.

J.T.(parent): I worked but my office was in the basement of our home. It was important for me to be there when they came home from school...around 4 o'clock I'd come up and start supper...

BETTY: Did your husband work in the house?

J.T.: He helped around the house a little...but he always worked long hours and different hours too so it was kind of hard to rely on him for help in the house. Having his own contracting business gives him a lot of pressure...stress you know...

L.L.B.(parent): I do most of the work around the house...maybe sometimes my husband washes the dishes but that's about it...but he often comes in late. Having his own business...he works long hours.

For the most part grandparents had to live their younger everyday lives without the available present-day conveniences As

noted earlier, money was scarce and most of their day was spent seeing to the basic needs of the household. However, during the interviews one could get a sense that while the home was their primary responsibility, some grandmothers had been active in decision making of the family business. In one particular case one of the grandmothers was instrumental in the success of one of the most prominent family businesses in the area if not the Atlantic region. Women have resisted and continue to resist the line drawn by patriarchy and its gendered division of labour.

R.D.(parent): My mother was the bookkeeper and the brains of the company...she would decide which contracts to take...you see Daddy had taken a shipbuilding course in Boston...so he was in charge of the construction side of the business. She worked at it until the business was really getting too big...so they hired bookkeepers...At school I took the commercial course to learn bookkeeping but I didn't like it... I loved doing housework so I did...while Mom would much rather work in the books...I did the housework...so we were both content.

Another important finding in this study reveals that the "breadwinner" ideology does not appear to be a central or crucial element of the Acadian male youth's construction of masculinity or

their maleness. While only one of the male students expressed a willingness to "stay home" and be responsible for running the home, the others intended to "share" the housework. Only two of them saw themselves as merely "helping" around the house. These Acadian male youth do not talk about their future wives and families in the patriarchal terms that are common in previous studies of working class youth (Willis 1977), (Weis 1989), (Gaskell 1987).

In this section we have seen that these Acadian male and female students are presenting a challenge to sexist ideologies. These young Acadian females, despite the material conditions of the rural community and its limited resources, construct a social identity which does hold wage labour as a central feature. To what extent they will be able to actually live out this identity is another question. If they actually carry through with their career aspirations it appears that they will be in position to have the necessary resources which allow for real independence.

Parental relationships

Discussions with these grade 12 students, their parents and their grandparents reveal important ways in which the parent child

relationship has changed over time. During the interviews, points were raised which touched on various facets of parents' control over their children as well as their influence over their future plans. Unlike other studies (Griffin 1985) where youth's experiences of home life often was a continual battle, parental relationships in these Acadian households, while by no means unproblematic, remain very positive.

It is clear that the material conditions in which the grandparents lived their youth have changed in a very real way as compared to the conditions in which the youth of today live. These changes have modified their everyday social relations generally and their parental relationships in particular. For instance, there were very few cars in the area at the time, therefore, the principal means of transportation was walking or the use of horse and cart. Visits from one village to another meant a full day affair. Also, communication between villages was limited.

Everyday life revolved around the household where their main preoccupation was the procuring of the basic necessities of food and shelter. Chores had to be done. With very little influence from the "outside world" parental authority within the household, supported by religious authority, was rarely questioned. According to most of the grandparents, parental authority was "automatic" and thus parents

were rarely challenged. Most grandparents remember their own parents as being hard working and having much strength of character. Parental authority would be extended even after the youth had left the home as one grandmother recalls:

M.G.(grandmother): Even when I left home at 14 to work as a housekeeper...you still felt you had to listen to your parents...They didn't have to tell you...you just knew you had to do it...we had been brought up that way.

Although most remembered special and happy times with their parents, some recall not so happy times and the more physical side of the discipline of children as well as sibling rivalry:

L.B.(grandmother): ...they would hit us...in those days parents beat their children to keep them in line. I remember once I had done something I wasn't supposed to and Mom gave me a whack...so I went and told my Papa about it...well I'll tell you I never went again to tell on Mom!...he took me over his knee and gave me such a spanking...you can be sure I never again told him if I ever got in trouble with Mom...I was the oldest...and I tried to boss them (her brothers and sisters) around...we would often have quarrels over who had the biggest piece of cake...there was always something....that's why my parents had so much trouble with us...I remember we

really were bad with one of my younger sisters...We kept telling her she was ugly...to this day the poor woman still has problems...a complex...about her looks.

While the control of parents seemed to be total, and while the youth engaged in accomodation by doing their chores, they also engaged in forms of resistance towards parental authority. For both the male and females, this resistance took the form of telling lies or perhaps not telling the whole truth. What is important to note is that Acadian youth make an active decision to engage in resistance which is less confrontational in nature (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985) which will not harm parental relationships. This type of resistance makes sense in a rural community where resources are limited and options for other living arrangements are not available. There are no youth hostels or similar institutions like those found in urban areas. There is no "street life" which might also be an alternative for them.

L.T.(grand-father): I don't remember my parents having any big problems...we were living well...we had lots of food...we didn't talk very much.

BETTY: How about when you started to see girls?

L.T.: No we never talked about that...but sometimes I'd come in late and he'd (his father) take my side against mother...(laugh)

BETTY: So was it your mother who tried to keep you in line?

L.T.: Well she really didn't say much either...if you were in a fight somewhere...you shut up...you wouldn't go to your parents about it...the best one won and that's all there was to it...(laugh).

L.B.(grandmother): When it came to my own daughter, I didn't just give her some slack in the rope...I gave her the whole rope...you see I didn't want her to tell me lies...I had told lies to my mother about where I was really going....they weren't big lies but I had lied to my mother and I didn't want my daughter to lie to me...I had to trust her...

In a time when these grandparents were young, the role of the church and its effect on the everyday lives of these Acadian youth cannot be overstated. Parents had the moral obligation to raise their children according to the dictates of the Church. In a sense this would shift responsibility from the parents' shoulders to those of the priest.

As one grandmother put it:

BETTY: Do you remember your parents being strict?

M.T.: Yes and no...I'll tell you...I remember it was Father Côté who was in charge of the

parish...oh he was strict...if there was a wedding we couldn't even go and watch them dance...the parents were strict but it came from the priest...going to see moving pictures was wrong...now priests do it...you know .. we were slaves...just a bunch of slaves...

The role of the church has changed over time, from an ever present authority and guide for the whole community to one which represents a more personal experience among the Acadian youth today. Clearly the effects of increased transportation and communication as well as an increase in the level of education has contributed to the erosion of the church's grip on this Acadian community. The following passages present well these changes from one generation to the other as the act of going to mass changes from being a one day affair to a "once in a while" affair.

E.L.B.(grandmother): We would get up early every Sunday morning to go to mass...you did not miss the mass otherwise you would risk not being buried in the church cemetery...we packed a lunch...so after mass we had lunch...then at 1 o'clock it was an hour of catechism then at 2 o'clock it was vespers...it was fun in a way...everyone could meet and catch up on the news...then we would head for home in time for supper.

L.C.(parents): We went to church every Sunday and confession at least once a month...our neighbour had an open truck with benches in back...in winter it was cold but we didn't mind at all...you would have never thought of saying that you were not going to go...you just did as you were told...it wasn't in your mind at all to refuse...now it's hard to bring my children to mass on Sunday...I remember back then religion was really the force behind my doing good or bad...now it's less religion and more the laws of society guiding them today...

L.A.(young female): I don't go to church often...They used to force me to go but lately they don't any more...so I don't go...well tonight we're going because grandmother wants us to take communion before we leave on our trip (during the March break she was going on a school trip to Russia)... sometimes I go on my own but not often...

E.L.B.(young male): I have not been in a while...now my parents have told me that I'm old enough to decide if I want to go or not...with my part-time job it's hard to find the time...when I was younger they forced me to go..

Without exception young Acadian males and females thought they had a positive relationship with their parents. Although some relationships were closer than others, young Acadians still in school seem to have worked out any problems with their parents by the time they're 16 or 17 years old. There were only two out of the 20 homes in which the parents were separated or divorced yet even in these cases positive relations were maintained with both parents.

A recent survey on Acadian youth in Nova Scotia (Dugas-LeBlanc 1987) showed that 87% of the youth interviewed in Clare said that they had a lot of confidence in their parents. In addition, 89% felt that their parents had confidence in them as well (Table 6).

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH HAVING ANSWERED "MOST OF THE TIME" TO THE QUESTIONS DEALING WITH PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

	Canada	Quebec	Nova Scotia	Clare
My parents understand me	51%	56%	51%	64%
I have fun with my parents	49%	54%	57%	69%
My parents have confidence in me	70%	73%	80%	89%

Source: Dugas-LeBlanc, 1987, p. 128

This would indicate, according to our respondents, that the parent-youth relationships tend to be very positive in this area. Compared to provincial and national statistics, Acadian youth in Clare had a higher percentage of those who had responded that they "got along well with their parents". Eighty-nine percent (89%) of Acadian youth felt that their parents had confidence in them compared to 80% for the province and 70% for Canada. In comparing her results with results obtained from Health and Welfare Canada's Health Attitudes and Behaviours Survey, 68% of Acadian youth said that they had fun with their parents (most of the time) compared to 57% of youth for the province of Nova Scotia and 49% of youth for the whole of Canada.

This study does indicate that indeed the parental relationship seems to be more open and more democratic than in the past. This holds true for both the males and the females of this study regardless of their class position. Although two of the female students expressed a very close relationship with their father most of the other students seemed to have closer relations with their mother. Reasons given for this were mostly centred on the mother's capacity for listening and understanding. In some cases the mother was considered more as a

friend than a parent. The presence of grandparents also had some impact on this relationship.

BETTY: How do you get along with your parents?

L.A.(female): We get along ok...sometimes grand-mère gets after both of us especially about "eating out" too often....Mom and I are very close...I can tell her practically anything at all...we're good "chums"....grandmother is like our mother to both of us...I'd rather fight with grandmother than with Mom....I have a friend who's like a rebel and her mother doesn't approve of the things she does...but it's not like that with my mom.

BETTY: Do you see yourself as a rebel?

L.A.: No, not really because I can tell mom what I do...I'm a "layed back" type of person. Most of the time I'm shy...sometimes I might do stuff I know I shouldn't but usually if I'm told not to go to a certain place, I won't go...no I don't think I'm a rebel.

BETTY: How do you get along with your parents?

G.T.(female): Now I would say that we're more like chums...before it really was bad...

BETTY: When did it start going bad?

G.T.: Well I guess I had some kind of "attitude" when I was about 14...I was on the senior side at school and I thought I was grown up...they would try and tell me something and I'd get mad...like if they wanted me to come home at a certain time...I thought they were too strict....now we get along

better...I smoke...they don't want me to smoke but they know I won't stop just because they say so...I drink too sometimes...but not enough to make a jackass of myself...

In most cases parents discussed family matters with their children. This also had a positive effect on their relationship.

BETTY: Do your parents talk to you about important family matter?

R.G.(male): Yes, I think so ...for example...when my father was considering changing jobs...he would ask for my opinion...I don't know how important my opinion had for him but at least he asked me what I thought...

BETTY: Do your parents talk to you about important family matters?

T.C.(male): Yes...sometimes...well if it's serious I'm sure they would talk to me about it...sometimes I'll ask how much money my father makes in a week...they'll tell me but then they'll tell me not to tell anyone...well a while back my father's company had big problems...and they would tell us about it...it wasn't anyone else's business...but we talked about it in the family...

BETTY: Sounds like you got along well?

T.C.: Oh yes...before I started going out with girls we were together all the time...but now I

have a girl friend...I'd rather go see her..I'd rather go "voir la girl".

Sometimes siblings would be a source of help for these youth.

As one girl states:

N.L.B.(female student): Things are going well with my parents..we really don't have problems because if they tell me to be home at a certain time...I do it...I mostly talk to my sisters...it's easier than talking to my mother (laugh)...My dad and I have good discussions on politics and stuff...(laugh) we don't agree on everything...he has his opinion and I have mine...but you know it's ok that way...

In this chapter, an attempt was made to gain a better understanding of the social relationships in the home/family sphere of Acadian grade 12 students and, in a retrospective way, these relationships for their parents and grandparents.

Along with a general rise in affluence within the community (in the grandparents' homes very few had electricity, running water, toilets or washing machines) there were changes in parental relationships from autocratic to more consensual or democratic relations.

Significantly, Acadian youth seem to have more satisfactory and positive parental relationships than youth in Nova Scotia and Canada, in general. Subsequently, there are considerably fewer reactions against parental authority. Although these youth stated that there had been conflict, it was at a younger age and they had since worked it out. This non-resistance within parental relations has important implications for research on the reproduction of Acadian culture in general. Traditionally, Acadian families drew strength from extended kinship networks set in close knit villages. Today, although less extended and less isolated, family and community cohesiveness still provides the basis on which Acadian youth attempt to resolve the contradictions resulting from shifts in the material and the economic forms around them. More research is needed which takes into account the potentially positive and supportive nature of family life for Acadian youth as they cope with the structural problems legitimized by an anglophone hegemonic order.

We have also drawn attention to the ideology of gender which holds that woman's primary responsibility is the home and domestic work and also constructs women as subservient to men's needs (McRobbie 1978). This gender ideology encompasses all of men's needs whether it be their emotional, sexual or physical needs. Most of

these students in this study came from homes where both parents were engaged in wage labour. In both working and middle class households, housework and childcare were still principally the woman's responsibility.

Nevertheless, the interesting point to be made about Acadian youth's cultural form is that it does not affirm patriarchal relations to the extent that the "lads" did or affirm a "culture of femininity" described by McRobbie (1978, 1980) in her work with young females.

In fact because these young Acadian females do not see the domestic sphere as primary but rather see wage labour as primary, they are engaging in resistance (as defined in Chapter one, p.13) in that they are presenting a possible challenge to patriarchal structures. While their opposition to sexist ideology does not take the form of hostility or rebellion it is still real. These youth are presenting a challenge to traditional social definitions of masculine and feminine. For these girls, however, this challenge might only be partial depending on various factors such as their career aspirations and choices, and what kind of jobs these girls will eventually obtain. Heidi Hartmann reminds us of the link between capitalism and patriarchy and the fact that while women may wish to break the bonds of patriarchy, young

women usually enter into jobs that do not pay enough to allow them to exist outside the bounds of marriage (Hartmann 1979). Without the necessary material conditions, financial independence is highly unlikely.

In this chapter, relationships within the home between these Acadian youth and their parents and grandparents have been examined. It is interesting to note that unlike most studies in this area [McRobbie (1978 and 1980), Griffin (1985), Baker (1985), Gaskell (1987) and Weis (1989)], Acadian youth have more positive relationships at home. Also, their confidence level seems higher than other Nova Scotian youth which can place them in a better position as they enter the job market.

Although most of these youth came from homes where the mother was responsible for domestic work, it is significant that for these girls, the domestic sphere did not seem to be central to their future as paid labour. Also the boys did not foresee their future spouse staying at home. In the next section we will look at relationships in the school and the plans these Acadian youth are actually making.

3

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
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Chapter 5

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS: RESISTANCE AND ACCOMMODATION

Within the theoretical framework used for this study, culture is seen as an active practice which has an impact on the economic and political processes as well as being conditioned and shaped by them. As discussed in Chapter One, Hall (1976) conceptualises culture as:

the practice which realizes or objectivates group-life in meaningful shape and form...a distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life.(Hall, 1976: 10)

Cultural forms and their reproduction must be studied in terms of how they are lived and experienced. As also noted in Chapter One, history shapes human beings in conditions which are not of their own making, yet human beings in turn are active in the creation of their own history. Human beings experience the conditions of life, define them and respond to them.

This chapter will focus on the high school as a site wherein Acadian youth as active social agents continually engage in the social

processes of resistance and accommodation (Chapter One) within this structure. We will try to gain insight into the youth's resistances as a response to the social structures which surround them and as a potential force for social change (Richer 1990). We will look at the nature of their resistance, that is to say, whether it is passive or active and whether it is formal or informal.

Acadian youth live through their everyday experiences in a coastal rural community. This is a particular community, one wherein 77% of the people are Acadian living within a wider anglophone Nova Scotian setting. The Nova Scotian hegemonic order may and very often does reflect distortions of Acadians' everyday experiences rather than reality. One such distortion has been the image of Acadians as generally being portrayed (Chapter 2) as a hospitable and accommodating people with little desire for control over the social structures which affect them. Traditional ways of writing history to fit with dominant socio-cultural assumptions, have resulted in Acadians having been characterized as "other" and, thus, have had their experiences marginalized to a subordinate position.

According to Hall and Jefferson (1976) the education process is a crucial site of social reproduction in the sense that this is an area where social meanings are formed and passed on from generation to

generation. There is a legitimacy to the social meanings found in the education process. However, often what is presented as "truth" is often only a partial view of social phenomena. Because most people have little first hand experience with much of the education process, it is likely that dominant groups will come to know different people as "other" through knowledge of this kind.

Rather than helping to create a more egalitarian society, school processes too often simply reproduce existing inequalities. By explaining how teachers often gear their class to boys' behaviour thus giving them more attention, Spender describes this process as:

..the process whereby the male experience becomes the classroom experience, whereby education duplicates the patterns of the wider society. (Spender, 1982: 59)

The "accepted text" found in the materials of the education process also has an impact on the social construction and social meanings within this Acadian community. Their experiences and lives are reduced to a few paragraphs in a history text while other aspects of their lives be it economic, social or political are completely ignored. This can result in the wearing away of a strong Acadian identity and contribute to assimilation.

In a previous study of school textbooks and the amount of Acadian content found within them, it was discovered that many history texts ignore Acadians' contribution to Nova Scotian society. This implicitly conveys the notion that Acadians' contributions are not important. Although Acadians are portrayed positively, most of the information on Acadians centres on the deportation in 1755. This, as Samson and Hughes argue, results in "dehistorisation" by denying any consideration of their life experiences as a specific community for over 200 years after the deportation: "On prive les Acadiens eux-mêmes d'un sentiment de continuité dans leur propre histoire et de fierté dans leur identité ethnique contemporaine." (Samson and Hughes, 1982: 54)

The schooling process is one of the most central shared experience for youth today. Previous studies on working class youth, especially boys, have suggested that opposition to school authority forms a central part of the cultural formation. In Paul Willis' Learning to Labour, the "lads" engage in behaviour which displays resentment to school authority and school meanings while stopping short of outright confrontation. Absenteeism was seen to be an important part of their resistance. As Willis states: "Opposition to the school is principally manifested in the struggle to win symbolic and physical

space from the institution and its rules and to defeat its main perceived purpose: to make you work "(Willis, 1977: 26).

While previous studies have shown that opposition to school authority and school meanings were also present among girls, particularly working class girls, this opposition was not as intense as it was for boys. McRobbie found that girls' opposition translated into transforming the school into a "place" for developing their social life, that is, meeting boys, learning the latest steps to a dance, grabbing a smoke in the girls' washrooms or playing up to the teachers (McRobbie 1978). One form of resistance engaged in by working class girls was to "assert their "femaleness" by introducing into the classroom their sexuality and their physical maturity in a manner which would force the teachers to take notice " (McRobbie, 1978: 104). Spender has gone as far as to say that often through boys' opposition of school, girls themselves learn to lower their self worth and confidence and learn that males are in control (Spender, 1982: 60). These processes do not seem to be as predominant among these young Acadian females.

The students in this study all attend the local high school which is the only consolidated Acadian high school in the area. Students of working class and middle class positions attend this school which has

been in existence for 35 years. During the course of this study, marked differences with the behaviours and articulations of Acadian youth with those found in previous studies both for male and female youth were uncovered. For the purpose of this dissertation, we will focus on two major areas: 1) reactions toward school authority in which will be discussed the students' relationship to teachers and, generally, how they follow rules of the school; and, 2) the meaning of school in highly utilitarian terms, that is, to get a job and the meaning of school which encompasses a more positive attitude toward mental labour. This more positive attitude towards mental labour translated into most of these students planning to go on to university or to community college.

However, in order to get a sense of schooling over time we will look first at how previous generations of Acadian youth experienced changes in these particular social relations.

Grandparents' Experiences of School

Through discussions with the grandparents, it became clear that the material conditions in which they lived affected their understanding of the importance or lack of importance of the education process. At a

time when the prime activities centred on the basics of living such as food and shelter, education was secondary. Although school was secondary, education was positively viewed and everyone interviewed had attended school at least till grade 5. Many had reached the grade 7 or 8 level. In the case of the grandparents, however, only those who had the financial resources could continue beyond grade 9. Often going beyond grade 9 meant the student had to attend boarding school. Others, however, could overcome their lack of financial resources and pursue their education by joining a religious order. Apart from their spiritual dimension, vocations were not only prestigious but also very practical for those with limited resources in this Acadian community.

Other factors affecting one's ability to attend school were linked to family responsibilities. In some cases one parent fell sick or help was needed at home in which case the child would leave school. Also by 13 or 14 years of age, youth were expected to go to work to support themselves and help out their parents financially if it was at all possible. Those that were fortunate enough to live close to the school tended to go to school a little longer than those who had to walk as much as 2 miles to get to school. But, as one grand-father remarked

walking to school was also a social experience. There was strength in being together:

L.T.: School was ok...we had a two room school house...I had to walk 2 miles to school...that was quite a distance in winter...but you weren't alone...there was a bunch of us together.

All grandparents expressed a positive attitude toward their school days. However, it was understood that the obtaining of an education had a higher social value for males than for females. As one grand-father put it:

F.T.(grand-father): We used to think that girls didn't need any schooling because they were going to be housekeepers anyway...if they got to grade 7 or 8...and they could read or write a letter...then that's all they needed...their work was housework.

As could be expected most of the grandparents did leave school early. Most of the women left to find work as housekeepers or help out at home. Most of the men left to find work in the lumber camps, in the fishery or to work as skilled and unskilled labourers.

Among these Acadians not only did gender frame how they experienced education but their class position also came into play. Of

the 20 grandparents interviewed only 3 (2 grandmothers and 1 grandfather) had made it past the secondary school level. The grandfather had graduated with his B.A. from Collège Sainte-Anne and one of the grandmothers had made it through nursing school. The other grandmother had completed a two year secretarial course. This in itself was remarkable for this woman because at that time secretarial work was considered male work:

E.T.(grandmother): I wanted to be different. I wanted to be a secretary...in those days secretaries were all men...and there weren't many in the area....I loved to write...I would go and write letters for older people in the village who couldn't write...I loved it.

Eleven of the grandparents had sought work outside the area. Five of these had gone to the United States while one had tried to make a living in Montreal. The five others had gone to the Halifax or Truro area to find employment or to continue their education.³⁸

Although education was viewed positively their class position played an important part in the actual "choice" made. In many cases

38. It is interesting to note that the exodus of youth from this Acadian community is a factor which has been advanced as ultimately weakening this community to the point of extinction. Yet this is a practice that has been occurring for over 80 years.

people could just not afford to continue their formal education. A grand-father describes the situation keeping in mind that he came from a relatively prosperous family and he had managed to obtain his B.A. degree from Collège Sainte-Anne:

F.T.(grand-father): ...The depression hit...we had no money...I didn't have the .50 cents it cost for my graduation pictures...Papa was still sick from typhoid fever...My dream was to become a doctor but it would take five more years of schooling...I could have borrowed money for maybe two years...but five years...it was impossible...it was the depression ...in the meantime you could go to Truro at Teacher's College and get a teaching licence in two years...so that's what I did...but it wasn't my first choice.

A.L.B.(grandmother): ...I loved going to school...and I did well too...my favourite subject was arithmetic...I got along well with the teacher...well you see I had no problem learning...but in those days to continue to grade 9 I had to go stay at the

convent in Meteghan...well we just couldn't afford that...so I just went to work as a housekeeper...and five years later I got married and started having children...

There were some, however, who did not fare too well at school. Interviews reveal that some students, most often boys, tended to act up in school. While most of the grandparents remember their teachers

as very strict, most of them sympathized with them in that being a teacher was no easy task. However, punishment could be severe and the actual physical conditions of the school were also harsh. The following passages reveal the more negative side of school:

E.L.B.(grandmother): We didn't have schools like today...I remember in our school...during winter we would get there and you had to sit around the wood stove to try and keep warm...we were all in the same classroom from grade 1 to 10...there was only one room...

L.T.(grand-father): School was ok...(laugh).
BETTY: Did you give the teacher a hard time?
L.T.: I think so...(laugh) You know there were always those who 'acted up'(faire le diable). Teachers had to be tough...I remember one teacher, Joe à Lézin's girl from Mavilette...you know her..she married Siffroi à Louis à Marc...well anyway..she had to have a sense of humour to put up with us...

J.L.B.(grandmother): I remember one teacher used to hit the students...she would break sticks on the student's hands...one day she hit one in the eye and that was the end of her...I think she lost her licence after that...

One of the grand-fathers is more specific about students' resistances to school authority:

F.T.(grand-father): Those students that were sent or forced to go to school in spite of themselves would tend to cause the most problems for teachers...almost everyone had a pocket knife so some would carve out things on their desks...even on walls...some would break things....a desk or window....others would always be late...or get into fights...fights were quite frequent.

Others remember the humiliation of being singled out by a teacher. Although many of the teachers were nuns, they could be very hard. The humiliation experienced by this particular grandmother goes to the very heart of the artificial split between the private/public spheres and how a simple object can be an object of shame and ridicule.

M.T.(grandmother): Once I went to school with my apron...I had forgotten to take it off...Well I'll tell you...well it was an insult and a disgrace...can you imagine...well she made fun of me all day...but I had worn it by accident...in those days you wore an apron in the house all the time...I just forgot to take it off...I'll never forget that.

Also a grand-father recalls that punishment could also take the form of forcing boys to play among the girls:

F.T.(grand-father): At that time girls and boys each had their side of the school yard...I remember that boys who were punished would be placed on the girls' side...well this was an embarrassment because boys were not used to being there (laugh)...today that wouldn't be much of a punishment...everyone plays together.

School for these older people was considered a privilege and only those with the most resources could ever hope of pursuing their education beyond the minimum regardless of ability or desire to do so. In addition to class differences, it was also clear that education was encouraged along gender lines. Girls were not seen as "needing" education. Clearly, these grandparents lived the social relations of the school through the inequalities of class and gender.

For these Acadians the curriculum was focused on religious instruction for not only were many of the teachers of religious orders but also the main reader was the catechism. If a student failed to learn the catechism he or she did not proceed to the next grade. Religious instruction according to these grandparents was an essential

part of an Acadian's education as well as an Acadian's total way of life.

The school experiences of these grandparents help us to understand the school-student dynamic among Acadians of a different generation under different material conditions. The recollections of these grandparents reveal clearly the presence of class and gender inequalities. They also had to cope with an education system which had little relevance for the labour market of the time. It was thus not surprising to see many grandparents having not gone beyond elementary schooling. Their resistance often translated in their leaving the system.

Parents' experiences of school

Although the parents in this research project had generally more education than their grandparents, the changes in the material condition in which they lived had not changed dramatically. It is important to note that in a previous survey (Dugas-LeBlanc 1987) it was found that 30.8% of mothers and 38.6% of fathers had less than 9 years of schooling (Table 7). Keeping in mind all the Acadian regions of Nova Scotia, education levels varied among fathers and mothers

such that while many fathers had less than 9 years schooling, more of the males than females had vocational training and post secondary education.

TABLE 7

EDUCATION LEVEL: FATHER - MOTHER
ALL ACADIAN REGIONS OF NOVA SCOTIA

	Less than 9 years	Primary (grade 9 completed)	Secondary (grade 12 completed)	Vocational school	University
Mother	30.8%	17.4%	35.1%	6.7%	10.1%
Father	38.6%	16.7%	22.9%	9.3%	12.6%

Source: Dugas-LeBlanc, 1987, p.22

The reported experiences of the parents in the classroom are similar to those of the grandparents in the sense that opposition to authority was very limited; the authority of the teacher was rarely questioned. In those cases where the student did not like school or did not get along with the teacher, the solution would invariably be for the student to drop out. In most cases academic ability was not the

only factor which came into play, family conditions also affected their decision.

BETTY: Did you like going to school?
N.L.B.(parent-male): Well I was stupid...I didn't do well in school...at that time your parents didn't tell you to quit school.. but there was no money...you just knew they'd rather you went to work.

One parent who expressed a dislike for school gives us insights into the fact that whether one succeeds or fails in the school system is not based solely on the academic ability of the students. For while this parent dropped out in grade 8, he nevertheless obtained his grade 12 diploma about 20 years later when schooling was not as negative for him and he had the available resources to return.

E.C.(parent-male)...I never liked school...left in grade 8...I was 17 years old That summer I had found myself a job in Yarmouth...then when September came around I just didn't go back to school..I did body work on cars...did that for 20 years...Since then I passed my GEDs giving me my grade 12 diploma...It was okay...I was older and knew better I guess....

Only one parent mentioned the case of a teacher having been fired for using excessive force when punishing a student; the teacher's

authority was considered an extension of the parent's authority over the child. It was not something to be questioned.

R.A.(parent): I liked going to school...I remember it was a warm place...most of the teachers were nuns in those days...they were strict but they liked everyone and they were nice...at recess everyone would play outside...I liked it...it was important to be a good student because if you weren't and they called your parents...you'd get it even worse when you got home...you'd get punished twice...so I was a good student....you can be sure...you respected the teachers in those days...

While most said they had liked school some parents also have memories of being disciplined in the classroom. It would appear that teachers could be as hard on girls as they were with the boys. The two following passages give us a feeling of what it must have been like to be under the teacher's authority. We also see that social informal relations were also a positive aspect of attending school and recess time was as important to them as with students today.

BETTY: Did you like school?

B.C.(parent-male): Well I didn't mind it...We played baseball at every recess and in those days you didn't bring home too much homework...I remember one teacher...she was rugged...I was in grade 2...she asked me for the English word for "sucre"...well I had no idea...she gave me a big smack with the back

of her hand...I was just a little guy...I landed about 7 or 8 feet away...(laugh) I never forgot the word "sugar" after that!...they also used the strap...I never got it but I know others who did.

BETTY: So the teachers could be strict?

B.C.: Oh yes...they wouldn't hesitate to punish us...I remember one time...Hubert à Léger was in my class...the teacher gave us a written math problem...no one knew the answer...so she punished us...no one could go out and play at recess until the problem was solved. After two days of this, Hubert copied the problem on a little piece of paper and he brought it home to ask his mother for the answer...(laugh)...the next day when the teacher asked, Hubert à Leger had the answer...so we were all off the hook (laugh)...he had figured we had been punished enough.³⁹

BETTY: What did you think of the teachers?

J.T.(parent-female): I had teachers that were really strict...I remember this one teacher was strict but she was the best teacher I ever had...I remember once she pulled my ear so hard it tore off a bit...

BETTY: What did you do to deserve that?

J.T.: I don't really remember but I guess I had the "devil in me"...I could talk a lot and giggle...you know "act up"...

39. Hubert à Léger died in 1989. After he quit school in grade 7, he became a fisherman, eventually opened his own fish plant and died a millionaire.

There were some who worked hard to be successful at school but there were also those who resisted the authority of teachers and parents.

P.C.(parent-female): I guess school was o.k....teachers were not like teachers today...at that time teachers were really in control...but I was a tough nut to crack...I didn't want to study...I used to go up to my room...sit at my desk and I would play solitaire instead of studying...it's no mystery why I failed my grade 10...it was my fault...sometimes my own daughter reminds me of that when I get after her to study...I guess she has a point...

These interviews indicate that these Acadian youth of the 50's and 60's while resisting the teacher's control over them, still held a positive attitude towards school. Time outside the school was spent doing the chores at home and very early pressures were on them to start wage labour as soon as possible. For the parents' generation, we can see that more students stayed in school and thus more of them graduated from secondary school than was the case with the grandparents. The more "well to do" students tended to stay in school longer, evidence of the link between class and their educational attainment.

An increase in the level of education did not translate into lessening the grip of patriarchy and a gendered division of labour. In practically all of these households the women were responsible for the domestic chores. Also, those women who were engaged in wage labour did so in the traditional work areas such as nurse, teacher, secretary, and bookkeeper. Although some of the mothers had worked periodically in the local fish plants, they considered themselves full time housewives. The fishing industry in the area relies on the flexibility and availability of the reserve army of labour.

It is important to note that three of these women worked as secretaries for their husband's company. While they didn't see themselves as owners or partners of the company, they were confident that their contribution helped the company to survive and grow. They talked in terms of "teamwork".

In the 18 households where both parents were present, domestic responsibilities were placed on the mother. This was considered by those interviewed as the most natural thing to do, just another fact of life.

Many of the fathers of these students had traditional male jobs as fishermen, carpenters, welders and car mechanics. Those that did become teachers were teaching in senior as opposed to junior high

school. In fact, one of the fathers got the position of principal of this particular high school just shortly before being interviewed.

When one compares the responses of grandparents and parents, although there has been a general rise in affluence in the area and educational levels have also risen, the sexual division of labour in the household remained constant. Also while education was regarded as positive, many of these parents did leave school early in order to earn a living at wage labour or to become successful entrepreneurs. In eight of the twenty households, the father owned his own business or was an independent fisherman. Evidence of this is reflected in that compared to other areas in Nova Scotia, Clare has a relatively strong and diversified economy (Chapter Two).

The school experiences of these parents provides an important link between the grandparents and the Acadian youth who are the focus of this study. Taking the experiences of these three generations helps us to understand how these processes help to insure linguistic and cultural continuity in this Acadian community. Insights into these parents' experiences of school are important in that it provides the social context in which these Acadian youth make sense of their experiences today as social actors.

Now let us look at these Acadian youths' experiences of school, keeping in mind that all of them have reached their graduating year.

Acadian youth's experiences of school

Willis (1977) found that an important dimension of the "lad" culture was a generalized opposition to school authority and to school meaning. By rejecting the school, they were also rejecting mental labour. For the "lads" mental labour was associated with the social inferiority of femininity while manual labour was associated with the social superiority of masculinity (Weis 1989). This emphasis on male superiority led the lads to impose a restricted domestic role on their girlfriends.

Another important element in the lads' culture was their negative attitude toward racial minorities. While this was not discussed at all during the present interviews, discussions with other youth (grade 9 and 10 students) reveal that racial tensions did exist with the black youth of the surrounding communities. This tension is demonstrated by fights at youth dances where white males would object to the black males dancing with "their" girls. The girls, on the other hand, would not be impressed with the show of force and

would blame the Acadian boys of being racist. The Acadian boys who pick fights with Black boys are few. These Acadian boys also have the reputation for drinking and causing trouble. Generally, it seems that race relations among Acadian and Black youth are positive.

Acadian youth do not share the same opposition to school authority as the "lads". This holds true for young Acadian females as well as males. Also there was very little evidence of the girls' use of appearance and "playing up" to the teachers found in Griffin's research. This is not to imply that their analysis of urban youth cultural formations was inaccurate or mistaken but simply that they have little relevance to the lives of these rural Acadian youth.

Reactions to school authority and school meanings

For many of these students, school was a positive part of their lives. Only one of the females expressed a categorical dislike for school but her opposition to school seemed to be mixed in with opposition to parental relations. Living in a middle class household, she held a part-time job and she went to school in her own car.

BETTY: Do you like school?

R.D.(female): I don't like school at all...I would rather go out and work...in grade 10 I switched to 'general' because I was stupid (laugh)...really I knew I could do 'academic' but my parents wanted me to stick with the academic courses...so I took 'general'...I'm really not interested this year.

Others were not as definite in their dislike for school, and therefore expressed their feelings about school in more ambivalent terms.

BETTY: Do you like school?

L.S.(female): I guess I like it...well yes and no...it'll help me to get a job I suppose.

One of the students became a single mother the year before, in grade 11. Having been forced to stay at home for a certain length of time and the parental responsibilities she acquired when she had her little girl did have an effect on her attitude toward school.

L.T.(female): I really didn't like school...but I guess I started liking it in grade 11...well I liked it a bit in grade 9 and 10 but it was mostly to see my friends...but this year I'm really interested in my classes...Last year when I had the baby, I stayed home for 2 months..believe me after that, I really wanted to go back to school..I didn't like staying home all the time...I worked hard and I still passed my year...that really encouraged me.

The boys responded in a similar way. Most liked it or tolerated school because it would help them get a job. The following passage summarizes well the general tone of the boys' responses toward school.

BETTY: How do you like school?

M.L.B.(male): I've never really liked going to school....it's just I never hated school. School was a fact of life...it was something that was part of my life...it was just something that would get me somewhere later in life...I really like physics and chemistry...Sometimes I liked English depending on the novel we had to read...I did not like French or Math even though my French teacher, M.LeBlanc, was the best teacher I have ever had.

Clearly the most positive aspect of school, as in other studies, was the fact that school provided an opportunity to meet friends. For these Acadian youth, this was true for both the male and female students.

BETTY: What do you like about school?

E.L.B.(male) I like classes and that but what I really like is recess...to talk to people and that...discuss what we did the night before or tell jokes...

C.T.(female): I always liked going to school...if one morning I'm so tired I don't feel like going I just think...well at noon I'll be with all my friends...and it gives me a boost to go...that's what I like...I like school...but I really love to be with my friends...at noon they all come in my class and we talk and laugh and all that...

G.T.(female): Generally I liked school...like some days I absolutely didn't want to be there...but other times it was ok...it was worse at the little school(elementary school in Church Point)...I didn't like it much because I was the class nerd...but now it's not so bad.

BETTY: What do you mean you were the class nerd?

G.T.: Well it means I dressed weird...I wore blouses while all the others had T-shirts and jeans...I didn't really care about clothes...what my mother suggested was okay...I didn't really have much taste...

BETTY: You say it got better in high school?

G.T.: Yes...now there are still class nerds...I talk to them now...for awhile I didn't want to be put in that category any more...but now I talk to them...It's fun to talk to friends at recess...

Most of the students expressed having preferred high school to elementary schools because it brought students from all over Clare district and they liked meeting students from other Acadian villages.

C.C.(male): I like school but I liked it better at the high school...at the small school, it was always the same people...here you can meet different people...with different stories to tell...I like it better.

R.G.(male): I really liked coming to the high school compared to the elementary school. I could relate much better with the students here...you had much more choice of who you want to hang around with.

It is interesting to note that some students did feel resentment toward school authority, however, they did so at an earlier age especially during the years they were in grade 9 and grade 10. As was discussed in Chapter Three, the focus here is on the successful students who have made it through the system to grade 12. A recent survey⁴⁰ conducted by the local school board (Conseil Scolaire Clare

40. This survey looked at school drop-outs during a four year period from 1988 to 1992. During this time, 64 students had dropped out of school from a student population of 1371 students in Clare. This gives a drop out rate of 4.6% which is considerably less than the Canadian rate of about 30% (Report of the Select

Argyle School Board, 1992) reveals that most school drop outs occur in grades 7, 8 and 9 (Table 8).

TABLE 8
PUPIL WITHDRAWALS 1990-1991

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARDS	Withdrawals as a % of enrolment by grade				
	JUNIOR (7 to 9)		SENIOR (10 to 12)		TOTAL RATE
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	
Clare-Argyle	10.58%	4.24%	8.40%	6.60%	7.48%
Digby	8.79%	4.95%	9.41%	9.66%	8.03%
Yarmouth	4.04%	1.91%	14.78%	13.95%	8.05%
Halifax	1.24%	1.55%	17.54%	13.87%	9.55%
Province of N.S.	3.08%	1.84%	11.04%	8.92%	6.25%

Source: Report of the Select Committee on Education, Province of Nova Scotia, March 1992, p. 21.

It would appear that by the time these students made it to grade 12, their behaviour and attitude toward school changed considerably.

Committee on Education, Province of Nova Scotia, March 1992, p 86). This lower figure can be at least partially explained by the fact that this particular school board has qualified its definition of "drop out" to exclude those students who have left school to take courses elsewhere such as vocational and other forms of training. The provincial rate, on the other hand, is obtained by looking at the student population who has made it to grade 12 compared to the student population that began in grade 7. This makes comparisons very difficult.

Many expressed a feeling of being more "mature" now, as they got ready to leave school, opposition to school authority was tempered.

One popular form of resistance for both female and male students was to create their own leisure by skipping classes. This was rarely done alone. Usually two or a few friends would decide it was time for a break from the boredom of the classroom. In the sense that this activity often required a system of group co-operation and communication, it can be determined as resistance (Richer 1990). However, only two of the female students admitted to still "skipping" classes. The eight others, while admitting they had done so previously, said that they didn't engage in such behaviour in their final year. Most of the girls had come to the conclusion that "skipping" classes was not worth the "hassle". That is, they preferred avoiding trouble with school authorities and avoiding the time it took to catch up on course notes from classmates who had attended the class they had skipped.

BETTY: Have you ever skipped classes?

L.T.(female) Oh yes, but much more on the junior side...

BETTY: What would you do?

L.T.: Well, the only thing to do was to go outside and have a smoke or go to the library...you couldn't walk in the corridors because they would catch you so usually I

would hang out at the school entrance...This year if you're not in school the principal will call home to see what's the matter..I think they're really getting strict about skipping out.

L.A.(female): Not this year...last year I skipped a lot of times...especially when it was a nice day...but this year not very much...

BETTY: What would you do?

L.A.:...well we went for some ice cream or we went for a smoke behind the tennis courts...or we would walk to my friend's house.

In previous studies the girls' washrooms was shown to be a "place", some special area, where the girls could control their own space (Griffin 1985; McRobbie 1978). For these Acadian girls, this does not appear to be important. Although some make reference to having hidden out in the girls' washrooms instead of going to class, they did so when they were younger. Now they consider this type of behaviour to be quite immature and boring in itself. In fact, many of them can't help but chuckle when they talk about it.

BETTY: Do you ever skip class?

N.L.B.(female): No...not any more...I did a lot in grade 10 but now if I go, it's for a reason. I don't go sit in the girls' washroom any more(laugh)...I used to do it all the time...then I started to think...what's the use in sitting in the washroom instead of the classroom...

(laugh)...but I know some still do that...I saw some there this morning...I mean you can't go outside 'cause someone will see you, right? (laugh)..what can you do?..(laugh)..

Sometimes, students would skip class in order to engage in paid employment. But again this was before grade 12. This working class male student explains that now, in his final year, he only skips class sometimes while in previous years, education did take second place to making money.

G.C.(male): Well sometimes...not really this year...more in grade 9 or 10.

BETTY: What would you do?

G.C.: Well, I'd go to work...work at the herring factory in September and October...I wanted to make money and I could not make money in school...Now I work on week-ends so I don't have to work on week-days.

This student's experience of school holds little resemblance to that of the lads in Willis' study. In grade 11, he had switched from "academic" to "general" courses which meant that he no longer had the option to continue to university after graduation. Yet there seemed to be no resentment or any hint of the "lads'" counter school culture and opposition towards authority. The following passage

provides us a sense of how this student got along with his teachers at school and his comments about his relations with female teachers are very interesting. While there are few female teachers in senior high (this Acadian school reflects the male female ratios of all high schools in general), he felt that having a female teacher made a difference in his class.

BETTY: How did you find your teachers?

G.C.(male student): Teachers are okay.

BETTY: Did you see any difference between male and female teachers?

G.C.: Well, I've learned more with male teachers because female teachers are afraid to talk to us...they think we'll talk back to them... while male teachers talk to us the way we talk to them...they're not afraid of us...I found that to have a good discussion you have to talk to a male teacher...that's the way I think.

BETTY: What do you do if the class is boring?

G.C.: I say nothing...that's just the way I am...I don't dare say anything...but sometimes I talk with my friends in class...but then the teacher tells me to shut up...I know I'm doing something wrong so I stop.

It is interesting to note that while this male student believes that female teachers are intimidated by them, he does not use this to his advantage or try to control the classroom. A conformist's attitude prevails, unlike the "lads" who expressed resentment of institutional control over their use of time, space and dress: " The lads specialise in

a caged resentment which always stops short of outright confrontation...there is a continuous scraping of chairs, a bad tempered 'tut-tutting' at the simplest request and a continuous fidgeting about which explores every permutation of sitting or lying on a chair " (Willis, 1977: 13). The same resentment doesn't seem to be present among Acadian male and female students. This apparent lack of resentment toward the teachers is perhaps due to the close knit nature of this community although few teachers had personal-informal relationships with the students.

When there was trouble with the teacher it was more on a personal or individual level. While most of the students got along with their teachers, some students had serious problems. Although we can understand that students would stand together to confront a teacher, this could hardly compare with the "gang of lads" scenario. The following passages from a male and a female student, both from middle class families, provide insights into these students' conflict with their teachers.

BETTY: How did you like your teachers?

S.C.(male): There's only one teacher I could never get along with...he lives not far from my home and between his family and mine, it's never been good...but the rest of my teachers

were ok...they helped me every time I went for help.

BETTY: Did you see any difference between male teachers and female teachers?

S.C.: It's pretty much the same thing.

They're there to teach...there's not much difference...there are teacher's pets in the class but it's always been like that.

The following female student finally resolves the problem she had with one of her teachers in grade 10. Opposition to the teacher was individual although she was trying to defend her friend. The resolution to this conflict was ultimately "falling in line" and doing her school work. In the end she developed empathy for her teacher. It appears that the positive value placed on graduating overrides any conflict she might have had with teachers. In the following passage we see that while this student came to her friend's defence, obtaining the teacher's recognition and praise of her work went a long way towards creating more positive relations:

L.T.(female): I have had problems with one of my teachers...he was always on my friend's back...when I would stand up for my friend...well I guess my teacher did not like me too much...I didn't like him too much either...it was just a bad situation. For about half the year...he was always picking on me...I decided it couldn't keep going on like that...One day I did really well on a test and he said so in front of all the class...I was so surprised he had

given me a complimer t in front of all the class.. I was shocked...After that, things started to get better between us...I guess doing good on that test that way gave me a boost...I came to realize too that my friend was really out of line...you know...not very reasonable...and that probably the teacher had good reason to do what he did...you know before the year ended that teacher had to take some sick leave from work...his nerves were gone...he actually hit the student...in lab one day he came at my friend with a torch...I think then he saw that he was at the end of his rope.

Again we see that students' resistances to school authority occurs mostly in grade 9 and 10 or still younger in grade 7 or 8. Those who make it to grade 12 still resist school meanings but do so in a less antagonistic manner. As noted earlier, while they skipped classes in grade 9 or 10, now in grade 12 they do not do so. There were few so called "troublemakers" in grade 12, these having perhaps dropped out in junior high. Most of them, in their graduating year, had a very practical approach to schooling. They hoped that graduating would help them to find a good job or go on to university.

It would appear that the biggest fight in the classroom is the students' fight with "boredom". Knowledge for these students is reduced to that knowledge needed to pass the "test"; academic knowledge "for its own sake" is mostly considered a waste of time.

These students are interested in getting good grades and as such are only interested in the facts needed to obtain a good passing mark.

What happens in most cases is that the student struggles to keep awake in class. The following passages reveal that while some students attempt to ask questions or talk with their friends in the classroom most of them just daydream, doodle or read a magazine of some kind. Many of these activities are engaged in both privately and individually therefore it is difficult to determine whether these students engage in resistance or accommodation.

Class participation has often been seen as controlled by the male students [Willis (1977) Griffin (1985) Baker (1985) Gaskell (1987) Hill (1989)]. The physical and verbal aggression displayed by the male students asserted their dominance. Willis (1977) points out that in their relationships with and their attitudes towards girls, working class boys display a sense of superiority over girls. McRobbie draws attention to this as she states:

One striking feature of Willis's study is how unambiguously degrading to women is the language of aggressive masculinity through which the lads kick against the oppressive structures they inhabit- the text is littered with references of the utmost brutality. (McRobbie, 1980: 41)

For the Acadian students in this study, class participation does not seem to be divided along gender lines. According to these students, girls are just as likely to "act up" in class as the boys. Also while it would appear that the teacher controls the classroom and while there is rarely a breakdown of order, the students do engage in behaviours over which the teacher seems to have little control.

BETTY: What do you do when a class is boring?

N.L.B.(female-academic): Sometimes we talk a little amongst ourselves...sometimes I'll write a letter to a friend...sometimes I read a magazine I find in the desk or something...other times I just "tune off"...I remember in grade 8 it was more rowdy...now it's not like that at all.

R.G.(male-academic): Normally I daydream... Sometimes for certain classes my attention span is very short..(laugh)...I just mentally tune out...that's what most of the students do...junior high was worse than now...

L.S.(female-general): I doodle...when a class is boring it makes me sleepy. I just try and keep awake...I try and think of other things...but I do try and stay interested as much as I can.

C.C.(male - academic): Well I try to listen but...well in my English class, there are these guys who sit next to me...these guys talk...their books are closed...they arm wrestle...stuff like that...the teacher can't do anything about it...he tells them many times during class to stop...but it doesn't work.

BETTY: Do classes get boring?

J.C.(female - general): Yes sometimes it's boring...When they take a long time to explain something...and you can't ask questions or anything...if you can't have a discussion it gets kinda boring...

BETTY: What do you do then?

J.C.: I just stay there and listen, because if you don't listen you're going to miss something that's important for a test...and when you get a test...you don't understand and you don't do as well as you could have if you had listened...sometimes I "tune out"...but then I come back and start taking notes to keep me awake.. (laugh).

Only one of the students had ever been thrown out of a class for having made fun of the teacher. Most of the time he just sat there or "maybe sleeps a little". One other male student, a very smart student who does very well academically explains that he is rarely bored in class. He, like most others, does not try and disrupt the class.

M.L.B.(male - academic): If it's really boring...I'll take notes...or I'll read

something...it doesn't really happen often that it's so boring I can't listen any more...If I'm bored it means everyone is bored because it takes a lot for me to be bored.. (laugh)...then the teacher usually tries to do something...change the subject...raise or lower his voice...tries something.

Conventional wisdom on youth subcultures (Hall and Jefferson, 1976; Willis, 1977; Hebdige, 1976) has focussed on the male overt acts of rebellion such that resistance came to mean aggressive or disruptive behaviour.

The behaviour of both Acadian males and females (daydreaming, reading magazines, doodling, etc.) while not similar to the aggressiveness of the "lads" should not be dismissed as insignificant. The transfer of meanings from school to student is not a simple process. Richer (1990) guards us against a too simplistic model of socialization. He argues that even in cases where there are many shared cultural elements between the dominant culture and the youth subculture, the bureaucratic nature of the school and the age difference between the staff and the students can produce resistance (Richer, 1990: 94). In this case, these Acadian youth are strongly linked to the school staff which is mostly Acadian and as such the source of resistance is more one of generation rather than class.

According to Richer's typology, the resistance engaged in by these Acadian youth may be characterized as informal passive resistance (Richer, 1990: 96) and has limited potential to bring about social change. However, although the potential for real change is lower with this type of resistance, these Acadian youth do respond as active social agents. All the male and female students in this study questioned the lack of interesting opportunities in the school (most of the courses were boring as far as they were concerned). This did not, however, lead them to challenge the organization of the school but rather to make the best of what was available.

The meaning of school in highly utilitarian terms

The fact that these Acadian students do their homework and do not tend to engage in the overt rejection of school meaning and content does not necessarily mean that they are more involved in the schooling process or that they hold different values of school achievement than do the "lads" in Willis' study. However, what is significant is that Acadians do not value the specific and overt negation of school meanings in the same way the "lads" do. As one of the teachers put it:

C.P.(female teacher): You always have to justify what you do in class...they don't necessarily accept that the program is the best for them...we very often have to make the link with the utility of the course with their own lives...we have to explain that it's worthwhile for them.

The informal active resistance engaged in by Willis' "lads" (the exaggeration of masculinity, laughing and mocking humour, etc.) was not prevalent among these Acadian youth. This might at least be due partially to the fact that these students were all in their graduating year. Willis' "lads" were non-academic working class students who were in the second half of their final year. Although the age of the students was perhaps similar to those of these Acadian students, the "lads" had been chosen specifically because of their membership in some kind of an oppositional culture (Willis, 1977: 4). It is therefore important to emphasize that the theoretical considerations should reflect these different realities.

As we saw earlier in this chapter, the most positive aspect of school is that it is above all a place to meet friends or to play sports for these Acadian students. That is to say, it is a place where one can pursue other activities not related to the structured learning process. Generally, however, these youth placed a more positive value on

mental labour than was the case in other studies (Willis 1977). School was positive in the sense that it would provide better job opportunities later on.

Most of the students interviewed wished to continue their education either in university or vocational school. Raymond Breton has noted that "the presence of post-secondary institutions in the community is positively related to the secondary and post secondary plans of boys, but only to the secondary plans of girls" (Breton, 1972: 226). While the presence of Université Sainte Anne and its impact on the career decisions of Acadian boys and girls is beyond the scope of this work, there appears to be a similar tendency in this Acadian community. One can not, however, ignore that six of the ten girls had in fact made plans to attend university. This could suggest the possibility of Université Sainte Anne having some impact on girls' post secondary plans also. Of the twenty students interviewed only two female students (one from a middle class family and one from a working class family) wished to find jobs upon leaving school.⁴¹ However, for most of these Acadian students of both working and middle class locations, there is less value placed on manual labour jobs

41. Both these girls are now working at the jobs they had planned for themselves. One is a clerk at a grocery store and the other is a kitchen helper at the university cafeteria.

than was found in earlier studies. It is important to note that thirteen, or two-thirds, of the twenty students planned to go to university (7 males and 6 females). Those that did not wish to pursue university studies planned to get manual jobs, jobs in the trades such as mechanics which require further training. In this study, being working class did not necessarily mean the seeking of a working class job. In one instance, a male student from a working class family planned to join the military to become a parachutist.

Studies of girls' occupational aspirations [Marini (1978) Baker (1985) Griffin (1985)] find that girls seek occupations that conform to societal expectations of female gender roles. However, most of the girls in this study were seeking future employment in the business sector which is an area not normally considered as traditionally female. One of the girls wants to work in a crime lab of a police department. If they actually go through with their future plans, these girls have a good chance of having the financial resources needed to negotiate power relations within their own household later on. Only one of the female students wished to become a nurse while another wanted to take accounting at the vocational level. It is interesting to see how this particular female student from a working class family articulates

how she arrived at her career plan and how her plans were linked to her relationships at home.

J.C.(female student): At first I wanted to be a truck driver because I was always going around with my father in his truck...then I wanted to be a cop...then a hairdresser...I changed my mind because there were already too many hairdressers around...I liked accounting...so I'm going for that...

Most of the girls talk of actual careers, often non-traditional ones. The girls in the "general" (non-university oriented) classes are aware of their limited opportunities however, are thinking in terms of finding jobs usually considered to be traditional ghetto jobs such as food service worker or store clerk.

The education system tends to position male and female students according to both their class and gender (Gaskell 1987). Indeed the school system has been exposed as a means of reproducing existing divisions and inequalities in society rather than a system which creates equality. For some time now feminists have insisted that sexism is part of the politics of education and that girls are being moulded to occupy a specific place in society (Spender and Sarah 1989).

Despite attempts to make the educational system's sexism more transparent and ultimately to make it disappear, sexist attitudes are still part of the system. In all fairness to this particular Acadian high school, girls and boys are to some extent encouraged to take non-traditional classes such that more and more girls are taking drafting and more and more boys are taking cooking and family living. As one administrator puts it:

BETTY: Do you think that girls and boys receive equal treatment in the school?

C.P.(female vice-principal and teacher): Yes, girls and boys are treated equally... now the possibility is there if they want to...girls are not refused in industrial arts and boys can go in family living and some do...As administrators we try and provide the opportunity for choice for both girls and boys...although it's not perfect but we are trying to schedule classes to encourage this as much as possible.

When talking to teachers, they saw little difference in the abilities of students by gender. Both the Science teacher and the French teacher believed that "interest in the course" had greater impact on the success of a student as opposed to gender qualities. They saw little difference between girls and boys with respect to work done in the classroom or general comprehension. Unfortunately, more

access to school records would have been needed in order to see if students' actual grades reflect these teachers' views.

However, while there is no official written school policy which encourages different treatment of girls and boys, the everyday things that get done during the school hours have the same results. When asked about how the educational system treats girls, one teacher remarked about how the "old" ideas about girls and boys are still around.

BETTY: Do you think that girls and boys receive equal treatment in the school?

D.M.(male science teacher): No, I don't think the system treats girls and boys in the same way...even myself without even thinking...If I have a box of books to bring to the lab or a microscope or anything at all...I rarely ask the girls to help me...automatically I'll ask the boys...sometimes I'll think of it and I make a conscious effort to ask girls...sometimes the girls themselves will raise the issue and remind me...(laugh)...but we tend to think that something that requires something physical...automatically you think boys will do it...if there's a blackboard to clean..ah...then I'll ask the girls...(laugh)...it's true...we still have those prejudices...and I think it's general in the system.

It was in the discussions with the school guidance counsellor that one can see that sexual stereotypes are alive and well in this particular school system.

A.T.(guidance counsellor): Well we try here at the school to counsel the students according to their abilities and their tastes...Well with girls we often talk of work having to do with children...secretarial work, social work or some kind of work in public relations...If some girls are good in sciences or show some ability in the sciences, we talk of becoming pharmacists, or lab technicians or nursing...Lately these are the careers that have been more popular among the girls. With boys we usually discuss different trades...mechanic...electrician....if they're good in the sciences we talk of engineering...things like that...

Yet it is encouraging that despite these blatant sexist counselling attitudes, some female students in this graduating class sought careers in less traditional sectors such as business and accounting. Female students are resisting a system which despite many good intentions still reproduces social inequalities of class, gender as well as ethnicity. While the school system is a major site of social reproduction, other influences originating from the women's movement through various

sources like the media, especially television and radio, are also making an impact.

School relations have changed over time. As we have seen with the parents' and grandparents' experiences with schooling, students today appear to have a more open and friendly relationship with their teachers. This point was also raised by the teachers themselves:

BETTY: Do you feel that the school and teaching have changed since you became a teacher?

D.M.(male teacher): Well I've been teaching for 22 years now...the methods of teaching science is essentially the same...content has changed...new discoveries are made...but the method is about the same...The students have changed...there's no doubt about it...they're much more open...they are not scared of giving you their opinion...also Monday mornings they'll sit next to you and they're not ashamed to talk about their week-end and their parties and what they did...A few years ago they would hide in a corner somewhere to talk about that kind of thing...It's easier to know them and how they think.

BETTY: Does this create discipline problems?

D.M.: Oh you know...the idea of student raising his hand to speak and things like that...it's done a bit, if you really insist on it, but in general they just ask what they want to ask...in grade 12, generally they are very reasonable...there's very little problems with discipline...

The School and Acadian Identity

The position of schools and the processes of social life revolving around the school have been explored in order to determine how ethnic social inequalities are produced and held in place in the educational process (Mannette 1986; Weis 1989; Walker and Barton 1989; Vallee 1982). While there is the appearance of equality for all, social inequalities of ethnicity are being reproduced. As was stated earlier, this Acadian high school operates within a dominant English school system. The curriculum still tends to limit information on Acadians to a few paragraphs of history from 1755. Although there have been attempts⁴² to redress this situation, this school still tends to give scheduling priority to courses taught in English. Also very few, in fact, only one male French teacher, openly objects to the fact that Acadian students are forced by the provincial department of education to take an extra English course in order to graduate.

The students are actually receiving contradictory messages. On the one hand cultural groups are encouraging them to keep their French language and on the other hand, Acadian teachers and school

42. The school now uses a new social studies text entitled Les Maritimes: trois provinces à découvrir in which the lives and experiences of present day Acadians are an integral part of the text.

administrators, especially through the school curriculum, suggest that English is "better" especially if they want to continue their education in an English university. As the education process tends to reproduce structurally existing social relations of inequality, these students and teachers seem to find themselves caught in this process.

This contradictory message needs to be resolved as soon as possible in view of the fact that these students perceived their Acadian identity predominantly in terms of their French language. If the school continues to send out the message that French is second best, this institutional site will have a negative impact on these students' construction of Acadianess.

It is very difficult to understand how people respond to ethnic labels. Vallee argues that all too often researchers oversimplify the issue as if there was a fixed connection between a particular label and a particular person (Vallee, 1982: 129). Identities should thus be perceived as being "fluid" such that one may feel very conscious of being Acadian vis-a-vis a Quebecois yet feel strongly francophone vis-a-vis Anglophone Nova Scotians. Furthermore the same person may feel strongly Canadian vis-a-vis Americans. While Vallee's definition of ethnicity refers to people who "share some sense of peoplehood or consciousness of kind" (Chapter One, p.17), a person can see herself

differently depending on the context. In this study, therefore, it is very important to keep in mind the fact that the researcher was an Acadian interviewing Acadian students thus influencing their definitions of themselves as Acadians.

When these students were asked directly about their Acadianness, only two of the students responded that it did not matter much to them. The others expressed positive views of what it meant for them to be Acadian and the importance of keeping their culture alive. The following statements give us a sense of the elements such as language, food, common ancestors and a feeling of belonging as composing their concept of culture.

Betty: What does being Acadian mean to you?
C.T.(female student): Well.. I like our language ..our Acadian language..I like it when I'm with all my friends..it's like we have something in common with everyone around here..Being Acadian is also having an identity that's different from everyone else so..we're not just Canadian but we're also Acadians..I like stuff that's Acadian although I don't eat rapure...Some people will ask me if I'm sure I'm an Acadian..(laugh)..but I like other things like the parade every year and the Acadian festival...I don't think much of the Deportation..I mean I learned the date it happened and a bit more in history class at school...but I think it just proves that we're

tough..you know..we were deported and we came back..I think there'll always be Acadians.

G.T.(female student) I don't know..I like our culture..it's not the fanciest thing.. but I like it..I find that we're more friendly around here.. maybe that's not part of our culture..In Clare we're tight knit you know.. it's hard to put your finger on it.

R.G.(male student): Yes being Acadian is important.. BETTY: How is it important?
R.G.: I don't know..you stand out from the rest of the country.. Our culture is different from the other cultures....Being Acadian is being bilingual, that's the most important part of being Acadian...It's our history...Acadians were more inclined to make peace...They didn't want to fight...Being deported was a shame but at least they didn't die. Now, we still have to fight to keep our culture alive...to stay Acadians...I don't mean to make war.. but we want to stay Acadian.

In this chapter we have discussed the social relations of schooling experienced by young Acadian male and female students over time. In general these social relations were more of a school-resistant nature rather than a school rejecting nature displayed by the "lads". We have kept in mind the different social context in which the "lads" in Willis' study lived (urban-working class) as opposed to the

Acadian youth (rural-middle and working class). We have also argued that the responses of both Acadian female and male students represented important departures from existing studies of youth cultures (Willis 1977; McRobbie 1980; Hall and Jefferson 1976). Also the resistances and the accommodations to school authority manifested by both male and female students were not very different. This is also a departure from other studies (Stanworth 1983; Spender 1982; Weis 1989; McRobbie and Garber 1983; Baker 1985). These Acadian youth showed differences especially concerning the "lads" emphasis on the male superiority of manual labour (Willis 1977) and the girls' use of femininity as a means of getting control in the classroom (McRobbie 1978).

While practically all these students had a positive outlook on schooling, both female and male students tended to view education in highly utilitarian terms. Education was useful to get a job and their resistance to school authority did not endanger their chances of graduating.

Working from a culturalist perspective (Chapter One) which is reflexive and attempts to restore human agency in social relations, it appears that these Acadian youth see through the injustices and inequalities of the dominant hegemonic educational system but seem

not to translate this insight into outright rebellion. It could be that those who might be expected to rebel have already dropped out of school although the small number of dropouts compared to other school systems tends to minimize this aspect.

We will now look at how these Acadian youth spend their leisure time and how this has changed over the years. We will see how their spare time has been limited differently for different generations.

Chapter 6

RELATIONSHIPS AT LEISURE: FRIENDSHIPS AND HAVING A GOOD TIME

In the previous two chapters, relationships in two formal settings were examined, the home and the school, that is, relationships in an adult-controlled world. We will now turn to informal settings, that is to say, those settings wherein peers tend to be the arbiters of values, attitudes and behaviours. These are leisure-type settings.

The concept of leisure, as discussed in Chapter One, can be problematic and should not be taken for granted. In capitalist societies the notion of leisure is a concept usually referred to in terms of non-work where an individual can relax or rest in order to be able to return to waged labour. Shaw argues appropriately for a move away from a narrow interpretation of the leisure/work relationship to a conception of leisure as experienced during almost any type of activity in which relaxation, freedom of choice, intrinsic motivation and lack of evaluation are important elements (Shaw 1985).

Much of the research on youth subcultures has focused on youth's leisure activities (Hebdige 1979). More specifically, these studies have concentrated on the leisure activities of white working class males. Due to this obvious male bias, what was considered

important was to gain insights into how the "lads" lived their social relations out on the street or in shopping malls. (see Hall and Jefferson, 1976 for review).

Feminists have drawn attention to this partial and inadequate view of leisure among youth (McRobbie and Garber 1975; McRobbie 1980; Griffin 1985). As already discussed in Chapter One of this dissertation, social relations do not only occur on the "street" but in the home as well.

In the case of rural youth, we must ask questions which will help us understand how they make sense of their everyday lives. Our understanding of the social meanings constructed by Acadian youth is also very important for our understanding of social life in this Atlantic province and in Canada, generally. Previous studies, having concentrated on urban youth, provide little insight into the meanings and social constructions of youth in rural areas.

Previous studies of youth subcultures have focused on leisure and how this played an important part in the lives of urban young men and women. What leisure means for Acadian male and female youth in this particular area of Nova Scotia should not be measured in terms that are only relevant to urban youth.

In this chapter, we will attempt to present, as faithfully as possible, the part leisure plays in the lives of these Acadian youth. Having included both female and male youth, we will see the similarities between the two with respect to how they spend their leisure time. The point will be made, as in Chapter Two, that Acadian youth's ways of seeing are different than that of youth noted in other studies.

Acadian youth's experiences reflect more a middle class mediation in the sense that they have little access to "street culture" as described in other studies (Willis 1977) where there is strong street culture in working class urban districts.

The commercial aspects of youth culture has some relevance for these Acadian youth although its influence does not appear to be very strong. This is very different from the findings of Hebdige (1976) for example who focused on "style" as a central element in the social construction of subculture. According to Hebdige, through "style", practically any object could be made to carry secret meanings and particularly meanings which expressed a form of resistance. In fact style was considered to be an essential form of resistance. What this present research reveals quite clearly is the fact that Acadian youth engage in modes of resistance that are very different than that of the

"punks", "mods", and "Teds" of Britain who resist through style, make-up etc.

Resistance (as discussed in Chapter one, p.13), refers to the way in which people respond to and oppose domination which allows for the possibility for social change. For Acadians, resistance to parent and anglophone domination is expressed less in terms of stylistic expressions of aggression and frustrations but more in terms of friendship groups, and beer drinking parties. Unlike most studies which deal with youth subcultures which have tight boundaries, that is to say, distinctive shapes and engage in particular activities or more spectacular forms of expression, Acadian youth are much more loosely bound together. The respondents in this study indicate a strong link with the parent culture. This also becomes an important factor in shaping social meaning in the everyday lives of these Acadian youth. The spectacular rejection of the hegemonic order (Hebdige 1979) by which sub-cultural meanings become distinct forms of expression seem considerably less significant for these Acadian youth as compared for example to the "punks" and "mods".

Also, it is important to keep in mind that leisure time for these youth is not unlimited. Time spent at school and to a lesser extent time spent doing chores at home and curfews set by parents take

away from their leisure time. Also, the fact that many of these grade 12 students work part-time limits further their leisure time.

It is necessary to look at how these youth spend their leisure time. We need to gain insights into the form leisure takes and how it is constrained and enhanced by paid employment. As in Chapters One and Two, it is our intention to keep in mind the dynamic quality of culture and to investigate the social constructions of culture today and in previous generations. It will thus be important to look at the responses of these youth's parents and grandparents and how they also lived their leisure time in order to understand their meaning of "having fun".

Working from a culturalist perspective, we have argued that people produce and reproduce their own culture. Looking at the experiences of grandparents and parents allows us to gain insights into the processes of cultural production over time. It allows us to trace cultural continuity despite changing economic times. Leisure activities of grandparents and parents occurred within close proximity of their household. In view of fact that it was very common for people of the same family to settle within the same village, leisure activities among villagers was also an important factor in encouraging and maintaining close kinship ties within the village.

Stepping back: how grandparents and parents experienced leisure

Consistently, during interviews conducted with these individuals, over three generations, discussions of leisure time elicited a positive reaction. The smiles on their faces and the twinkle in their eyes, especially for the grandparents, demonstrated very well that indeed leisure was a good time to remember.

The material conditions have changed considerably from the time these grandparents lived their youth. The absence of electricity, television sets and VCRs in the home, restricted their activities when compared to today's youth. This meant also that without cars, mobility between villages was also restricted thus limiting interaction among youth from different villages. Hence, neighbours were important as a source of support and amusement. This also contributed to enhance a sense of togetherness within the villages.

As already discussed in Chapter Four, there was very little money in circulation at that time and therefore there were very few commercial leisure goods that one could buy. As a result these grandparents in their youth had no choice but to "make" their own fun.

This was done during social gatherings at special occasions such as weddings, baptisms or funerals. Many grandparents talked of "des quiltines" or "bees" where all the village people would help a neighbour build or repair a barn or house. Sometimes they would even move houses from one village to another. In the following passage, the words of this grand-father are quoted at length in order to give the full flavour of his thoughts on the cohesiveness of the community. For him a "good time" was closely linked to a feeling of togetherness, a community in which everyone could be seen helping out each other. "Get togethers" were simple yet are remembered with warm nostalgia:

BETTY: What would you do in those days to have a good time?

L.T.(grand-father): There was really nothing much to do except go and make noise at people's windows at night ...(laugh)...we would play little tricks on people not only at Halloween you know...that was our fun...we wouldn't break anything ...It's not the same fun at all...today, their idea of a good time is to climb into a car and go parking somewhere or to go to the club...or to a camp...for us we would gather at a house and make a big pot of soup...or make some fudge...at that time you could get a big bag of sugar for \$.50 We would make some fudge and others would try and steal it ..(laugh) ...You see we would put it outside to cool down and we needed a watchman to make sure no one would steal it...At that time the only booze we had was alcohol bootlegged from the islands of St.

Pierre and Miquelon...it came in five gallon cans...boy it was potent stuff...you didn't drink much of that.(laugh)...Others would make "buck beer" with yeast cake...My parents didn't drink...maybe sometimes...like at 'quiltines' to haul wood or to haul a house or something ...One time it took 100 pairs of oxen to move a house...You know, that house is still standing in St. Alphonse...That was quite a sight...people worked together then and there would be a good time.

A grandmother from Saulnierville Station remembers that simply going down the road to see the train pass by was a Sunday night ritual. She recalls that singing and playing music was very much a part of her fun time with friends. These friends, of course, being from the same village.

M.G.(grandmother): There were no dances at that time...what we used to do on Sunday nights is go and see the night train go by...you see there were a lot of men in the village who worked on the railway...they would take the night train on Sunday night and be gone all week...then we would walk back...we'd be a whole gang of us...we had fun...In those days we would go in houses...there were pianos or organs in almost every house back then...We would sing and play music...and we had fun that way...(laugh) happy as anything...

BETTY: How about alcohol? Would you drink a little?

M.G.: No...there was no liquor..not our gang...there were a lot of young people around...there were big families...so we stayed

in the village...There were no dances, except on special occasions...we didn't think of dances because it didn't exist like today...but we thought we were having a good time...

As noted earlier (cf. pp. 46-49), the influence and control of the Catholic Church was an important part of the everyday lives of earlier generations of Acadian youth. Most of the grandparents remember this control as simply a fact of life of those days. Others remember the Church's control with bitterness and resentment.

BETTY: What would you do for a good time?
M.T.(grandmother): We couldn't do anything...What could you do when everything was forbidden by the Church...you couldn't go to the pictures and you couldn't dance...a boyfriend could come and visit but he had to leave before 10 o'clock....a boy who stayed longer than that was considered a "good for nothing".

Records show that from the priest's point of view, Acadians were far from being the desired obedient flock of sheep. Boudreau (1989) in his study of the papers written by Father Sigogne has found many references in which this parish priest chastises both young and old for their excesses and debauchery : "Je vois les enfants oisifs, les jeunes gens occupés à la promenade, fréquentant les veillées; les vieux

qui ont le tems de les souffrir faire et de s'en passer, n'est-ce pas là une grande vérité malheureusement trop évidente dans cette paroisse...vous trouvez du tems, jeunes et vieux, pour le libertinage et la folie."(National Archives of Canada, Vol.2, MG 23, c-10). The harsh words of the parish priest indicate that church control was far from total control. However, the response of the Acadian youth would be to avoid as much as possible public signs of leisure and having "fun" for the more private place of the home. This was the case for all the grandparents regardless of gender and class position.

For the next generation of youth (the student's parents), leisure took a somewhat different form as these are linked to the changes in their material conditions of life. Basic commodities of life such as running water in the homes and electricity made life easier for them. The automobile also did much to increase interaction between different villages. This increase in mobility was reflected in their leisure activities.

Although friendly get-togethers were still very popular, there were now more public commercial forms of leisure activities which took youth outside the home. In the 50's and 60's, youth could go skating at the ice rink in Church Point or roller skating in Little Brook. There was also bowling in the area and on special occasions for those

with more resources, there was a movie theatre in the town of Yarmouth (the nearest town about 45km away). There were also a few restaurants in the area where youth would gather after a dance for a snack before going home.

Those who came from poorer families who lacked the resources of the more affluent families continued to meet in homes close by. The parish activities during the summer months were also a highlight of their vacation time. The following passages are expressed by parents from working class families, whose own fathers worked as labourers in a logging camp or on a fishing boat respectively.

BETTY: What would you do for a good time?
L.C.(mother): Well we would have gathered next door to play some music...sing...eat popcorn and chips...that kind of stuff.. We had a lot of fun...now you don't have parties without liquor or beer...

BETTY: What did you do for a good time?
N.L.B.(father): Well in those days they opened up the roller skating rink and we would go there sometimes...In the summer there was always a parish picnic(bazaar) somewhere...each parish would take a turn having a picnic to raise money for the parish...We didn't have any money, but we had much more fun that they have now...now you go to a dance at the Legion and you need \$100 to enjoy yourself...When I was younger you didn't travel...you were on foot...in

summertime we would go swimming in the nearby brook...there was always something to do...

In other more middle class homes, youth would have access to the car or parents would arrange transportation for them.

BETTY: What did you do for a good time?

P.C.(mother): Well we would go to dances once in a while...and we would go skating every Sunday night...my dad had arranged to have a school bus pick up the kids who wanted to go skating Sunday nights...

R.M.D.(mother): We would go to dances at the parish hall on Friday nights and Sunday night we would go skating. At that time we had to be in by 11 o'clock...I started going out when I was in grade 9...After I had my licence...I could always have the car...my parents pretty well let us do what we wanted.

Religion was still very much a part of these parents' lives when they were younger. In a sense Church, for them, was not only something one did on Sundays.

BETTY: Did you have problems with your parents when you started going out?

L.C.(mother): No, not really...It still went well because I knew what I was allowed to do and I didn't ask for more...I couldn't wait to be sixteen...to have my driver's licence...my freedom...Dad would let me have the truck...but there was still an hour I was to come home...there were certain places I wasn't supposed to go...and mostly I would not go to these places...but there were other places, sometimes...we went to take a peek..(laugh)....you could go see you didn't have to participate eh?(laugh)...mostly we would just go a bunch of girls and have fries at the restaurant....Every first Friday of every month, we would go to mass and confession. We would do this for nine months in a row for special graces... and we did it...my friends and I...(laugh) now it's hard to bring my children to mass on Sunday...When I was younger, religion really was the force behind doing good or bad...now it's less religion and more the laws of society guiding them today...it makes a difference.

Leisure time enjoyed by grandparents and parents was a collective experience. The Church's control over many public forms of leisure activities was resented and to a certain point resisted. The form of their leisure was closely related to the cohesiveness of their community or their village. In the next section, we will look at how their children experience leisure today.

Present youth's experience of leisure

What do our sample of young males and females do for a good time today? Well the most common activity is getting together a group of friends for a party at a camp.⁴³ While their parents played music and their grandparents enjoyed making fudge, these Acadian youth like to gather together, talk, laugh and drink beer. They do so not in homes but rather in more neutral places (away from parents) most often at their parent's camp or cottage. This holds true for both female and male youth of working or middle class families because although not all youth's parents can afford a cottage by the lake or ocean, there is always one person in the group who does. These Acadian youth are less likely to structure their friendship groups according to class lines and more likely to choose friends through kinship networks and those youth living in the same village.

Young women's leisure time activities did not vary significantly from young men's leisure time. Both regarded time spent with friends as being very important. Other research has found that female friendship groups meet after school in each other's houses, usually in

43. In this community and other french speaking regions of Canada, the word camp is often used to mean a cabin or modest dwelling used on a vacation or outing. Other parts of Canada would call it "the cottage" or "the place in the country".

the girl's bedroom for privacy. There they would play music, experiment with make-up or clothes or just talk about teachers, boys, school and sex (Griffin 1985). In this way, the girls' friendship group was seen to be different from the larger looser "gang of lads" which has been considered as the basis of youth cultures (Hall and Jefferson 1976).

In this Acadian community, girls' leisure took relatively the same form as their male counterparts. In fact the similarities are striking. While "best friends" would be of the same sex, very often "the gang" was composed of both male and female friends. Although it was not true in all cases, for most of these youth "best" friendships lasted over several years for both the males and females. Because of this, now that they are in their final year at school, the prospect of separating from their friends is difficult:

BETTY: Would you talk to me about your friends?

C.T.(female): Yes, I have lots of friends...but my best friend Charmaine...we've been best chums since grade 1...Next year she's going to stay in Clare and go to Université Sainte-Anne and I'm going to Université de Moncton...so we'll be separated for the first time...but she's going to come and visit and when I come home we'll see each other too...we're going to try it.

BETTY: What do you do in your spare time?
C.C.(male): It doesn't matter what I do as long as I'm with my friends....We often get together at a friend's house and play music...these days every Friday night we go to Belleville (a village about 60 km away) to go meet girls...

BETTY: What do you talk about?

C.C.: We talk about girls.

BETTY: What do you talk about?

G.T.(Female) Well if we're just my friend and me..we just like to talk about anything...plans..boys..music..stuff like that..

As could be expected, boys like to talk about girls and girls like to talk about boys. Four out of the ten girls interviewed had steady boyfriends and four of the boys interviewed had steady girlfriends. In Griffin's study, if a young woman started going out with a "steady" boyfriend, she gradually lost touch with her girlfriends, often at the request of her boyfriend. In the case of the boys, however, the "lads" would continue to meet their friends on a regular basis (Willis 1977). Among Acadian youth this does not appear to be the case. While having a steady friend does cut into leisure time spent with other friends, in general, it seems to have a mutual effect on the part of both partners.

BETTY: Would you talk to me about your friends?

S.C.(male): Well now that I have a girlfriend, I'm mostly with her...Sometimes I'll go fishing on Saturdays with my friends...but I'm mostly with her...We go to a movie or watch TV at her place...or just drive around...Before I went out with her, I would go with my friends and get drunk...but not now..

T.C.(male): Now I have a girl friend...I'd rather go see her..."voir la girl".

BETTY: Would you talk to me about your friends?

J.C.(female): Well, I have a boy friend...sometimes we go to his aunt's place and watch TV because she likes to have company...Sometimes we just listen to music or we'll go to Yarmouth or to the rink...the usual places, nothing special.

BETTY: Where did you meet?

J.C.: We met at the fish plant last summer.

BETTY: What do you consider to be a good time?

J.C.: It's just being together...meeting my friends, maybe eating out or going to a movie...stuff like that.

It is interesting to note also that while some boys had all male friendship groups and some girls had all female small friendship groups, most of these Acadian youth were part of friendship groups composed of both males and females. Both seemed very important to them:

BETTY: Do you go out with just girls?
C.T.(female): Oh no there are guys in our group too...we laugh a lot...we go to yarmouth shopping...eat out...not really dates...just going out together and have fun...I feel at ease with them...that's what I like...
BETTY: Do you have a 'special friend'?
C.T.: No boyfriend...like in love....no...just chums...I'm going to Québec this summer and then to Moncton for four years...there's no sense in getting a boyfriend around here...not now anyway...

BETTY: Do you have a 'special friend'?
G.T.(female): Yes, I have a boyfriend...I've been going with him for two months now...at first I didn't like him...but now I like him...he makes me laugh...he has a ton of energy...he doesn't drive...that's a problem so we'll just stay at home and watch TV.
BETTY: What about other friends?
G.T.: Well, if we're just my best friend Nicole and I...I just like to talk...talk about anything...plans, music etc...With others we go to the duck reserve where you can park there and have a few beers and no one sees you. I go to the 'Bunny'⁴⁴ too...it depends if we can get a ride and if I'm not working. I have my beginner's licence...I can't wait to have my driver's licence!

44. The "bunny" refers to a place called the "Bunny Lodge". This is simply a small camp or cottage in an isolated area where youth meet to have parties. Two other similar places exist; the "Fraggle Rock" and the "High Rubber Boot".

Only one of the boys seemed to have a clear stand on where his girlfriend stood in relation to his own particular priorities. This male youth saw the time spent with his girlfriend as the time left after sports and school work. While he wanted to make it clear that he thought his girlfriend was special, other things were more important to him.

BETTY: Would you talk to me about your friends and what you do with them?

M.L.B.(male): Well you see I'm very sports minded and most of my friends are too...so we'll play sports...tennis...volleyball cycling...Sometimes I go to parties but not very often.

BETTY: Do you have a girl friend?

M.L.B.: Yes I have a girl friend...she gets bored sometimes if I talk too much about cycling...You see it's this way...I have team practices...nothing comes before my practices after all the team is important. Then I have my school work....after that I have time for my 'petite amie'...but most of my friends are on the team with me.

BETTY: What do you think about drinking or taking drugs?

M.L.B.: Well I've never taken any drugs and I don't like beer...I don't see any reason to drink....I know that drinking affects your body, I know because I learned it in science class...I prefer not to drink...and it's expensive too...I got sick once...that was no fun.

Clearly, the most popular form of having fun was the time spent with friends. This was often coupled with "drinking" as opposed to doing other kinds of drugs. Although drinking was more popular among the boys, most of the girls admitted to drinking sometimes and at least two girls admitted having taken drugs before but now preferred to drink alcohol.

L.T.(female): ..I've taken drugs but nothing like cocaine or crack...I'd rather drink alcohol...I've seen some of my friends on drugs and some really don't know what they're doing...It scares me...I had a friend addicted to cocaine...after a while he wasn't my friend any more...He was like another person...It's sad. Especially now with my own baby...it makes me think...if I took drugs what would happen to my baby...it's not worth it...

G.T.(female): I joined the CJP⁴⁵ to go to Halifax for the "big party"...that's fun...everyone together...having a few beers...it was a good time...

Previous research (Dugas-LeBlanc 1987) on Acadian adolescents shows that only a small percentage of Acadian youth take drugs but a

45. Conseil Jeunesse Provincial is the youth section of the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (F.A.N.E.).

greater percentage of Acadian youth seem to consume alcohol compared to other youth in Nova Scotia and Canada (Table 9).

TABLE 9
PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH WHO CONSUME ALCOHOL

	Clare	Nova Scotia	Canada
not at all	38.1%	61.6%	54.2%
once a month	47.5%	18.4%	19.4%
once a week	13.7%	17.1%	20.0%

Source: Dugas-LeBlanc, 1987, p.159.

Discussions with the youth in this research (conducted in 1991) support these earlier findings . However while most drugs seem to be a minor problem for Acadian youth, alcohol consumption is very popular and is perhaps more of a problem then they realize themselves. In this rural community where leisure options are limited, many youth see alcohol as a key feature of having a good time. While the negative effects of alcohol abuse are well known, the higher level of consumption among Acadian youth is significant in that it may be a reflection of and contributing factor to their structural inequality in Nova Scotia. More research is needed in this area.

In the following discussion a working class male student in the non-academic or general stream describes his drinking habit. It is interesting to note that this youth did not think of himself as a heavy drinker, yet he'd often have to sleep-over or call his father to come and get him in order to get home. We can also understand that some friendship groups are loose and vary according to circumstance. Students can be friends at school without necessarily hanging around together after school.

BETTY: Did your parents comment on your friends?

G.C.(male): Oh they warned me about those who take dope because they didn't want me to hang around those people.

BETTY: Did you listen to them?

G.C.: Oh yes...I keep clear of those people anyway...they're my friends at school...I mean I talk to them at school but I don't go with them at parties and that...

BETTY: So what do you do with your friends?

G.C.: We go to dances...or we play ball or play floor hockey...sometimes we go to Yarmouth...play at the arcade...in summer we often have parties at someone's camp....Some say I drink a lot...but I don't think so...I don't drink a lot at one time...I drink a little...then the next day a little...but I don't overdo it because I know how it feels the next morning...so what I do at a party is I drink till I feel it...then I'll stop and maybe drink more a little later...then I'll fall asleep somewhere...then it's over..(laugh).. that's all...

BETTY: How much do you drink?
G.C.: Oh about a dozen beer in the evening...Sometimes my father takes me some place then he'll ask if he has to come back to get me...we're ok ..my Dad and I.

Money did not seem to be a problem for these Acadian youth although many of them had limited funds. Part time jobs provided the extra funds they need. Of the twenty students interviewed, 14 had part time work (7 girls and 7 boys). There also didn't seem to be, at least with these students, any link with having part time work and their position in working or middle class families. For example, among the three girls with no part-time job, one was from a middle class family where both parents were high school teachers. The other two girls came from families where parents worked in a fish plant or as a labourer for the department of highways. Among the boys however, two of the boys with no part-time work came from middle class families with the fathers being high school teachers and the mothers being nurses working at the Yarmouth hospital. The third boy came from a family where the mother worked as a secretary and the father as a machinist.

Clothes did not seem to be a priority with these Acadian youth, unlike the urban youth studies, although some stated that style was important to them they would add that they don't take it "overboard".

BETTY: How about clothes, style? How do you feel about it?

N.L.B.(female): It's important, but not too much...I wouldn't go 'all out'...

L.T.(female): Style is not really important...I dress in my own style...If it fits my personality ok...it depends...

Style as a form of expression was not accepted wholesale by these Acadian youth. It was important⁴⁶ only in the sense that one could "fit in" keeping in mind their individual personalities and limited financial resources.

L.S.(female): To a certain point, I like to follow the style...some wear their clothes too.. too baggy...I don't like that...I like baggy clothes a bit but not all the time...I like to buy clothes that will do for a long time..

46. It is interesting to note that only one student thought clothes and style are important and thus spent much of her money on clothes. This young female was also the one who had called herself the 'class nerd' when she was younger. She had no intention of being the class nerd again.

G.C.(male): No...style for me is not important...I'm not into style...the colours these days are too loud for me...They say I'm old fashioned but that's just the way I am...those 'looks' like the 'Miami Vice look'...I'm not into those 'looks'...and those that have holes in their jeans...that's not me....

BETTY: How about clothes? Style? How do you feel about it ?

R.G.(male): I don't think much of it really...If I see a nice t-shirt...I'll buy it...I go pretty much with my own taste...I don't want to look totally out of place..but a pair of jeans and a t-shirt you can fit in with the rest.

Generally, the importance of clothes and style rarely went beyond the point of "fitting in" with the rest of the youth in the community. Observations made during the interviews and while walking in the school corridors, one could see that the standard wearing apparel for these youth are jeans and T-shirts. Only a few students, especially in junior high, dressed with the "patches look". There were a few who wore their hair longer than most of students and wore black leather jackets everywhere. Although, as previously mentioned, these youth do watch the American channels on television, they generally do not appear engrossed with Hollywood and media

influences. The lack of available resources in this rural community and the fact that many of these youth have part time work would certainly place limits on how much these youth can actually indulge in the fantasies of Hollywood.

Within a culturalist perspective, in order to capture the essence of subcultural meanings it is important to understand the process whereby objects are made to mean something new. Hebdige (1979) saw this process as beginning with the use of ordinary mundane objects against the natural order. In his study of more spectacular urban subcultures of "punks", "mods" and "teds" he saw that these youth attributed a symbolic dimension to ordinary objects which ended up in the construction of a style which itself was a gesture of defiance or contempt. Style, in this way, signalled a refusal or resistance to the social order.

Clearly, from the responses obtained during these interviews, style did not carry with it secret meanings which expressed a form of resistance or a breakdown of consensus.

Style, in fact, seemed much more important to younger students (11 to 14 year old students). For this age group the marketing strategies of the United States seem to be very effective. At a certain point in time, while drafting this dissertation, the "New Kids on the

Block" were the craze then there was the "Teenage mutant Ninja Turtles" craze which magically transformed ordinary objects (pencils, t-shirts, sleeping bags etc.) into special objects by simply applying their picture on them.

Significantly, it appears that it is in this age group that what you wear really matters. For example it was important for an 11 year old boy to have running shoes "with a name" not just any running shoes. Clearly more ethnographic study on this age group is needed.

One may also wonder whether those to whom style, fads and fashion were important had dropped out of school before getting to grade 12. However, there is very little evidence of this in the day to day activities within this community whether these be at the social clubs, bingo, arena, restaurant, bowling alleys or other social activities.

Some have maintained that the major problem experienced by youth is how to "kill" time. However, this does not appear to be the case with these Acadian youth. While these Acadian male and female students bemoan the absence of recreational facilities found in urban areas, they have relatively little "free" time to kill. Studies (Griffin 1985) conducted on other youth show overall about 40% of youth engaging in part-time employment. In this study of Acadian youth 70% of these youth had part-time jobs (7 out of 10 males and 7 out of

10 females). Young Acadian women and men had similar levels of overall involvement in part-time employment⁴⁷. This holds true for academic as well as non-academic youth and for middle as well as working class youth.

Both female and male students interviewed had similar patterns of casual employment. Most of them worked for an hour or two after school as well as on Saturdays and Sundays. The types of jobs were also similar. Two girls and two boys worked at pumping gas. One boy and one girl (this particular girl was actually working for her father) worked at sorting material for a recycling plant. While working for her father did translate into some advantages such as greater flexibility in working hours, she nevertheless had to work for her money. Others had jobs as store clerks and store cleaners. One girl was hired as a nurses' aid in a senior citizens' home and one boy worked for his brother's logging company.

Generally, whether they worked or not, it did not seem to matter whether these students came from working class or middle class homes where both parents worked. Even when it was clear that

47. I want to point out that I did not control for part time employment when choosing the sample of youth to be interviewed.

money was not a problem for some families, these students still worked for their pocket money.

Most of these students had no intention of continuing their part-time jobs but rather expected to continue on to university or trade school. Two of the girls, however, wished to start working full time immediately after graduation.⁴⁸ In the case of L.S. from a working class family, having taken the general courses, limited her possibilities as to her future plans. It was also clear that her money was spent for necessities rather than just having a good time.

BETTY: Do you have a part-time job?

L.S.(female): Yes, every day I work after school at the university cafeteria. I'm a kitchen helper. When I come home...I'm tired...I don't feel like doing much except watch TV...I don't go out much...I stay at home.

BETTY: How about weekends?

L.S.: I work every Saturday and often on Sunday too.

BETTY: I guess you must make a lot of money?

L.S.: Not really...I like to spend my money (laugh)...but I saved enough to fix up my room...it's almost finished now...I bought myself a dresser for my room...and I like to shop for clothes...Mom helps me a bit with my

48. This is indeed what happened to these girls. L.S. is now working full time as a kitchen helper and M.L.B.(middle class) is working as a store clerk. Discussions with M.L.B. reveal that she is very content with her job.

clothes but not very much...she tells me to save up for what I'd like to have.

BETTY: What do you plan to do next year?

L.S.: Work...I plan to work full time at the cafeteria...When I was younger there were lots of things I wanted to do but when I got older, I didn't think of that...because to do anything I would have to take a course...I'd like to be a nurse but with my "general" grade 12, I don't have the courses I need to go into nursing...It's too bad in a way...

Only one student (working class female) had been unable to get a job despite her efforts to find one. This, however, did not seem to bother her too much considering the importance she placed on her school work.

BETTY: Do you have an allowance?

J.C.(female): Well my parents give me the money I need for my lunch at school and things like that. They used to give me my family allowance cheque. Now that I'm too old for that they give me the same amount per month and I have to make do with that.

BETTY: Did you ever think of a part-time job?

J.C.: Well I had applied at the Villa (a senior citizens' home) but there were fifteen people there for the same job...they chose a woman that had a family and kids to support...so that's ok...but I'm still looking for a job...I don't want to work too much after school....because I don't want to see my marks go down.

Organized groups and school committees as areas to spend time held little attraction for both male and female students interviewed. In this way the Acadian youth's responses were similar to other Canadian youth responses where only 1 in 5 say that they often participate in youth or hobby clubs of any kind (Bibby and Posterski, 1985: 45). In the Bibby and Posterski survey, only 1 in 10 claimed to be personally involved in student association activities. In this particular study on Acadian youth, only 1 male student out of these 20 students was involved in the student council activities. These findings also support other research (Dugas-LeBlanc 1987) where very few of the Acadian adolescents of Clare said that they participated in organized youth groups.

There were some students, however, interested in specific activities that related directly with their graduation celebrations. Three of the female students said they were on the "safe grad"⁴⁹ committee and two of these were on the yearbook committee. Two of

49. It is interesting to note that "safe grad" is a government sponsored program to encourage graduating students to celebrate their graduation night without alcohol. While this is a popular activity and many students help organize it, unofficially another party is planned where the grads meet at a camp somewhere to drink and really celebrate all night. Most of the graduating students attend both activities. Because of the conservative nature of this tightly knit community, rejecting "safe grad" activities would create too much negative reactions within the community as a whole. This contradictory behaviour is an example of how these youth keep conflict low while asserting their power to do things their own way.

the male students were active members of the school varsity teams. Many students wore symbols which displayed pride in their school and Acadian culture. These took the form of T-shirts with the school crest or the logo of Les Jeux de l'Acadie on them. Also most of the school varsity players had team jackets with the school crest on them.

Four students (3 male and 1 female) stated that they were or recently had been members of more community based activities. One male student was a member of the militia and helped with the local cadet unit. Another male student was active in the CJP (Conseil Jeunesse Provincial). The female student had been a member of the Association des Acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse but had refused to renew her membership.⁵⁰

Most often the students would say that they just didn't have time for organised groups or for regular meetings. One male student was quite open about his resentment towards adults who took control of the group in which he had been involved.

BETTY: Are you a member of a group in the community?

C.C.(male): Well I was a member of this group called "Hugs not Drugs" but I left because the

50. The year prior to doing the interview, this Association had passed a resolution adopting a 'Pro-life' position. She and many Acadian women strongly objected to this and left the Association.

people who ran it were too full of themselves...I didn't like that so I left...When it started, it was okay but then when Hugs not Drugs got really popular, they started organizing activities that they (the adults) wanted not the activities that the kids wanted...I liked it much better when the kids decided...in the beginning well, there was a group of us...and we decided what we were going to do every month...now they don't do it that way...they (the adults) decide...it's not the same.

Acadian youth cultural forms of leisure and "having a good time" does appear to be significantly different from the lads "having a laff". For the "lads", cultural forms were so important in the counter-school culture as a means or a way out of almost anything (Willis 1977). While the material base in the form of the small informal group is present in both the "lads" and Acadian youth, it does not provide the basic structure within which these youth generate fun, pleasant atmosphere and even social identity.

Fun time for these Acadian youth was found within their informal group away from parental and school authority, yet for them "having a laff" did not symbolize the independence, excitement and general feeling of superiority that it did for the "lads". Clothes and style carry little importance for these Acadian youth and therefore have less significance on a symbolic level than other youth cultures.

There appears to be limited inequality of gender in leisure activities among Acadian youth. In general, girls' leisure time did not seem to be constrained by domestic responsibilities to any greater extent than the boys. Many of the girls admitted doing very little work at home apart from washing dishes and keeping their room in order. Both male and female students were encouraged "to help out" in preparing the evening meal. This is not to deny the fact that domestic chores were still considered to be the responsibility of the mother in practically all these households. However, for these young Acadian females this did not translate into a constraint on their other social activities. This contrasts with Griffin's (1985) findings where babysitting and domestic chores limited the girls' leisure time. Generally there appear to be few role related constraints that affect access to leisure experiences or leisure time for both male and female Acadian youth.

Part-time work constraints on leisure time is as significant for female students as it is for the male students. Here too gender differences and class differences do not seem significant. For the most part, they engage in similar types of jobs from pumping gas to store clerk, whether they came from working or middle class homes.

It is interesting to note that certain behaviour such as using the telephone was much less frequent than expected. Having long conversations with friends over the telephone makes sense for youth living in a rural community where often friends do not live in walking distance. However, these grade 12 students did not use the telephone as much as they previously did. This could at least partially be explained by the fact that most of these students had access to their parents' car and therefore could see each other more often.

Also the use of drugs was not as prevalent as was expected. Discussions with members of the local R.C.M.P. detachment corroborates these youth's responses in that most cases involving youth offenders were alcohol related as opposed to drug related.⁵¹

For those who had admitted having taken drugs on a regular basis, the male and female students both said that they engaged in this type of behaviour at an earlier age around 13 or 14 years of age. For most of these grade 12 students this behaviour was more or less passé.

51. While statistics on this subject are difficult to obtain, in the Sargeant's opinion, after having worked in various parts of Nova Scotia, drug abuse among Acadian youth seems somewhat lower than among youth in other rural parts of the province.

Clearly there are no street corners for these youth in this Acadian community. Although there are places such as the hockey arena and two bowling alleys, it is the younger youth 12-14 years old who hang out at these places.

The following words capture the tone of how Acadian youth like to have a good time. Being with their friends, just being together is important for this female student as it is for these students generally.

BETTY: Would you talk to me about 'having a good time'? What do you do?

L.A.(female): Well usually we get together and have a party...there's booze...I drink but not enough to get sick. What I like to do is when we're just a small group of people we just sit and talk...I like that better than big parties...In my group hardly anyone smokes dope any more, a few will do it sometimes...we mostly drink beer.

BETTY: 'What do you talk about?

L.A.: We talk of other people...about world problems...but mostly we talk about the dumb stuff we did...

Acadian youth's experiences of leisure have changed over time. Yet there exist very real threads of cultural continuity among these three generations. Despite changes in the material conditions over time, "meeting friends" or going with the "gang" was by far the most enjoyed leisure time. Although "best friends" were of the same sex,

the "gang" was often composed of both males and females enjoying relatively equal participation. This is very different from the marginal position girls have in relation to the "lad's" group. This exclusion is compounded by the "lad's" contradictory view of girls: they are both sexual objects and domestic comforters (Willis 1977; p.43). These findings seem to suggest that Acadian youth make their leisure time that is community based and tends to be egalitarian in nature.

Chapter 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation, guided by a culturalist perspective, has attempted to provide insights into how Acadian youth make sense of their everyday lives which in turn influences how they come to see themselves as "Acadians" and influence their future aspirations. This research focused on the experiences of twenty Acadian high school students, their parents and their grandparents and the interrelationships of these experiences at school, at home and at leisure. It attempted to gain insights into how Acadian youth construct their identity not only through class ascriptions but especially through the interplay of generation and gender.

Throughout this work it has been argued that previous studies on youth subcultures (Hall and Jefferson 1976; Willis 1977; Hebdige 1976; Hall 1980; Cohen 1972; Murdock and McCron 1976; Mungham 1976; Jones 1988 and Clark and Jefferson 1976) have ignored the experiences of females (McRobbie 1978; McRobbie and Garber 1975; Parmar 1982) and have to a certain extent overemphasized the importance of class. Also, because of their focus on spectacular urban settings, it is argued that these studies offer limited access to

understanding Acadian youth in a rural Nova Scotia context. By challenging conventional wisdom of youth cultures and by looking at the cultural elements which are important to these Acadian youth, this thesis provides a significant contribution to the study of youth in Atlantic Canada.

The methodological approach used in this research project gave validity to these Acadian youth's own experiences (Stanley and Wise, 1983: 109). What these people had to say was taken seriously and has been used as the focal point of this thesis. Through the medium of their own words, this researcher hoped to gain a better understanding of their reality.

As discussed in Chapter Three, feminists have wisely drawn attention to the real problems associated with treating the subjects of research as objects. This is sometimes referred to as "the rebellion against objectivity" (McCalla Vickers, 1982: 40). Feminists have also exposed the power relations possible in the interview setting (Oakley 1981). It was thus crucial to never lose sight of these youth as being active agents in their social relations and to never "reduce them to effects of social processes" (Smith, 1987: 204).

It was also important to be conscious of the role the researcher plays in the social setting and the research process itself. It was made

clear from the outset that the social background and personal characteristics of this researcher were an integral part of this work (Chapter Three). Clearly this researcher's reputation and standing in the community was a positive factor which facilitated access to the school system and the cooperation of teachers to use classroom time in order to finish the interviews with the students themselves. Also with the researcher being Acadian herself, this meant that the interviewees could communicate in their own language.

On the other hand, the age of the researcher as well as her sex could have had a negative impact on the information obtained during the interviews with the students. The question must be raised about possible negative effects of the researcher being "one of them" as an Acadian yet an outsider with respect to generation. Letting the students control as much as possible the direction of the interview helped overcome some negative effects of the age difference between the interviewer and the interviewees. It is now well known that in some areas of investigation the information obtained may vary with the sex of the interviewer especially in areas that are differentially sensitive for members of the two sexes such as sexual behaviours and abuse (Eichler, 1988: 77). This negative impact on the data obtained

was in a sense limited because questions dealing specifically with sexual behaviour were deliberately left out of the research guide.⁵²

Sexuality is undoubtedly an important dimension of adolescence, yet unfortunately, the subject was not raised very often during the course of the interviews. As Eichler (1988) points out many factors can hinder the sharing of sensitive information. For this specific research project, three factors may have contributed to the silence on matters of sexuality. Firstly, the fact that the researcher was of the parent generation could have hindered the student's discussions of sex. Secondly, the fact that these interviews were conducted in the school itself could have hindered the exchange of information on delicate matters. Thirdly, and perhaps more importantly, the interviews were conducted on an individual basis and not in groups. Elsewhere, this researcher has had the opportunity to have discussions with a

52. Preliminary discussions with the superintendent and the school principal revealed that the school had participated in many other research projects. Due to some prior negative experiences, they did not appreciate the intrusion of more researchers and thus authorities were reluctant to give permission for yet another research especially one dealing with teenage sexual behaviour. When it was explained to them that this researcher wished to have open discussions with the students and that specific questions on sexual behaviour were not on the research guide or the focus of the study, access to the school was approved. The respondents' straightforwardness indicated that they were generally at ease with the researcher. Personal appearance was also considered important to help interaction and therefore the researcher would wear the usual jeans and sweater when interviewing the students. Very few respondents actually volunteered information on their sexual habits although one girl did talk about being abused by her grand-father. Another girl revealed that she had sex with only one guy- the father of her baby.

group of grade 9 and 10 girls in an informal setting outside the school. These girls together were more candid and open to discuss their thoughts on sex. Discussions revealed that many girls of their age are sexually active. Most of them, however, thought that some of the girls who were sexually active were "just dumb" to give in to the guys who just have sex on their minds. If girls in grade 9 and 10 are sexually active, one could safely assume that grade 12 students engaged in such relations also.

In Chapter Two, we have drawn attention to the fact that what comes to be known about Acadians and Acadianess has real consequences for Acadians especially Acadian youth. Historically, Acadians have not been visible in the mainstream of Nova Scotian social life. Although Acadians were the first Europeans to settle this province, mainstream history tells us very little about Acadian history and their place in Nova Scotian society. What comes to be known about Acadians often reflects the distortions of the English hegemonic social order rather than reality. Conventional and "acceptable" ways of doing history and also sociology have characterized Acadians as "other" and made patronizing assessments which have helped to portray Acadians as marginal social beings. As such, in Chapter Two, it was argued that mainstream history downgrades the injustices of

1755 in order to socially construct an image of Acadians as peaceful, simple, poor and hospitable people.

Although Acadians have perhaps not suffered to the same extent the effects of pejorative assessments and oppression of Blacks or Native people in Nova Scotia (Mannette 1984 and 1986), the difference is one of degree rather than essence. The message to the Acadian people was and is clear. They are considered to be a positive part of Nova Scotian society as long as they keep their place, speak English and accept the hegemonic order.

It is within this context that Acadian youth make sense of their everyday lives. In the sense that subcultures are solutions to collectively experienced problems (Hall and Jefferson, 1976: 52), Acadian youth subculture shares much with its "parent" culture. We have seen in Chapter Four that Acadian youth basically share so many of the basic structure and social constraints that their views and meanings are in harmony to a greater extent than they are in opposition to the older generations. There is more a sense of "cultural continuity" where change occurs by negotiation rather than rebellion. For these Acadian youth, conflict with parents is negotiated and kept relatively lower than other Canadian youth (Health and Welfare Canada, 1984-85: 24). This is not to imply that there has never been

Resolution test chart showing patterns of vertical and horizontal lines with numerical values: 1.0, 1.1, 1.25, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.0, 2.2, 2.5, 2.8, 3.2, 3.6, 4.0.

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

conflict between Acadian youth and their parents. However, discussions have revealed that difficulties occurred at a younger age, 12-15 approximately, so that having made it through the difficult period, by the time they make it to high school graduation, conflict is low.

In this dissertation, the everyday experiences of young females and their mothers was taken seriously (Smith 1974a, 1974b, 1975; Benston 1982; Eichler 1983, 1987; Roberts 1981; Stanley and Wise 1983; McRobbie 1978; Griffin 1985). These interviews with three generations of women reveal that while the form may have changed over time, the fact of sexual discrimination within the domestic sphere has not changed considerably.

Yet the very important finding of this work is that patriarchy seems to be challenged by these Acadian females of both working and middle class. Compared to young females in other studies (McRobbie 1978; McRobbie and Garber 1975; Griffin 1985; Stanworth 1983; Hill 1989) it would appear that family and domestic responsibilities are not as central to Acadian females' social identities. Young Acadian females do not marginalize wage labour but rather see it as an important part of their lives with which they will one day have to negotiate the conditions of their family or home life.

Traditional stereotypes of masculinity and femininity which ultimately devalue women's position in society (Smith 1987; Barrett 1984) are not as clearly distinguishable for the youth in this work. Other studies have shown girls to seek partners who would be sensitive to them while boys have rather stressed physical attraction (Weis 1989). This was not true for Acadian youth where both females and males expressed the need for someone who will listen to them and respect them as the most important qualities of a mate.

While these male students still envision a patriarchal future in the sense that they see themselves as breadwinners, they do not necessarily see their wives at home. Although it is not clear as to how they expect to resolve this contradiction, they nevertheless tend to think in terms of a "sharing" of domestic tasks when both spouses have paid employment.

Time will tell what these youth will actually do in the future, but there is perhaps a little room for optimism. In culturalist terms, this is a clear indication that the dominant ideology of male breadwinner is not received passively by these social agents but rather received, interpreted and changed to adjust to these Acadian's particular reality.

In Chapter Five we have seen that teacher-student relationships in the school are, to a certain extent, accompanied by an institutional

resentment which is affirmed among these Acadian youth as with other youth studies. However, for both Acadian female and male students their resentment and opposition to school authority does not lead to outright rejection of the school and the total educational process. Rather than being disruptive to the system, resistance took the form of "tuning out" in most cases. In Richer's (1990) typology, these youth engage in resistance which is very often passive and individual in form. They did, however, prior to grade 12, actively resist teacher control by engaging in behaviour (skipping classes, talking amongst themselves, exchanging notes in class) which was collective in nature, regardless of their class position and gender. Although this behaviour had little affect on the rules of the school or school authority, it demonstrated these student's opposition to the existing conditions of the school without rejecting it altogether. In Richer's words: "This accommodation was a compromise solution that yielded subcultural space to these students in exchange for compliance (Richer, 1990: 97)".

Once they had reached grade 12, opposition to school authority most often took the form of accommodation. While classroom work could be seen as boring and irrelevant by the students, they seldom disrupted the class. Both male and female students shared similar

sentiments concerning school and both responded to them in similar ways (daydreaming, reading). This differs from other studies (McRobbie 1978; Hill 1989) which found that girls' responses were more passive due to greater social constraints.

The accomodating nature of these Acadian youth's responses is significantly different from the "lads'" This research thus demonstrates the limitations of generalizations that emerge from the experiences of male youth in an urban setting. This non-resistant form of behaviour among Acadian youth is significant and needs to be taken into account if we are to understand youth cultural production in the Atlantic area. As we have seen, these Acadian youth live in a rural area where there are limited resources and limited options. But they also live in a community where there is a tradition of strong kinship ties and strong group cohesiveness among the villages.

Both limited resources and strong parental relations are important elements forming the context in which these Acadian youth live their everyday lives. These elements also help us understand the accomodating nature of their behaviour at home, in school and at leisure.

In this dissertation it has also been argued that within a culturalist perspective, agency should not fall prey to social structure

but should rather be conceived as interrelated with social structures. People are active social agents which continually experience and interpret social relations within specific social structures. Furthermore, culture is seen as an important key to understanding how people come to see themselves as who they are. To understand how Acadian see themselves as Acadians and to grasp the socially constructed notion of "Acadianess", it was important to look at the "maps of meaning" (Hall, 1976: 10) which rendered things intelligible to the members of this community and useful for cultural reproduction. This study has shown that the basic elements of their Acadian culture centre around their language (Acadian French and the problems in striving to be bilingual), strong family and friendship ties as well as strong ties with their ancestors having suffered through the Deportation of 1755.

In order to make sense of these findings it is useful to link these subjects' constructions with the structures in which they live. This work has shown us that in Nova Scotia this Acadian community lacks institutional completeness as conceived by Breton which meant that "members would never have to make use of native institutions for the satisfaction of any of their needs" (Breton, 1964: 194). Yet in order to look beyond the structures, Rosenberg and Jedwab (1992) build

upon Breton's notion of institutional completeness by not only looking for the degree of institutional development but also looking for the type or direction of development which they call "the organizational style" of an ethnic community. They define this term as being "the typical structures, practices and strategies used by ethnic community members as they organize to act on their interests (Rosenberg and Jedweb 1992;p.268).

This Acadian community, while lacking in institutional completeness, adopts an institutional style which has fostered a positive and fruitful relationship with the dominant majority. Over the years, confrontation (except for the demonstrations led by the students in order to keep University Sainte Anne in Pointe-de-l'Eglise in the late 60's) between Acadians and the ruling anglophones has been limited despite increasing interaction between these two groups. Factors such as increased mobility, a gradual weakening of the Catholic grip, and the introduction of various technological innovations (television and video for example) have contributed to the weakening of Acadian ethnic boundaries. Yet this has not meant assimilation.

The institutions Acadians have built and maintained (as discussed in Chapter 2) have not resulted in total integration of Acadians in the anglophone majority but rather have strengthened their

position and maintained their survival as a people. This study has shown us that the practices adopted by these Acadian youth are practices which have kept conflict low in relation to their "parent culture" and Nova Scotian society generally. To a certain extent they do challenge the existing cultural forms both within and outside their community although they have limited power to effect complete social change. We are reminded here of the resistance through accommodation engaged in by the black slaves in the United States (Genovese 1972) in order to gain power over their owners. It is too simplistic to argue that the lack of confrontation of these Acadian youth is a sign of a weak minority bowing down to the powerful majority. Rather, these youth through their relationships at home, at school and at leisure create a cultural space in which they make sense of their Acadianness and determine how they will actively keep it alive. This work has uncovered two major factors which constantly confront these youth. On the one hand they have strong parental ties which contribute to secure an intra-group attachment, while on the other hand they are pulled by the job market which remains the major point of integration into the anglophone majority and the structures of inequality.

This work in a sense attempts to make a contribution by pointing to the complex nature of the relationship between the anglophone and francophone communities in Nova Scotia. More research is needed in order to understand this relationship and in so doing help us to understand better the diversity of ethnic communities in Canada.

It is unfortunate that in this particular high school, these Acadian youth find very little there to strengthen the cultural elements which are important to them. Encouraging more student input into the curriculum and the general organisation of the school could strengthen the students' cultural space and their sense of control over their lives. Because of these students' tendency to engage in passive and informal forms of resistance, major changes to the school system will not likely come from the students themselves.

While today, the language of equality often obscures the discrimination which lies below the surface (Eichler 1988), these girls were aware of sexism and of traditional expectations placed upon them but they have not accepted its inevitability. There are very few signs of these girls' appropriation of the "femininity" ideology as found by McRobbie (1978) and others. That is to say, there was no panic to get a boyfriend, girls did ask boys out, participation in class was generally equitable, girls were not necessarily quiet and very few used

"feminine wiles" to obtain preferential treatment. These results were not expected and of course overgeneralization should be avoided. However, as discussed in Chapter Two, the historical and material conditions within this Acadian community have enabled Acadian woman to play a strong and active role over the years. Because these youths maintain a positive link with the past, these girls are perhaps drawing on this position of strength in order to see themselves as capable of being in control of their own lives today and in the future.

Feminists have argued that while it may not be a written policy, secondary school curriculum channel choices of male and female students (Gaskell 1987). Over the years and in many ways, the school often transmits messages concerning the appropriations of gender as a differentiating principle. In this way actual career choices are not confined to the moment of decision making. Yet despite these structural constraints, some of these Acadian girls are resisting. In the sense that resistance is an expressed hope for radical transformation (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985:105), by directing themselves towards business and accounting these girls are engaged in the struggle against patriarchal domination. Unlike the girls in other studies (McRobbie and Garber 1975; Griffin 1985) their resistance did not take the form of wearing excessive make-up, crying or playing the maternal role. It

would appear that these girls see through the lies and promises of equal treatment and equal access to jobs transmitted by this school. Their responses display a rejection of the inevitability of gender inequality and the confidence to overcome it. Yet all-out rebelliousness was not seen to be a major part of these Acadian youth's subcultural base.

Leisure time (Chapter Six) for both male and females in this study meant spending time with friends. Small informal friendship groups are a key feature of their culture. Yet Acadian youth cultural forms of leisure appear significantly different from the "lad's" cultural forms which were so important in the counter-school culture (Willis 1977). More importantly, there were marked differences with other studies in Great Britain (McRobbie 1978; Griffin 1985) and in the United States (Weis 1989) where girls spent much energy in maintaining female friendship groups and getting a boyfriend. Very often the friendship groups of these Acadian youth included both sexes.

One should exercise some degree of caution in making broad generalisations from this small sample of Acadian youth. It was, however, surprising to see how much fun these youth had in heterosexual groupings. Girls in Acadian youth groups were not as marginal as expected. This finding supports the main position of this

thesis which argues that generally, research on youth cultures needs to get away from the "gang of lads" model which may not be appropriate for smaller friendship groups and rural groups everywhere.

Acadian youth themselves did not see themselves as "different" except for their mother tongue, French. Consciously they saw no difference in their everyday lives than any other youth in a rural community. Everyone interviewed expressed positive feelings towards their Acadian ancestors especially those having lived through the Deportation of 1755. This common thread still contributes to a collective force which fuels their resistance to English dominant ideologies of Acadianness. However, they nevertheless live the contradiction of wanting to keep their language but accommodating the dominant culture by speaking English. These Acadian youth are challenging dominant visions of this province in that the French language is a central part of who they are and how their Acadianness will continue. These youth feel secure in demanding to be able to function and live their lives in their own language.

These Acadian youth are challenging the dominant order. The signs and meanings found in their everyday lives show them to be active rather than passive in creating their own culture. In conclusion,

they are living proof that although people are constrained by structures, they are not totally prescribed by these structures.

Suggestions For Further Research

It is important to keep in mind that the students interviewed for this work were in their final year of school. That is to say, these were the successful students and not the drop-outs. Clearly more research is needed in order to understand what happens to those who do not make it through the system. Discussions with teachers and other students reveal that conflict occurred to a greater extent in junior high. Many of the students interviewed (and my own children included) found the transition from elementary to junior high a particularly trying time. Focusing on the processes involved in the social relations of younger students would surely strengthen our understanding of the student-teacher-parent dynamic.

This research project has looked at the social relations of Acadians living in a rural area of Nova Scotia. It would be interesting to seek out Acadians living in the metro area of Halifax to see how urban Acadians make sense of their everyday lives.

Also much could be gained by comparative research on students in an English rural community of Nova Scotia in order to further explore the influence of cultural elements and its impact on youth's relationships at home, at school and at leisure.

The student strike of 1969 at Université Sainte Anne, marking one of the very few instances of youth collective resistance has never been documented. This also would be a very worthwhile research project.

Finally because of the dynamic nature of the social contract between dominant and minority groups, we need to look at the relationship between the Acadian community and the state and bureaucratic structures which rule over them. We need to understand the dynamics by which this small community, through negotiation and arbitration with the Nova Scotia government, ensures that its concerns are taken into account.

Appendix A

Interview schedule A: youth

Description of my research: the why and how of this research project and how they came to be chosen by me.

1. How do you feel about being interviewed? Have you been interviewed before? If so what were the circumstances?
2. Can you tell me something about yourself? age - in what village do you live - with whom? - mother, father, sisters, brothers, grandparents, others...
3. What type of work does your mother and or father do ? (get an idea of household income)
4. Who does most of the housework? Do you help? What is mealtime like? Is everyone there most of the time?
5. Can you describe an average day for me? Weekday and weekend
6. How do you like school? Have you always felt that way?
7. What courses do you like best? Less?
8. Are you in academic - general - commercial ? Why are you there?
9. Do you find that teachers are helpful? Supportive?
10. What do you think of your teachers in general?
11. Do you see a difference between male and female teachers in the way they treat students?
12. Have you ever skipped classes? Where do you go ? What did you do? How often?

13. When you find a particular class/teacher is boring, how do you deal with it?
14. What activities are you involved in school ? (sports, yearbook, prom committee etc.) in the community (youth groups, F.A.N.E. etc..)
15. How do you get along with your parents? Has it always been that way? Do you get an allowance? Money problems..
16. Do your parents try and influence your choice of friends... Where you go...? What you do...? What you will do in the future?
17. What about your parents and discipline? too much...too little..? How do you handle these situations?
18. Do your parents talk to you about important family matters?
19. Can you talk to me about your friends? How many...age...gender.."best" friends?
20. How often do you meet? How do you get around?
21. Do you use the phone much?
22. How about clothes? . . .style? How do you feel about it?
23. What's your idea of a good time? With whom girls - boys ? What do you do?
24. How about organized fun: bowling..canoe club...hockey.. exercise class..
25. What do you plan to do next year? educational/occupational plans?
26. What type of work do you plan to do?
27. Does this mean that you will leave the area or do you plan on staying? How do you feel about this?

28. What does it mean to you to be Acadian ? Does being Acadian matter to you? In what way?
29. Do you expect to get married? What type of person would you like to marry? When?
30. Do you expect to have children? How will this affect your life? Notions of motherhood ...fatherhood...
31. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing male and female students today?

Thank you for talking with me. Would you have any questions?

Appendix B

Interview schedule B: Parents and grandparents

Description of my research: Why and how they came to be chosen

1. Can you tell me something about yourself? Where did you grow up? Brothers..Sisters...Are your parents still alive?...Do you think they would accept to talk to me?
2. Can you give me an idea of what it was like when you were growing up?...poor?...well-off?...Can you remember what an average day would have been? weekday...week-end..
3. What type of work do you do? How long?...did you do some other type of work?
4. Are you married..divorced..separated..? How many children?
5. Did you find a difference in raising boys and girls?
6. How do you feel about being a parent today?
7. Who does the work around the house? Who does what? Stereotypes..
8. How would you describe your relationship with your daughter... son..? Has it changed over time? discipline..manners.. social activities..
9. Do you talk to your children about problems you might have at home? As a group or on an individual basis? describe..
10. What do you wish for your children in the future?
11. Have you suggested a particular line of work for them ... perhaps influence their future plans?
12. Do you plan to help them ...how...financially?
13. Does being Acadian matter to you? In what way?

14. It is often said that Acadians are threatened by assimilation. Do you believe this? What can be done about (for or against)?
15. What do you think is the biggest problem facing parents today? Why?
16. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing male and female students today?

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me.

Appendix C

Interview schedule C: Teachers

Description of my research: Why and how I will do it and how they came to be chosen to participate.

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What courses are you teaching? Have ever taught?
3. Do you feel that the school and teaching have changed since you became a teacher? In what way?
4. What do you think is the biggest problem facing teachers today?
5. Would you describe the kind of participation you have in class? Who participates boys? - girls? smarter or weaker students? rich? poor?....
6. Do the students show an interest in class?
7. What happens when the students are not interested in class? What do you do?
8. Who gives you more trouble in class: girls or boys? In what way?
9. What do you do about it?
10. Do you feel that some courses are more suited for girls and others for boys? Explain.
11. Do you think that girls and boys receive equal treatment in the school? Explain.
12. It is often said that Acadians are becoming assimilated, do you agree? Does this matter to you? Is there anything you can do in one way or another?

13. Does being Acadian make a difference as a teacher in this particular school?
14. What do you think of the Woman's Movement? How do you think it impacts in the school?
15. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing male and female students today?

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me.

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