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Cultural Tourism in Newfoundland

by

Maureen E. Doody, B.A.

A thesis submitted to the faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
September 1999**

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and Research acceptance of the thesis

Cultural Tourism in Newfoundland

submitted by Maureen E. Doody

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

Thesis Supervisor

Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Carleton University

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Abstract

This thesis critically examines the consequences of the development and representation of cultural tourism in Newfoundland in recent years, and compares recent developments with tourism strategies over the past century. Specifically, my thesis question is the following: How is “cultural tourism” being promoted in Newfoundland as a means of economic development, and what are the consequences of such promotions? Through case materials I explore these issues with particular attention to three major areas of concern: i) the effects of tourism development on local Newfoundlanders; ii) the involvement of the state in this process; and iii) the way Newfoundland is depicted through textual and visual tourism forms. Overall, my thesis concludes that little has changed over the past century regarding the strategies and themes utilized in the implementation of Newfoundland’s tourism policies, and that the consequences for the people and environment continue to be problematic.

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Chapter one - Introduction: Cultural Tourism

I Aim of Thesis

Since the late nineteenth century Newfoundland has been promoted for tourism by both the public and private sectors. As elsewhere, tourism has been one of the main ways of representing Newfoundland and its people. Through tourism, images and ideas are created about a people and places (Overton 1996:xi). Consequently, the overall purpose of this thesis is to critically examine the consequences of tourism development in Newfoundland. Specifically, I am interested in how the cultural forms of Newfoundland are promoted for tourism. I will argue that tourism is an arena of cultural politics in the sense that it reproduces unequal power/social relations through (mis)representation and consumption.

Through specific examples I will explore these issues with particular attention to three major areas of concern: i) the effect of tourism development on local Newfoundlanders; ii) the involvement of the state in this process; and iii) the way Newfoundland is depicted through textual and visual tourism forms. It is important to recognize three significant and problematic contradictions which recur within this analysis: independent versus government support, modern infrastructure versus rural environment, and authenticity versus nostalgia.

In this chapter, I will provide a general introduction to the topic of cultural tourism and its long-standing significance for Newfoundland's economy and culture. Chapter two reviews the recurring themes identified by critical scholars when cultural forms are commoditized for tourism, including themes of nostalgia and authenticity. Chapter three provides an historical overview of the history of tourism development in Newfoundland,

including the political, economic, and social contexts which have shaped the infrastructure and ideology of Newfoundland tourism as the province enters into the 21st century.

Chapter four examines Newfoundland's current tourism policies and practices, while chapter five specifically addresses the consequences of Newfoundland's promotion of cultural tourism. In Chapter five, I focus on the town of Bonavista, host to the 1997 Cabot 500 Celebrations which was one of the biggest tourism events in North America. The last chapter will summarize my conclusions regarding the consequences of cultural tourism development in Newfoundland, the role tourism is likely to play for the province in the 21st century, and directions for further research.

II Methodology

I have always been interested in the history and culture of Newfoundland. Both my parents were born and raised on the island; but, due to my father's military posting, our family emigrated to Ontario in 1977. All of our holidays and summers were spent on the island, so that as children we strengthened our bonds with family, and never forgot our historic and cultural roots. My parents are strong Newfoundland nationalists and have always considered Newfoundland to be their home. If anyone were to ask me where I considered 'home' to be, I, too, would have to say, Newfoundland.

My love of the history of Newfoundland was passed down to me from my grandparents and parents. I wanted to write about contemporary issues facing Newfoundland's people, and at the same time look at its history and directions for its future. Presently, nothing could be more relevant in Newfoundland society than the collapse of the food fishery and the consequences for the people. Studying anthropology, I was particularly

interested in the discourse focusing on cultural tourism as a means of rejuvenating the province's economy.

I chose the geographical location of Bonavista to carry out my fieldwork for two reasons: 1) It was the focal point of the 1997 Cabot 500 Celebrations - Newfoundland's biggest tourism event to date. Cabot 500 was promoted as the cultural celebration which would heighten the province's global awareness and place Newfoundland on the map as a tourism destination; 2) My father's side of the family is from Bonavista; and, it was over a decade ago that my father chose to return home to Bonavista to live. For me, it will always be my second home. I know the people and landmarks of the town, and I wanted to be a part of Bonavista's journey as the town prepared for the festivities.

In August of 1997, I visited Bonavista and surrounding communities participating in the various festivities, sightseeing and talking to the local people and the tourists about the Cabot experience. My month long visit to Eastern Newfoundland, predominantly Bonavista and Trinity, finalized a two year process of phone and written interviews following the Cabot 500 Celebration's development from its infancy. The data for my case study and various examples are based upon open-ended or informal interviews with local residents of Bonavista and surrounding communities, local tourism/small business operators, and government tourism officials, participant observation, and visiting the towns and tourist attractions. In addition I read and analyzed countless tourism brochures, pamphlets and advertisements and viewed numerous historical and contemporary television documentaries about Newfoundland.

Newfoundland's Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation directed me to government tourism agencies and officials for interviewing purposes. I contacted various

tourism agencies in Bonavista, both local and government operated, to set up interviews. In addition, my father was able to put me in touch with small business owners and tourism operators, and members of Bonavista's Historical Society.

I conducted 30 pre-arranged interviews¹, with government tourism officials, tourism operators, local business owners and fishery workers. I also visited numerous tourism attractions² and conducted spontaneous interviews with coordinators of events, employees, local inhabitants and visiting tourists. The number of people I talked to within this context was around 100. In order to ensure the privacy of each individual, anonymity was guaranteed (unless permission was granted otherwise). For each individual or group of people that I interviewed, records were kept of our conversations. In fieldnotes, each place, attraction and observation was noted.

The interviews were conducted in order to elicit the opinions, attitudes and impressions of various people on the effects and consequences of tourism development on the island, especially the Cabot 500 Celebrations. The interviewees also provided a wealth of background and information about the general state of political, social and cultural affairs of Newfoundland and, more specifically, about the communities I visited.

Upon completion, I plan to make my thesis available to the people of Bonavista. I hope that they will find it useful, and I will welcome their comments.

¹ See Appendix I for a list of interviewees.

² List of sites visited include: In Bonavista, the Cape Bonavista Lighthouse, Ryans Premises, Mockbeggar Property, The Dungeon, Bonavista Museum; in Trinity, "Summer in the Bight" Rising Tide Theatre performance which includes visiting the town's historic sites, the Mathew ship and the Mathew farewell celebration; in Gander, Terra Nova Provincial Park; in St. John's, Cape Spear, Signal Hill Tatoo; in King's Cove, the Lighthouse Festival and in Elliston, whale watching tours.

III The Rise of Cultural Tourism Globally

Tourism has been heralded as the world's largest industry. According to the World Tourism Organization, by the year 2000, tourism will constitute the world's largest industry (DTCR 1994:3). Once the privilege of the wealthy elite, travel and tourism have now become "an institutionalized way of life for most of the world's middle-class population" (Theobald 1994:4). Advanced technology in travel and communications has enabled people to travel the globe and physically cross cultural frontiers in growing numbers (Boniface and Fowler 1993:xii). As we move into the 21st century, it is safe to assume that practically everyone in the world has had some direct contact with tourists, either as hosts or guests. Hence, the addition of the study of tourism to the anthropological discipline. As Nelson H. Graburn notes, "our understandings of the social, cultural, and economic effects of tourism may contribute to the anthropology of ethnicity, acculturation, development, expressive culture and ecology" (1983:3 cited in O'Hollaren 1985:16).

More than ever before, tourism on a global scale is being treated as "one of the most important cultural, economic, and even political forces of the twentieth century" (Overton 1996:viii-ix). In recent years, nations across the globe have realized the potential of the tourism industry for generating economic growth. Tourism has played a particularly important role in contributing to economic diversification in the more underdeveloped regions and countries, where due to a depletion in natural resources, debt and lack of industry, more imaginative and flexible methods of gaining income and foreign input are needed.

IV Cultural Tourism and Economic Development in Newfoundland

i Cultural Tourism

Specifically, within the tourism and travel industry there is a growing market based on heritage and cultural forms; this is what the industry has promoted as “cultural tourism.” There are many definitions of “cultural tourism”³, but, for the purpose of this thesis, I will utilize Blundell’s definition:

Forms of international mass pleasure travel that provide tourists with opportunities to experience the cultural attractions and the cultural distinctiveness of the area they visit. References are commonly made to a country’s (or a region’s) art, craft and heritage forms; its museums, art galleries, and historic sites; its culturally different populations; as well as to the different “sense of place” that tourists can experience. (1994:2)

Blundell also refers to Robert Kelly’s definition of cultural tourism, which has been widely cited in Canada: “the consumption of cultural experiences (and objects) by individuals who are away from their normal place of habitation” (1988:57-61 cited in Blundell 1994:2). Over the past decade, state officials have perpetuated this view of cultural tourism as “the consumption of cultural experiences”, arguing that “such experiences can be commoditized for tourists” (Blundell 1994:2). Therefore, what has been promoted has been the commodification of heritage and expressive cultural forms for “cultural tourists.”

This phenomenon has particularly crucial implications for Canada, as tourism [as a percentage of the GNP] “already ranks second in Canada only to automobile production” (DTCR 1994:3). In the Canadian context, this is very important because the government has been trying to promote tourism in Canada by placing emphasis on the “nations’ distinctive cultural forms” (Blundell 1994:2). These “cultural forms” are meant to attract tourists to

³ See A Strategy for Cultural Tourism and Heritage Tourism. Vol. IV (NLPMMS) (1996:18) for WTO definition.

Canada and have been foregrounded in federal and provincial policies promoting “cultural tourism” (Blundell 1994:2). According to Blundell, governments are interested in promoting cultural tourism because they believe that it can “generate benefits for the Canadian tourism industry, and at the same time provide a means of economic development for marginal areas and disadvantaged groups who market themselves for tourism” (1994:2).

This trend toward developing cultural tourism within post-industrial societies is also found in the province of Newfoundland. In fact, Newfoundland has an extensive history of promoting and developing what the industry today calls “cultural tourism”, for the purpose of economic development. As Overton notes, once again the province’s tourism officials and operators, newspapers, contract researchers, state/government officials and residents of the rural or outport ⁴communities “express the hope that tourism will play a significant role in revitalizing Newfoundland’s economy” (1996:viii).

The province of Newfoundland has always relied on the ever uncertain food fishery as the main staple for economic survival. However, with the collapse of the northern cod stocks and closure of the food fishery in 1992, alternative measures are needed to deal with this economically challenged area. One strategy that has been increasingly advocated is tourism. Many Newfoundlanders have now turned to tourism in the hope that it will solve their economic problems. With the economy at a critical low point, tourists are seen as a necessity to provide economic support. The government is looking for new ways to use rural Newfoundland and its resources for tourism (Welbourn 1995:37). Consequently, tourism

⁴ Meaning coastal village.

has played an important role in a “government rural/regional development strategy by promoting opportunities for capital accumulation and employment” (Overton 1979-80:118). Tourism boosters see the tourist dollar as a means to stabilize “resource-dependent economies” whose traditional means of subsistence have disappeared (O’Hollaren 1985:11).

Thus one must examine how tourism is being put forward as an economic strategy, and how it reaches in and commoditizes the Newfoundland culture and environment. I plan to focus in this thesis on how Newfoundland’s cultural forms come to be constructed, promoted and legitimized through policy by non-government institutions, entrepreneurs, tourism officials and operators, and other Newfoundlanders. Moreover, in this thesis cultural tourism and policy are approached as arenas for cultural politics because “culture can be a contested part of political struggle” whereby the more powerful elite in society attempt to control it, while “those who are subjugated use culture in their efforts to resist, and change, the policies and practices of the government”(Blundell et al 1989:29). This is an important area of concern because “cultural practices have political consequences, including consequences which can empower people as well as consequences which can perpetuate their subjugation” (Blundell et al 1989:29). Historically, provincial and federal policies have mainly benefited the dominant class or power elite (ie: corporations, businesses, etc.) and the state (provincial and federal governments and their bureaucracies). One of the major ramifications of this has been the demise of the cod fishery, and loss of jobs for thousands of fishers and fish plant workers in rural Newfoundland. The government is attempting to revive Newfoundland’s economy by promoting tourism based on commodification of traditional outport life and Newfoundland’s natural beauty. This is not new strategy. The consequences continue to be problematic because state policies past and present favour the

wealthy and powerful elite; this process, further marginalizes working people in rural communities.

ii The Economic Context

Newfoundland's geographical location and history make it a unique province compared to the rest of the country⁵. Although Labrador is part of the province of Newfoundland, its connection to the mainland has resulted in a different history of settlement and development. Thus, for the most part, this thesis will concentrate on the island of Newfoundland.

Newfoundland's history of development is unique in that it was an island isolated geographically, with a history of colonial control. When John Cabot discovered the island's rugged shores in 1497, he claimed allegiance to the King of England - King Henry VII - and the island remained under British rule even when Responsible Government was granted in 1855. But word of the island's rich resources reached far, and precipitated a long term struggle over these resources - namely the fish industry. The British, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Norwegians and others exploited her waters for their wealth of fish, and fought for control of the island. Settlements were sparse as the British government and merchants sometimes prohibited permanent settlement in Newfoundland (The British government and merchants wanted complete control of the fish.) (O'Hollaren 1985:24). Because they were

⁵ Please see Appendix II for a detailed map of Newfoundland.

defying British law, those fishermen that did settle in the mid-17th century, hid from the local merchants and British Navy by choosing secret, isolated inlets for their homes which were mostly accessible only by sea.

Despite the harsh conditions of Newfoundland's climate and terrain, settlers were able to earn a living. Consequently, the fishing industry continued to thrive; salt cod production for European, Caribbean, and North American markets continued on a grand scale. Many settlements such as Bonavista, were dominated by merchants. In spring and summer months, families fished on a small scale, trading supplies for fish with the local merchants for life's necessities. In the winter months, lumber and hunting were main means of survival.

With the advent of the twentieth century came industrialization and accumulation of capital on a grand scale. Unfortunately, Newfoundland "remained a resource base which supported [metropolitan] development" (O'Hollaren 1985:25). Newfoundland never participated in this wave of development - being geographically isolated and dependent on a mother country not terribly concerned with her fate (as long as money was to be made off the fish). Julie O'Hollaren cites in her thesis on development in Newfoundland The 1978 Report of the People's Commission on Unemployment (62): "For most of its history, Newfoundland has been an 'underdeveloped' part of some empire or nation" (1985:24).

The fact that Britain had granted Newfoundland Responsible Government in the last half of the nineteenth century, did not solve any of the problems; it only transferred them from Britain's hands to the Newfoundland elite.

Newfoundland's current interest in tourism should come as no surprise. "Canada's newest and possibly its most alienated province has had an unemployment rate of about 20

percent, twice the national average. Per capita income is but 70 percent of the Canadian average" (Overton 1996:2). Newfoundland has the lowest standard of living, the highest taxes, and the highest unemployment in Canada (19.4% for 1997). In addition, Newfoundland has the poorest public facilities in terms of schools, hospitals, roads and hydro/sewage. The province's main industries, fishing, mining and forestry, are not extensive enough to employ the great number of unemployed in the province, nor to revitalize the economy. All of the island's resource based industries have encountered grave problems, histories of mismanagement and threats of extinction, or they have limited possibilities for expansion. Rural Newfoundland has very similar problems to those of Third World nations and the underdeveloped regions of more developed nations. Carter explains the similarities:

High unemployment, under-employment, poverty, dependency and despair are not peculiar to this region, although they take on locally coloured manifestations. Mutual aid, co-operation and progressive struggle are necessary in rural Newfoundland...
(1988:226)

In recent years, it has been the fishing industry that has knocked the wind out of the province's economic and social structure. The collapse of the fish stocks and the closure of the cod fishery in mid-1992 not only destroyed the livelihood of thousands of rural fisherpersons and their families, but it also altered a way of life that had been in existence since the first European settlers set foot on the island's rocky, rugged shore. In 1992, the federal government developed The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy or TAGS, a \$1.9 billion retraining and income-support package, to aid the 40,000 who were thrown out of work. Many fisherpersons have hundreds of thousands of dollars invested in their fishing operations

and hang on to the hope that the fishery will recover⁶. Yet, even if the fish stocks do recover, the quotas will never be high enough to support all the people (probably only one quarter of them), who are expecting to return to their livelihood of cod fishing.

With the decline in the fishery, other avenues for capital expansion and growth have been explored; but as yet, none have been able to fill the ever widening hole that the demise of the fishing industry has left. For example, one of the sources for optimism for Newfoundlanders this past decade or so has been the development of the Hibernia offshore oil field. Unfortunately, its development has only just recently gotten off the ground, and Hibernia itself will not make Newfoundland rich. There is a small royalty payout until the oil companies make their profit, and after that seventy percent of royalties will go to Ottawa to pay equalization grants (CBC East Of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997).

Hardest hit have been the outport and rural communities which comprise about seventy percent of the population of Newfoundland. The resources and various industries these people rely on for economic sustenance can no longer support such large numbers. In addition, the federal government is cutting back on its aid to the province. Overton states:

In the last ten or so years the federal government has taken a tougher attitude toward Canada's poor regions and this has meant cuts in transfer payments and regional aid. In a province where about 50 percent of income comes from various federal transfers, the drastic impact of these changes hardly needs to be emphasized. Changes in the Unemployment Insurance system are also negatively affecting Newfoundland, making it harder for people to survive in rural areas.

(1996:2)

The present cause for alarm in the province has been the federal government's 1998 termination of the \$1.9 billion dollar TAGS funding for fisherpersons, a year earlier than

⁶ Federal Fisheries Minister, Fred Mifflin announced the re-opening of a limited cod fishery on the South coast for May 1st, 1997. Fishing was allowed under strict guidelines and regulated quotas on total catches and boat intake.

what was originally promised. The government stipulated that they miscalculated their quotas⁷ and that the money just wasn't there to give. As a result, the outport culture and way of life are in dire straits.

For the most part, the people of Newfoundland do not see TAGS as a program that they would prefer. Paul Green, manager of The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy for Newfoundland, believes that, "all of them would rather be back working in the fishery if the opportunities were there" (Smith, *The Evening Telegram* July 1997). Even though there are only half of the 32,000 still on TAGS who receive "only part or none of their income support payments because they are working", the harsh truth is that there are "more people on groundfish-related income support today than there were when the moratorium was announced five years ago" (Smith, *The Evening Telegram* July 1997). Dependence on TAGS supplements has been added to employment insurance and welfare.

The problem lies with what has been a history of federal, provincial and regional government mismanagement of the people of Newfoundland and their resources⁸. Because the government miscalculated the number of TAGS recipients, "money earmarked for training and buyouts quickly got shifted into straight income support. The program also met with stiff resistance from fishery workers unwilling to give up the only life they had known, or who felt they were too old to be retrained" (Bergman 1997:31).

Overall then the entire situation is extremely shaky and unstable for thousands of fisherpersons and their families. Not surprisingly, out-migration within the province is the highest in Canada. For example, census statistics show that the population of Newfoundland

⁷ Ottawa grossly underestimated the number of unemployed fisheries workers eligible for payments – 40,000 qualified rather than the estimated 26,000.

⁸ See Chapters one, three, four and five. Also see Mathews 1976; and Overton 1996.

and Labrador has declined by 2.9%, from 568,474 in 1991 to 551,792, in 1996 (Barron, *The Evening Telegram* April 1997:1). The youth, including the potential future intellectuals and leaders of the province, are leaving, heading to the mainland for jobs and security. Hence, the depopulation of the rural outport communities is a serious cause for concern. Statistics indicate that Newfoundland's population decreased by about 25,000 between July 1, 1993, and October 1, 1997, and has likely decreased another by 3,000 since (Flanagan, *The Evening Telegram* March 1998). As a result, the province lost an estimated \$40 million dollars in equalization payments due to this population decline, and another \$30 million dollars in 1998 due to a combination of tax cuts and transfer reductions announced in the February 24, 1998 federal budget. The situation may worsen because the province loses about \$10 million dollars for every 5,000 people who emigrate (Flanagan, *The Evening Telegram* March 1998).

Many suggestions have been voiced about how to solve Newfoundland's economic crisis. One writer even went so far as to suggest that the "final solution to the "Atlantic Canada problem" might be to relocate its residents westward and turn the region into one vast tourist park" (Overton 1996:2). This is not such a preposterous idea considering that since pre-Confederation, tourism has been repeatedly suggested as a strategy to deal with poverty in Newfoundland (Overton 1996:3). Again this past year, the fishery crisis dominated the lives of inhabitants of Newfoundland and Labrador. As the people struggle to find alternatives to the old economy, a major shift towards tourism has occurred, leading to a new emphasis on the island's heritage and cultural resources. Hence, the economic significance of tourism as an industry is important to Newfoundland's past, present and future.

iii The Political Context

The Liberal government of Newfoundland has recently expended a lot of energy promoting the province's cultural heritage and traditional way of life based on the outport culture. In keeping with the federal government's policy of promoting Canada's distinctive cultural forms for tourism, the provincial Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, has also stated that Newfoundland has a "definite comparative advantage" in the tourism market of "cultural tourism" (DTCR 1994:10). With the provincial economy in crisis, the province is hoping that the development of local industries will help to revitalize the economy wounded by the collapse of the fishery and other socio-economic problems. Government statistics have revealed the importance of the tourism industry in attracting foreign capital. The DTCR states:

For economic purposes, a difference is made between a resident (Newfoundlander or Labradorian) tourist travelling within his/her home Province and a non-resident tourist travelling to the Province. Every non-resident dollar attracted to the Province represents an export earning while every resident dollar retained in the Province represents an import substitution; while both types of expenditures are important, export dollars represent "new money" to the Province...the further the origin of the tourist from the Province, the more he/she is likely to spend while in the Province. Although non-residents represent only one-fifth of all tourists...they contribute fully one-third of the tourism revenues.

(1994:5)

Consequently, cultural tourism has been targeted by government as the market with the most potential for generating capital expansion and industrial development.

Like tourism organizations in Australia, New Zealand and most of Canada, pro-tourism organizations in Newfoundland advance a rhetoric that is committed to "sustainable development which includes economic, environmental, social and cultural dimensions"

(Craik 1994:160). Government texts boast of the far-reaching influence the tourism industry will have on all businesses and economic sectors of the province.

... “core” businesses, which generate most of the revenues from travellers (such as hotels, campgrounds, restaurants, lounges, car rental agencies, airlines, tour operators, outfitting lodges, etc.), secondary businesses, which generate a significant portion of their revenues from travellers (such as hotel and restaurant suppliers, taxi services, reservation systems, retailers, service stations, etc.), and tertiary businesses (like construction firms, advertising agencies, distillers, cartographers, etc.).

(DTCR 1994:6)

As a result, tourism promoters have targeted those spending the most money on touring the province. Advocacy for adventure tourism and especially cultural tourism has been the number one priority on the government’s agenda.

Premier Brian Tobin, in partnership with Tourism Minister Sandra Kelly, has advocated the importance of “keeping Newfoundland’s heritage alive.” In particular, the province’s tourism campaign objectives continue to promote those cultural attractions which “preserve and display the cultural heritage of the Province”, and “they aim to differentiate the tourism product in the market-place, especially in relation to the Maritime provinces” (Seymour 1980: 33)⁹. In a recent public address, the Premier commented on the province’s “majestic beauty and cultural richness;” he invited tourists to follow Cabot’s “historic lead, and discover...the character, the charm, and the adventure that is truly unique to Newfoundland and Labrador” (*Newfoundland Lifestyle* 1997:3).

In a joint project between the province of Newfoundland and Bristol, England, a replica of John Cabot’s ship the “*Mathew*” was constructed. Following Cabot’s putative route, the *Mathew* set sail from Bristol on May 2, 1997 and arrived in Bonavista on June

⁹ This is not new strategy as will be shown in the following chapters.

24th, 1997 - 500 years to the day that Newfoundland was first sighted. Thus began a summer long, province-wide celebration. “Some 1,400 artists from across the province have been recruited to stage more than 75 major events and projects, celebrating the province’s rich culture and history through music, dance, and poetry” (Bergman 1997:14). On hand to greet the *Mathew* as she entered Bonavista Harbour were Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and his Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh. In addition, there were Ireland’s Prime Minister, Italy’s President, Newfoundland’s Premier, Brian Tobin, Lieutenant-Governor Dr. Max House, as well as many other dignitaries from Canada and the rest of the world. This reenactment was a production of global scale and the whole world was its audience.

The international celebration of John Cabot’s Landfall included tens of thousands of tourists, the Royal Family, national and provincial delegations, and international media. It was the biggest tourism event in Newfoundland and Labrador’s history. With 17 official ports of call, and numerous unscheduled stops around the island, it was truly a province-wide celebration. Six hundred million viewers from around the world watched the *Mathew* sail into Bonavista and the accompanying celebration; 40,000 persons greeted the arrival of the *Mathew* in Bonavista; and more than 400,000 greeted the *Mathew* in Newfoundland itself. Addressing some 40,000 revellers on hand to welcome the *Mathew* into Bonavista Harbour, the Queen stated, “So Newfoundland became the link between the old and the new worlds...It represents the geographical and intellectual beginning of modern North America...” (*The Evening Telegram* 1997:1). The world was able to witness this historic moment as there were more than 150 journalists recording the event live for the world to witness.

The people of Newfoundland saw the *Mathew* as a symbol of their future - their aspirations, hope and faith in the survival of their people¹⁰. Trinity North MHA Doug Oldford's sentiments are representative of the province.

In the 500 years since John Cabot set foot upon these shores, we have become a resilient people tied to the land and sea. Like the voyage of the *Mathew*, we've had our ups and downs. But we persevered. We've learned from our past, and look forward to a brighter tomorrow. This Cabot 500 anniversary is a celebration of who we are, where we came from, all that we have accomplished. More importantly, it allows us to chart the beginning of the next 500 years.

(quoted in Norman, *The Packet* 1997:1)

Doug Moores, provincial chairman of the *Mathew* visitation committee, described the significance of the *Mathew* celebration as follows:

The *Mathew* visit will be a turning point in the history of the province. We showed the world what we can do. We have a tremendous amount to offer, from one end of this province to the other. The *Mathew* has focused it all. We've been here for 500 years. From what I've seen in the 17 ports of call, we'll be here at least 500 more.

(quoted in Norman, *The Packet* 1997:1)

Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, Sandra Kelly, commented on the importance of this event:

"This is an unprecedented opportunity for Newfoundland and Labrador to send a wonderful international message about our appeal as a tourism destination...Not only is the historical element of the Cabot anniversary of profound significance, but the Bonavista venue will be an excellent site from which to send out a warm welcome to the world."

(*The Evening Telegram* Special Section 1997:7)

Mayor of Bonavista, Don Tremblett felt confident that the media attention given to Newfoundland and specifically to Bonavista, would encourage a new wave of tourists to visit the province: "The foundation is laid because now everyone knows where Bonavista is. Everyone is aware of what we have, what our history is and what we have to offer and it's

¹⁰ Based on personal interviews of local residents and in-province tourists from various communities; and, quotes from newspaper articles. See methodology in Chapters one and five.

there to build on” (*The Packet* June 1997:2).

Similarly, Tourism Minister Sandra Kelly boasted of the province’s “very special and unique blend of Old World Hospitality and charm, and modern day conveniences” (*Newfoundland Lifestyle* 1997:11). As with past strategies, contemporary tourism strategy focuses on middle-class urban tourists who are looking for an “alternative to ‘mass tourism’ of the Disneyland type, or the air-conditioned Jamaican high-rise holiday with its perceived consumerism, impersonalization, and isolation from local cultures and ways of life” (Seymour 1980:33). These types of visitors are characterized as “cultural tourists.”

To summarize, Newfoundland has been no exception to a global trend towards utilizing cultural tourism as a means for economic development. Underdevelopment provides Newfoundland a context in which it is hoped that tourism will provide a basis for development. Focusing on Newfoundland’s comparative advantage in terms of the tourism market, it is no surprise that government and tourism boosters are promoting the island’s natural landscape, traditional way of life, and heritage. Importantly, underdevelopment provides the tourism industry with an opportunity to promote cultural tourism. As critical scholars note, “what is being packaged and sold...is the heritage of centuries of underdevelopment” (Overton 1979-80:119).

Despite the significant role tourism plays in national and regional economies, and its social and environmental effects, it has been only recently that the topic of tourism has found its way into mainstream academic literature as a viable and credible topic of study. Thus there has been a growing body of critical analyses of cultural tourism in the social, anthropological, and cultural studies literature. It is to these analyses that I turn in the next chapter.

Chapter two - The Critical Analysis of Tourism

In this chapter I draw upon a body of literature which critically analyzes the cultural politics within cultural tourism. In particular, I utilize the extensive work of James Overton who is a major scholar on Newfoundland tourism to critically analyze how culture is commodified in such a way that it evokes nostalgia.

Representational practices have consequences as they set up tourists' expectations; moreover, power relations can be reproduced when people and places are (mis)represented. Studies show that tourism forms distort real lives of people and the nature of place by promoting specific stereotypes (See Blundell 1989a, 1994; Urry 1990a, 1990b; MacCannell 1976; Smith 1989; Harp 1994; Craik 1994). Throughout Newfoundland's history a particular image has been promoted and perpetuated through what John Urry calls "the tourist gaze" (Urry 1990a). Newfoundland can be compared to Third World countries or underdeveloped nations, where in an absence of economic alternatives, attractions are constructed for the tourist gaze (Urry 1990a:65).

I Construction and Promotion of the Tourist Gaze – Issues of Nostalgia and Authenticity

i Nostalgia

For Urry, the tourist gaze is socially constructed within a context of commodification of "otherness." Historically, Newfoundland's tourism industry has promoted a specific gaze on Newfoundland. This has been accomplished through tourism advertisements that promote nostalgia, a strategy that engenders what Urry and other scholars call the romantic tourist gaze. According to Overton, "the Romantic's gaze is towards the past and it is from this

standpoint that they [Romantics] criticize the present...At the centre of the Romantic structure of feeling is nostalgia for a lost golden age...Re-enchantment of the world is sought in and through imagination and through attempts at “rediscovering paradise in the present”” (1996:9). Urry borrows from Hewison on this subject.¹¹ According to Hewison, it is in times of “discontent, anxiety or disappointment,” that people most strongly feel nostalgia towards the past” (1990a:109). When changes to the structure of one’s society are omnipresent, and traditional values and a way of life are under threat, people find solace in the “unchanged.” Whatever the threat may be - industrialization, disease, social and economic inequalities, resource depletion or government policy - the tourist gaze provides a diversion. Hewison points out that one’s “nostalgic memory” is a “socially organized construction.” In other words, “it is not whether we should or should not preserve the past, but what kind of past we have chosen to preserve” (1990a:109). This type of promotion is problematic because by solely concentrating on the nostalgic past, tourism promotion hides contemporary life from tourists.

This particular gaze has historical roots in Newfoundland. The work of MacCannell is important in understanding the romantic tourist gaze because historically the rise of modernity fed into the romantic tourist gaze and generated a backlash against development, capitalism, industrialism and war (MacCannell 1976:2-3). For example, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Newfoundland was advertised as a nostalgic and romantic place of visitation for urban dwellers worn down by capitalism and

¹¹ Urry cites Robert Hewison (1987) The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline. (London: Methuen). Hewison analyzes the conditions in which nostalgia, heritage and history are socially constructed.

industrialization. Newfoundland was a place to get back to one's natural roots and regain one's health. Then, beginning in the 1940's, state officials appealed to the nostalgic sentiment of expatriate Newfoundlanders; the image created and promoted about the people of Newfoundland focused on them as traditional, rustic, natural and hospitable.

Newfoundland's local distinctiveness was commodified for the tourist gaze. The tourist gaze was socially constructed during times of war and conflict over Newfoundland's inclusion in Canada (1949), by appealing to expatriate Newfoundlanders yearning for the 'good old days.'

Throughout Newfoundland's history of tourism development, tourism promotion reflected the social and political climate of the day. Romantics conceptualized the island as a utopian world where one could get away from industrialization, modernization and general malaise. That romanticized image, put forth decades ago, persists in tourism advertising today. Contemporary tourism advertisements perpetuate the feelings of nostalgia stemming historically from the Romantic movement of the nineteenth century, where tourists travelled to rustic, traditional and pre-modern cultures to experience 'authentic' existence and to find meaning in their lives that was thought to have been lost in the urban, industrial world. Once again, nostalgia about traditional Newfoundland is being promoted at a time when the fishery has collapsed, out-migration is at an all-time high, and many feel the outport mode of existence is waning. Below I cite recent examples of tourism ads that appeal to the modern tourist's sense of nostalgia for simpler, more meaningful forms of existence:

The real excitement of a Newfoundland and Labrador vacation is "off the beaten track," down the hundreds of roads that lead to its heart...Here you will encounter one of North America's oldest surviving folk cultures. The people living here, on the doorstep of the New World, have preserved a rich tradition of language, music and folklore that they brought with them from the Old World centuries ago...Generations

of proud Newfoundlanders have valued this rich heritage and have kept it alive. Centuries of isolation in a unique natural environment have shaped and molded this legacy into a culture that is like no other... This is a land of crystal clear waters, breathtakingly beautiful scenery and the freshest air that you will ever breath...

(Newfoundland and Labrador Travel Guide 1990)

Eastern Newfoundland... throughout the entire region, you will see signs of a different age. The churches, public buildings and private homes reflect this more genteel period, when there was time for taking care and people took pride in craftsmanship. It's all part of the charm of Eastern Newfoundland... The sights and sounds of these historic communities will please your senses and fill your thoughts long after you have returned.

(Newfoundland and Labrador Travel Guide 1991:81)

A land that lives by the sea... inhabited by great hearted people who grow up to the sound of the surf and smell of fresh salt air. The coastline is dotted with communities, some accessible only by boat. Others can be reached by magnificent coastal roads with breathtaking views and dramatic exposures as you drive to the harbours and fishing villages that are definitely off the beaten track... Feel the moisture against your skin when the whale exhales into the wind. Get so close that you can smell its salty breath as the spray from a blow whispers over the boat. Take the memory home and keep it forever... Icebergs are thrown in for free... Come and take it all in. You'll see more than you imagined. You'll leave knowing a whole lot more.

(Travel Guide 1996:14-15)

Here's where tradition isn't recreated. It lives on and on, every day...

(Travel Guide 1996:17)

Come to Labrador, and you visit one of the last wilderness areas on the earth. A place that will awaken your heart and soul.

(Travel Guide 1996: 23)

Hear in our music and traditions of our ancestors - the strains of French fiddles, the beat of Irish bodhran drums, and the ballads of England. See how our unique lifestyle and spectacular landscapes influence our photography, writings, films, paintings, and prints. Listen to the words of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians as they express their thoughts on our history, our culture, and our environment...

(500th Anniversary Festivals and Events Calendar 1997)

ii Authenticity

Whereas in pre-modern times tourism was very much a hobby for the elite, modern societies tend to be characterized by mass tourism (Urry 1990a:4-5). Tourism in modern society is a marker of social and economic status, in addition to being seen as beneficial to one's health (Urry 1990a:4). Overton discusses how MacCannell links tourism with modernity in terms of how people perceive their world and themselves (Overton 1996:7). According to MacCannell: "Modernity first [strikes] everyone...as disorganized fragments, alienating, wasteful, violent, superficial, unplanned, unstable and unauthentic" (1976:8). The modern world is one of inauthenticity and alienation. In other words, "for moderns reality and authenticity are thought to be elsewhere; in other historical periods and other cultures, in purer, simpler lifestyles" (MacCannell 1976:2)¹². People utilize the tourist experience as a means by which to centre themselves in a changing world, in which they feel overwhelmed, lost or alienated. They attempt to get away from the modern city, and search for authentic people and primitive lifestyles. Thus, great numbers of tourists focus the tourist gaze on places such as Newfoundland.

John Urry touches upon the theory of tourists and their gazes in his book The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies (1990a). Urry examines the reasons behind people's motivations for taking short periods of leave away from their usual place of work and residence (1990a:1). He writes:

It is about consuming goods and services which are in some sense unnecessary...are consumed because they supposedly generate pleasurable experiences which are

¹² I agree with Overton who points out that MacCannell's analysis is "class-specific". In other words, MacCannell's discussion of tourism, "is limited by the assumption that the way in which modernity appears to some people in some places, in some periods, is the way it appears to all people, in all places, at all times" (Overton 1996:8).

different from those typically encountered in everyday life. And yet part at least of that experience is to gaze upon or view a set of different scenes, of landscapes or townscape which are out of the ordinary...even in the production of “unnecessary” pleasure there are in fact many professional experts who help to construct and develop our gaze as tourists.

(1990a:1)

The tourist gaze like culture is constantly being reconstructed; and as Urry postulates, “...it varies by society, by social group and by historical period” (1990a:1). Therefore, it is important to examine and focus on the “processes by which the gaze is constructed and reinforced, and...consider who or what authorizes it and what its consequences are for the “places” which are its object, and how it interrelates with a variety of other social practices” (Urry 1990a:1). One must be critical of the people/institutions responsible for symbolizing a people’s culture. Tourism boosters and entrepreneurs play a vital role in constructing and promoting a particular atmosphere and visual image for the tourist. Consequently, it is important to examine the role that textual and visual representations (e.g. tourism ads, brochures, and attractions), and tourism policy play in perpetuating these stereotypes and shaping what tourists expect to see and how they conceptualize what they do see. For example, one type of attraction which is popular amongst visitors looking to experience “authentic” Newfoundland culture, as advertised in a brochure by Island Rendezvous tourism agency, is the holiday one can spend in abandoned communities from the Smallwood resettlement scheme of the 1950’s and 1960’s (See Chapter three). Probably the best known of these tourist attractions is Woody Island in Placentia Bay. The tourist is brought to the secluded, abandoned community by boat, promoted in tourism ads as a place where one can enjoy authentic and traditional meals, music, boat tours - all in an actual resettled community from the 1950’s. For the most part, the houses and fish stages and stores, and church are still

standing. People can see how “authentic” Newfoundlanders lived before globalization and commercialization, before Newfoundland was part of Canada. Tourism ads promote this type of tour as “a discovery of the past” (*The Newfoundland Conventioneer* 1997:5). Another tourism brochure likens this “escape to a deserted island,” to “slipping through a hole in time and stepping into an age gone by” (*Island Rendezvous Mount Pearl Newfoundland* 1997).

Authenticity is constituted as being linked with the past; tourism promotes nostalgia for a life before Confederation and modernization. But, for many, this is not a past that should be glorified and celebrated. These communities that tourists gaze upon and that tourism agencies make money from, are the skeletal remains of economic crisis, political oppression and manipulation, and the people’s loss of their homes and communities. Ironically, many local people of Newfoundland are utilizing the tourism industry for the sole purpose of rejuvenating their outport settlements, in the hope that their communities do not become more “Woody Islands.”

Both Urry and MacCannell discuss the role of the tourist in promoting a context in which underdeveloped communities continue to be oppressed, subordinated and stereotyped as a result of the “tourist gaze” and expectations.

For the purpose of attracting visitors and income, host communities provide a mythic ideal for tourists to visit. Thus, host communities tend to preserve and ‘represent’ a past that may not coincide with the reality of their everyday experiences, or even the everyday life of the past.

iii “Staged Authenticity”

Urry makes an excellent point when he comments that, “...fascination is shown by tourists in the ‘real lives’ of others which somehow possess a reality which is hard to discover in people’s own experiences. Modern society is...rapidly institutionalizing the rights of outsiders to look into its workings” (1990a:8). Cultural tourists not only desire to observe or gaze upon other cultures and people, they also desire to be active participants within other cultures. Tourism as an industry, or more importantly as a business, empowers government, tourism entrepreneurs and local peoples in different and predominantly conflicting ways, towards economic and cultural development. Different social relations arise from the interaction resulting from tourists and their fascination with other people’s “real lives” (Urry 1990a:9). MacCannell discusses the effects of the “tourist gaze” on host peoples and tourism boosters, and how it affects the production and organization of tourist space. Urry writes:

‘Tourist spaces’ are thus organized around what MacCannell calls ‘staged authenticity’ (1976). The development of the constructed tourist attraction results from how those who are subject to the tourist gaze respond, both to protect themselves from the intrusions into their lives backstage and to take advantage of the opportunities it presents for profitable investment.

(1990a:9)

Theron Nunez provides a chapter regarding the dilemma surrounding issues of “staged authenticity” in Valene Smith’s book Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism (1989). Both tourists and hosts prepare for their particular roles backstage: hosts follow government policies such as clean up campaigns, attend community meetings on behaviour conduct, or read about tourism in the newspapers. Guests also engage in research

on their intended people and place of visitation (e.g. through tourism magazines or travel brochures). This background knowledge provides them with the confidence to adopt a superior status over the host peoples with regard to financial, class, or political power. Hence, what results is a “staged authenticity” where people behave the way they are told or the way they think they should from outside influence. MacCannell elaborates on this issue:

Touristic consciousness is motivated by its desire for authentic experiences; and the tourist may believe that he/[she] is moving in this direction, but very often it is very difficult to know for sure if the experience is in fact authentic. It is always possible that what is taken to be entry into a back region is really entry into a front region that has been totally set up in advance for touristic visitation. In touristic settings, especially in industrial society, it may be necessary to discount the importance, and even the existence, of front and back regions except as ideal poles of touristic experience.

(1976:101)

Nunez comments on how in the host-guest interaction, a taxi driver for example, may take on the role of historian or expert in the history of ruins or social relations of his/her region or community, while guests may take on the role of affluent, high class travellers because their money may have more value than it does in their original place of residence (1989:71). When tourists encounter the various cultural forms promoted through tourism - be it art, attractions, sites, or souvenirs - it is important to understand the “...process by which tourists “read” meanings from such cultural forms... one must take into account the prior understandings that tourists bring to such encounters” (Blundell et al 1989:30). The growing dilemma of tourism is that people are visiting “the other” for the purpose of experiencing authenticity; yet, at the same time, the industry frustrates this process by manipulating tourist space to conform to the tourist gaze, thus destroying authenticity. Therefore, one must keep in mind that:

“Back regions,” like Newfoundland, are just as much a product of the logic of capitalism as “front regions.” The logic of the tourist trade touches the former as well as the latter, although perhaps in less obvious and sometimes more subtle ways. The distinction between “back” and “front” regions, between “real” and “staged” authenticity, is one which cannot be maintained.

(Overton 1996:164)

The (mis)representation of a culture and people through tourism’s cultural forms can be extremely detrimental to host communities as well as tourists because tourists only visit their hosts for a short period of time. Thus, whatever tourists consume in that short period of time will shape their perception of a particular culture. Laxson, in his article “How “WE” See “THEM”: Tourism and Native Americans” (1990), notes that when encounters between tourists and hosts are short, stereotypes can be quickly formulated and not easily discarded (1991:378). “Most of them (tourists) do not realize that their perceptions of the world are not universal to all cultures, and they do not see how much their own perceptions contribute to their cultural stereotypes. For many reasons, other cultures may be unwilling to challenge some of these stereotypes” (Laxson 1991:378)¹³. In consequence, class, social and economic inequalities and insubordination can begin to govern existing norms and values where these barriers never existed before (MacCannell 1976:177).

Consequently, when tourists go to museums or are observers at festivals and reenactments, their experiences are taken as a reflection of the society involved. Reflecting upon his research on tourists and Native Americans, Laxson further comments that, “these stereotypes, or rigid mental images of a culture are not checked against reality, nor modified by contradictory experience” (1991:373). Hence, the economic, political, and social reasons and motivations behind tourism policy and programs are not critically examined.

¹³ For example, because of the economic benefits involved such as employment opportunities, development advantages, or cultural control.

Unfortunately, the authentic experience that the tourist leaves home in search of through visiting other people and places, can end up being “contrived and orchestrated forms of “authenticity” that, in fact, reproduce a fallacious world” (Blundell 1989a:57).

In conclusion, the inhabitants of Newfoundland, the tourists themselves and tourism entrepreneurs, have their own specific reasons for helping to perpetuate the stereotypes and mythic ideologies found in tourism campaigns. The power to represent one’s cultural forms within the tourism industry involves a very complex system of power relationships, where hosts and guests struggle for control over cultural resources.

II Commodity Production and Consumption

Monetary incentives are the real driving force behind tourism. Hence, one must examine the different levels of economic relations existing within the context of commodity production, provision of services and consumption in host communities. Tourism is first and foremost a business and, “part of what is involved in tourism is the purchase of a particular social experience...”(Urry 1990a:141). In a competitive globalized market, it is crucial to direct the tourist gaze towards distinct objects or features, sites or attractions - all of these must be unique. I agree with Overton’s claim that, “There is no “authentic” cultural identity which is beyond the influence of commerce and state...At least since the late nineteenth century tourist promotion has played an important part in shaping not only visitor experiences but the self-image and public culture of Newfoundland” (1996:164-165).

The commodification of Newfoundland’s ‘underdevelopment’ as it were, is not a new strategy in the history of the province’s tourism industry. It is “...precisely because Newfoundland is underdeveloped that those tourist commodities which are now in demand

can be offered” (Seymour 1980:34), and hence become a marketable commodity for tourist consumption. Newfoundland has always been marketed as a unique place, “where the Old World meets the New” (1997 Cabot 500 tourism brochure, The John Cabot (1997) 500th Anniversary Corporation).

But far and beyond all else, the tourism industry has portrayed the island’s ‘true’ national character as residing in the traditional outport way of life. Thus, in order to experience ‘real’ authentic culture, one must take the back roads and integrate oneself into this lifestyle. Attractions, sites, spectacles and the people - all constructed by tourism boosters and state - help in convincing the visitor that they have gotten their money’s worth and have seen and experienced raw and untainted Newfoundland culture. The act of consumption comes into play as it allows guests to feel as if they have become a part of this authentic experience. For example, one souvenir shop plays on such tourist mentality, inviting tourists to take “home a little piece of Newfoundland” (Cabot 500 Years Newfoundland and Labrador 1997:31). Purchasing an “authentic” souvenir or participating in a “traditional” Newfoundland experience, invites tourists to feel as if they have taken on their hosts’ identity in some way; they have shed the malaise of modern, industrialized life, and can go back home rejuvenated and somewhat wiser for having lived through the experience. And of course they have their souvenirs, pictures, and pamphlets as proof of their journey.

Authenticity is to be found in all those experiences which are “national” in character; and through tourism, certain commodities have become symbols of “Newfoundland’s nationality” (Overton 1996:145). The present tourism movement in Newfoundland has revived all of these national symbols, and the Cabot celebrations displayed them on a world

stage. Newfoundland's distinct cultural forms were highlighted during the festivities: the Newfoundland dog parade, the Ryan's Premises opening, boats, icebergs, whales and the sea, and the unique language. In fact, there wasn't a tourist brochure or advertisement that didn't boast of these distinctive cultural forms which make up the national character of the province. There has even been a ten cent piece designed with the *Mathew* on it to exemplify and praise Newfoundland's significance in Canadian history.

Tourism allows for commodities to be separated from their actual social, cultural, political and economic contexts, thus allowing a sort of "mythological process" to occur with regard to the people and place (Overton 1996:108). According to Overton, "What the tourist industry does is to place the commodities which it produces and sells (gasoline, travel, food, souvenirs, accommodation, financial services, literature...) within a mythological structure, the tourist spectacle. Building on the peculiarities of a people and a region in a highly selective way it, for example, creates a sentimentalized culture which is suitable for mobilizing consumers" (Overton 1996:108). Therefore, when one buys a souvenir or visits a particular site as advertised in tourism brochures, visitors only see the end product. They do not see the conflicts which may have occurred between tourism officials and developers on one hand, and local residents on the other. Souvenirs marked as "authentic Newfoundland memorabilia" disguise the fact that these products were, in many cases, mass produced by commercial corporations and not by local residents. For example, one out-of-province agency mimicked the official Cabot 500 hat, marketing their reproduction as the "authentic" and "official" Cabot hat of the 1997 Cabot 500 Celebrations - making thousands of dollars

from what was supposed to have been a Newfoundland trademark¹⁴. Guests see beautiful landmarks and attractions, oblivious to the fact that rural Newfoundlanders have had their traditional methods of livelihood and subsistence restricted or demolished. Smiling rugged fishermen can be found on almost every souvenir and in every ad; yet, in reality, one could actually say there are no active traditional, “authentic” fishermen left in the province anymore - just illegal ones!

Government policy and public relations promote participation of the rural Newfoundlander in the tourism industry. It promotes the role of tourism in diversifying rural economies and in rejuvenating industry and resource development. Hence, tourism advertising and consumption are areas where cultural politics come to the foreground.

III Conclusions

Newfoundland's tourism industry - past and present - has consistently constructed and perpetuated themes of nostalgia and authenticity for the tourist gaze, and as a particular experience that can be purchased by the tourist. The purpose of this chapter was to provide a review of the literature on the problematic themes within the cultural tourism discourse. It has been shown that the promotion and commodification of themes within the tourism industry has profound consequences on the people and their contemporary social relations (Harp 1994:197-198). Similar to Blundell's observations of First Peoples' tourism sites and promotional materials, the issue is not that the past is depicted, but how the past is depicted

¹⁴ This information was revealed to me through conversations with residents and business owners in Trinity. It was a major topic of conversation at the Trinity celebrations.

and how it is disconnected from the present (1994:17). Blundell states, "Too often travel ads and tourist sites emphasize the so-called "traditional" or "heritage" forms of First Peoples in ways that disconnect them from their former and contemporary lived contexts" (1994: 17). Newfoundland's tourism industry also promotes "traditional" or "heritage" forms of local Newfoundlanders in their promotional materials and policy texts, thus contributing to the reproduction of biased views about the Newfoundland people and culture.

This is problematic because focusing on the past hides contemporary life from tourists. In consequence, social, political, economic and cultural inequalities and injustices are not addressed or perceived. In addition, these idealizations of the past aid in perpetuating unequal relations between the local people and power elite, by conforming to a dominant ideology which can guide and direct action by the people and the state through tourism policy implementation.

The following chapters will provide historical and contemporary background on these problematic issues as they have arisen in the promotion and commodification of cultural tourism in Newfoundland.

Chapter three - Tourism and Development in Newfoundland: the Historical Background

I Pre-Confederation: 1890-1949

Newfoundland's recent promotion of cultural tourism is not new. As mentioned in Chapter one, beginning with the fishery crisis of the late 1890's, Newfoundland has had a long history of promoting tourism as an economic strategy in times of economic decline. As Seymour notes, "since the late nineteenth century tourism has repeatedly been regarded as one solution to the social and economic problems which have plagued the province" (1980:34).

Various interested parties from the United States and Europe, such as artists, those interested in hunting and fishing, natural historians and academics, had been visiting the island throughout the nineteenth century. There were even books published during this time in England by well-known sportsmen of the day (like Hesketh Pritchard, F.C. Selous, and J.G. Millais) on the richness and abundance of Newfoundland's game resources (Smallwood 1931:52). However, it was not until late in the nineteenth century that emphasis was placed on organizing people to come to Newfoundland as "tourists".

The completion of the trans-island railway from St. John's to Port aux Basques in the late 1890's facilitated growth in the tourism industry. The construction of the railway provided the connection between tourism and industrial development (Seymour 1980:35). Promoting tourism was seen as the road to progress. With tourism came a better way of life for the local people: global exposure, trade and capital investment, resource development, luxuries such as hotels, stores, and resorts, and most importantly the creation of jobs.

Yet, from early on, it has been argued that the desire for tourism development came predominantly from the middle-class (Overton 1996:12). Economic diversification was promoted by merchants, shopkeepers, tradesmen, farmers, etc. They were advocates of progress and for development of the island's resources, and were in a position to profit most from such development (Overton 1996:12).

Tourism was seen as a way of bringing Newfoundland into touch with the modern world. The construction of the railway connected Newfoundland to national and international industry. From the late nineteenth century on, tourism was viewed as contributing to economic diversification and industrial progress. The railway company also played a critical role in promoting tourism in the province. Overton writes:

The railway company produced some of Newfoundland's first tourist promotional literature, advertising the country as a sportsman's paradise, abundant in caribou and other game. The country's scenery and climate, were also promoted as an appeal was made to artists (photographers, sketchers, painters) and adventurers to visit the "new playground of America." But Newfoundland was also presented as a "health resort," a "sanatorium for...weary brain-workers."

(1996:12)

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was a widespread movement in Europe and North America which promoted the return to nature as a cure for general illnesses and neuroses (Overton 1996:12-13). Complementing the "back to nature" theme of this period, many writers of the late nineteenth century also produced tourist literature which connected mental health with returning to primitive or natural roots through leisure (Overton 1996:14). For example, Norman Duncan, a writer for McClure's magazine, claimed that "the Real Newfoundland" was to be found in the numerous outports situated throughout the island (Overton 1996:14).

Thus, when attempting to understand the tourism literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which promoted Newfoundland as a haven for guests to visit and rejuvenate their health, one must look at the “broad social movement which emerged during this period,” which influenced the marketing strategies implemented by tourism boosters (Overton 1996:13-14). As more and more of the educated elite saw a need for leisure and rejuvenation, Newfoundland became a haven from modernity, capitalism, and illness. The tourism promoters advertised accordingly. Focus on Newfoundland’s geographical uniqueness and beauty became a marketing strategy to attract visitors to the island.

Newfoundland’s turn of the century marketing campaign started out promoting the island’s rural, outport settlements for their natural landscapes and for the unique and simple way of life of outport residents. What was done in order to appeal to those disenchanted with modernity or to those suffering ill health as a result of a modern, industrialized existence, became symbols which helped to define the people of Newfoundland and provide them with their rich, unique cultural heritage (Overton 1996:17).

From these beginnings in the early 1900’s, the tourism industry grew as small numbers ¹⁵ of people came to Newfoundland to experience leisure rather than visiting more conventional holiday places. As Overton notes, “the promoters of tourism aimed to attract relatively wealthy North Americans and Europeans...Newfoundland attracted a few princes, politicians, business tycoons, and famous big game hunters (1996:18).

It was also during the early twentieth century that more state initiatives were undertaken to put in place the infrastructure required to establish a tourism industry. For

¹⁵ Around 5,000 people had visited the province in the mid-1920’s (Overton 1996:20).

example, in the 1920's "roads were repaired, motels and roadhouses were built outside city centres, and salmon-fishing facilities were developed" (Smallwood 1931:54-59). In 1925 a Newfoundland Tourist and Publicity Commission was formed: provincial tourism literature was prepared, information bureaus were established in other countries, and tours were also conducted to promote the island's local culture and history; historical landmarks were also restored (Seymour 1980:35-36).

In 1929 alone, "the Commission had circulated over 100,000 pamphlets and advertised in magazines...there were 8,347 visitors who spent \$834,000 dollars...(Smallwood 1931:61). In addition, "special sub-committees" were formulated to organize "advertising, hotels, local transportation, historical attractions, sporting attractions, natural resources" (Smallwood 1931:58-59). Unfortunately, these development plans were abandoned prematurely when World War I and economic depression left little room for expansion in the tourism industry. This affected the number of tourists who visited the province at this time. In 1930 there were 7,545 visitors; but those figures fell in 1931 to 7,203, and by 1932 the figures were down to a mere 5,400 visitors (Overton 1996:20).

In 1932, under Prime Minister Richard Squires, the government had collapsed and the colony was insolvent, unable to make payments on the colony's debt. The merchants were worried about colonial bankruptcy and political crisis (CBC East Of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997). The merchants and businessmen from St. John's and the bigger fishing towns were pushing for British control once again. As a result, on November 28, 1933¹⁶, the Newfoundland legislature voted against further self-government. Britain could impose a

¹⁶ This was unique in the British Empire and Commonwealth.

government upon Newfoundland's elected national assembly, provided that they would pay the colonial debt. Many claim that direct British rule since 1933 kept the Newfoundland people "barefoot and ignorant" (CBC East Of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997).

In a world that was rapidly becoming industrialized and modernized, Newfoundland's socio-economic system could not sustain itself. Competition in the world market for salt cod was increasing as bigger and better fishing technologies could capture more and more fish. As well, the growing fresh fish industry left little need for salt cod from Newfoundland. This, coupled with the depression and political instability, caused the island to reach desperate levels of poverty. Along with industrialization came urbanization. The island was only sparsely populated, with almost 1,500 rural communities; the majority of these communities had fewer than 300 inhabitants (Mathews 1976:1). These isolated communities were spread out over 6,000 miles of rugged and often inaccessible coastline (Mathews 1976:1). Geography, along with their reliance on the fishery, made small communities extremely vulnerable. O'Hollaren comments:

As in any single-industry economy, Newfoundland was vulnerable. In this sense, it may be compared to Third World countries and underdeveloped regions - its vulnerability at the hands of outside forces, especially when coupled with internal mismanagement, compared with most of mainland Canada...

(1985:26)

Despite Newfoundland's economic and socio-political problems under the British-appointed Commission of Government, tourism development continued. The state came to play an even more active role in tourism development than in previous years. Improvements in tourist infrastructure continued, and a lot of attention was paid to advertising and publicity. For example, "Lee Wulff, a professional sportsman, photographer and writer was hired.

Under his guidance promotional films were produced for the North American market. In 1940 Wulff gave 23 lectures and picture shows in the United States” (Overton 1996:24).

Although World War II temporarily stunted any tourism development, post-war tourism and tourism development sparked great optimism for the province. The war had heightened Newfoundland’s exposure as a tourist haven for military personnel from the United States and Great Britain. The Newfoundland Tourist Development Board appointed “a full-time Director...and a West Coast branch of the Board was formed in Corner Brook, one of the main centres for those attracted to Newfoundland by the fishing” (Overton 1996:24). An advertising campaign was aimed at expatriate Newfoundlanders in the hope of instilling within them nostalgia towards the island and its people, and enticing them to return.

However, by the late 1940’s Newfoundland was in grave financial trouble, and the Commission of Government was in no position to come to the island’s aid. Britain had her own problems to worry about as well as the added difficulty of trying to administer Newfoundland’s economic and political affairs from across the Atlantic. Thus, when the Canadian government pushed for Confederation, promising support for isolated and somewhat abandoned communities, many Newfoundlanders responded enthusiastically.

II Tourism Post-Confederation - “The Smallwood Years”

Under the leadership of Joseph R. Smallwood, Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949, becoming Canada’s tenth province. Smallwood engineered Newfoundland’s union with Canada and served for over twenty years as the island’s first premier. When Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949, it was done out of necessity, for the years of mismanagement had “drained her of more resources than her one commodity, the fishery,

could provide” (Mathews 1976:1). Only a small elite had become rich; the majority were living in small rural fishing villages where they were “totally dependent on the precarious fortunes of the erratic inshore fishery and the good graces of the village merchant” (Mathews 1976:1). As Mathews notes, there were basically no industries on the island:

Standards of living were low. Educational facilities were poor. Roads were almost nonexistent. Hospitals were widely scattered. Social assistance in time of need was meager. Most Newfoundlanders were living a peasant existence much as their forefathers had done for generations.

(1976:1)

The people were desperate and eager for quick solutions. When Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949, Smallwood’s government inherited a \$45 million dollar budget surplus left behind by the unpopular but frugal British commissioners who had governed since 1933. Newfoundland was far behind the other provinces as far as economic development was concerned. Smallwood recognized this and personally took on the portfolio of economic development. Because he wanted to reduce Newfoundland’s reliance on the fishery, his motto became, “develop or perish.” Smallwood revolutionized the economic structure of the island, pushing a political and economic strategy which emphasized modernization and industrialization. Between 1950 and 1956, about fifteen enterprises were started (CBC East of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997). Roads were built, and the health care system was improved, as was the educational system. Seniors got old-age pension cheques. Young families received the baby bonus. Goods could be ordered duty-free. Smallwood was determined to bring Newfoundlanders “kicking and screaming into the twentieth century” (Mathews 1976:169).

Smallwood sought outside investors to stimulate the economy and develop the island’s natural resources. Tourism seemed like the perfect industry to initiate and promote

outside capital investment. In addition, improvements in air transport, communication, and advertising were opening up new and prosperous opportunities for tourism (Overton 1996:22). Smallwood had always been a tourism booster, and he held great hopes for the tourism industry and its role in Newfoundland's economic and industrial future. These sentiments were reflected as early as the 1930's when Smallwood wrote a book called The New Newfoundland (1931), which was intended to promote the province to North Americans. Smallwood created an idyllic image of Newfoundland in order to promote tourism:

Newfoundland has not been spoiled; nor has she become sophisticated, as other better-known resorts have been... There is no other country in North America where life is simpler, where the people are more genuine and hospitable, where outdoor attractions are more numerous or so easily availed of, or where greater joy of living can be experienced for so small a cash outlay. There are literally hundreds of fishing settlements and villages in Newfoundland that have yet to see their first tourist; there are many hundreds of ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, and brooks that have yet to be fished by white men; there are thousands of miles of territory that have never been trod.

(1931:64)

Smallwood pushed for more government participation and active involvement in tourism development. Surveys and studies were conducted to assess the province's tourism potential. For example, in 1950 "a preliminary study of the province's tourism potential was undertaken by Leo Dolan, Director of the Canadian Government Travel Bureau in Ottawa..." (Overton 1996:27). From this survey, Newfoundland's potential for tourism was recognized. It was concluded that if the right steps were taken and the proper leadership provided, the Newfoundland tourism industry had the potential to appeal to all types of travellers from all over the world. Yet, in order for any of this to happen a "tourist consciousness" would have to be developed "among the whole people of Newfoundland" (Overton 1996:27).

In the 1950's, "prospects for an expansion of the tourist sector seemed bright as the post-war period saw the rise of "mass tourism" associated with rising affluence, longer holidays, the growth of the leisure/tourism industry, and the widespread use of the automobile" (Overton 1996:104). Dolan's survey noted that the provincial government was to play a key role in "planning and encouraging tourism development" (Overton 1996:27-28). This laid the foundation for a policy aimed at developing an appropriate infrastructure to encourage post-war tourists to visit the province. Government "made loans and grants available to the private sector to assist in the construction of accommodation facilities. In the 1950's a Tourist Development Loan Board was established to provide matching grants, and this program was reactivated in the early 1960's..." (Seymour 1980:37). At the same time, Smallwood proceeded with tourism development slowly and with caution. He wanted to ensure that the roads, facilities, accommodations and services were accessible and of high quality before any tourists came in large numbers.

In the late 1950's, ferry services were established – an extension of the Canadian National Railway (CNR) - from North Sydney to Port Aux Basques, Terra Nova National Park was opened in 1961, and construction began on the Trans-Canada Highway. Completed in the mid-1960's, the Trans-Canada Highway connected Port Aux Basques to St. John's, and effectively opened up the province to motorized tourists from the mainland for the first time in the industry's history. Along with the highway came roadside cabins/motels and camping/trailer parks (Overton 1979-80:118), as well as restaurants, service stations, and hospitality homes. Improved roads and parks were constructed in more remote areas. Much of the infrastructure received financial assistance from the state.

In the post-confederation period, Smallwood saw tourism not only in economic terms, but in political terms as well: "...tourism was seen not just as an industry but as part of a broad plan to spread information about Newfoundland in the business world..."(Overton 1996:30;23).

Smallwood's social 'revolution' of the 1950's and 1960's changed the cultural, economic and political climate of Newfoundland in many lasting ways. Smallwood believed that the offshore fishery was the wave of the future for economic gain and expansion. Inshore fishing was believed to be too primitive and difficult for the rural fisherman. Resettlement and emigration were strongly related to Smallwood's "develop or perish" policies, and to development. Smallwood wanted to resettle the various outport communities to larger centres with factories, fishplants, better schools and services - to bring about a better standard of living. Centralization was a means to capital expansion and resource development. But in most small communities, fishing was the only industry. The government offered money to each family in those isolated communities if they would move to where there were roads and power. During the 1960's and early 1970's, 30,000 people were relocated and more than 3,000 outports abandoned. For many, this was a good move, but for more it was a bad move. Families that lived in the outports were self-supporting. After they moved, many ended up on welfare after three years (CBC East of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997).

Smallwood was an avid supporter of preserving Newfoundland's rural culture; as President of the Historical Society in the mid-1960's, he played a prominent role in creating programs and campaigns toward this end. Yet, at the same time, Smallwood realized that "promotion without improvements in accessibility, accommodation, and services needed for

tourism was of limited value. Not only would limited benefits be derived from tourism, but the tourists might have negative experiences which they would publicize” (Overton 1996:38). Consequently, Smallwood was a pivotal advocate for progressive and modern infrastructure development in Newfoundland to promote the island’s industry in competition with other tourist destinations.

III The Post-Smallwood Years: 1970’s and 1980’s

It was during the 1970’s after the modernization ideology of Joe Smallwood, that a more “small is beautiful” approach was taken towards development in Newfoundland. Policy-makers envisioned Newfoundland as “a post-industrial society” (Overton 1996:32). This was repeated in the rhetoric of Brian Peckford’s Conservative government, which advocated returning to Newfoundland’s roots and placing value on the island’s rural, natural characteristics. Peckford’s ‘rural’ ideology of the 1970’s included promotion of outdoor leisure activities. More then ever tourism was increasing in popularity. Tourists, who were mostly middle-class, visited Newfoundland because they “valued nature and people living close to nature” (Overton 1996:33).

Growing numbers of visitors reflected Newfoundland’s popularity among tourists. Non-resident statistics based on auto and air travel within the full year (January to December) for 1973 revealed that 228,457 people visited Newfoundland with expenditures totaling up to \$30,028,700 (DTCR July 5 1996). By 1979 there were 264,800 non-resident visitors with a total expenditure of \$58,344,000 (DTCR July 5 1996). Numbers rose steadily throughout the 1980’s, and by 1989 there were 304,724 non resident visitors, and total expenditures came to \$130,012,200 (DTCR July 5 1996).

As in previous years, the 1970's saw continued support from federal and provincial governments to promote tourism. For example, in 1979, the province of Newfoundland signed a \$13.2 million dollar Tourism Agreement with the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) (Seymour 1980:32). In focusing on tourism development, the provincial bourgeoisie aimed to acquire independence from federal influence in deciding the province's future development. Resource development was seen as essential to gaining "independent financial power within the federal system" (Overton 1978:111). Tourism promotion and its subsequent infrastructure development and policy implementation supported these political aims.

Once again, promotion of the island's heritage and unique cultural forms was advocated as a tourism strategy aimed at generating outside income for the provincial economy, and for initiating local development. One of the main objectives of this strategy was to generate employment in the rural areas of the province where the decline of the inshore fishery had created uneven development.

In 1977 Canada declared its right to control the fishery within 200 miles of its coast; this meant that more fish could be caught by Newfoundlanders. Soon, large quantities of fish were brought ashore for processing - caught by brand new draggers with the latest fish finding and processing capabilities. The government spent millions of dollars constructing huge privately-owned plants to process the fish. Offshore and fish plant communities prospered, but inshore fishermen did not. New Bonaventure fisherman John McGrath comments: "I saw the decline happening twenty years ago...when big draggers came in...not only the draggers fault, but foreigners did a lot of damage too. No two ways about it, they had to be tearing up the ocean floor's spawning grounds...Mother Nature wouldn't be

able to put it out as fast as it was being destroyed” (CBC East of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997). Successors to former federal Fisheries Minister Romeo LeBlanc ignored his 1981 comment that there was “...no way fish could keep up with this expansion in the most optimistic predictions” (CBC East of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997). The main staple of the economy was still at the mercy of provincial and federal government bourgeoisie and foreign institutions vying for profit. For example, the policies set out by Fisheries Minister John Crosbie of the Mulroney government showed many Newfoundlanders that they were not valued by Ottawa. Local concerns about fish population were overruled in favour of foreign trade partnerships. In the long run the combination of provincial businesses and politicians, foreign fishing fleets and modern technology had stripped the island of her main staple - the codfish.

By 1986, fisher families like the McGraths from New Bonaventure saw no more future in the fishery, as there was no money to be made. Families were losing sons and daughters who were leaving the province to find work elsewhere. The social fabric of community and family life was being undermined. No longer was the family unit working together for its livelihood. John McGrath said, “...my right arm was gone” after his son, with whom he had fished for many years, went to the United States (CBC East Of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997). As a result of out-migration, tiny outport fishing communities are dying off. In Newfoundland, there are only three urban areas which are not completely dependent on the fishing industry for livelihood: St. John’s, Corner Brook, and GrandFalls/Windsor. McGrath paints a bleak future for outport tradition:

What you’ll see down the road is St. John’s, Gander, Corner Brook, Grand Falls-Windsor, you’ll see these survive; but, all the outports will be deserted...all the

young gone, older people have had their day...there will be nothing left at all.
(CBC East Of Canada Documentary June 16-20:1997)

Throughout all of this socio-economic turmoil the province continued to promote Newfoundland's unique cultural heritage and traditional way of life. The 1980's saw continued efforts by the provincial government to market "cultural tourism." Areas which were suffering from severe economic depression were promoted as "Heritage Regions" by the government. The myth of an authentic "back region" for guests to experience when visiting Newfoundland was promoted and emphasized through tourism ads, brochures, sites and attractions, and policy.

Newfoundland and the Newfoundland people continue to be represented as traditional, natural and rural by the state and tourism agencies. Many Newfoundland people are eager to cash in on tourism by transforming any event, spectacle, site or idea - if it has any historical or cultural significance - into a tourist attraction. With the globalization of capitalist economies, more and more visitors are "demanding authenticity and meaning in their vacation experiences. Increasingly, people...are searching for natural environments, wilderness experiences, tranquillity and harmony with nature, and contact with other cultures and histories" (Seymour 1980:33). State officials in their federal and provincial policy texts refer to the fact that tourists deserve "authentic experiences" when visiting other peoples/cultures (see Chapter four).

IV Conclusions

We have seen in this chapter that the history of Newfoundland's tourism development reflected social, political and economic conditions. And we have also seen how expansion

and growth in the tourism industry was related to resource depletion, loss of traditional culture, and socio-economic distress.

In retrospect, when analyzing the history of Newfoundland's state initiative with regard to utilizing tourism as an economic strategy, it is clear that policies have not really changed. As Seymour notes, "the management of tourism in Newfoundland since the 1890's has followed unchanging lines, both in terms of images promoted and the kinds of infrastructure and attractions developed" (1980:38). For years, and through various governments, tourism strategy promoted the province's distinct heritage, traditional outport culture, and unique cultural forms. Emphasis has always been placed on the rural areas of the province where unemployment and poverty are greatest. Plans are formulated for enticing the tourist away from the bigger cities/towns to the little fishing communities. Federal and provincial governments are pushing for infrastructure development in these underdeveloped areas (e.g., hotels); yet, at the same time, such development would contradict the rural, 'authentic' images promoted about Newfoundland by government tourism agencies.

Changes have occurred in the types of visitors - a result of changing social and cultural contexts on a global scale. In the past, this strategy was aimed exclusively at the upper middle class and the very wealthy who were "lured by the promotion of the province's history, culture, and scenery as the major attractions of the 'real Newfoundland'" (Seymour 1980:38). Now, especially since confederation in 1949, the campaign has been aimed at members of a larger middle class market who are looking for a cultural experience (Seymour 1980:34).

Over the years the government has increased its management, involvement, and control over tourism policy and development. It is important to see what this means for Newfoundlanders in particular social and economic contexts.

As the following chapters will demonstrate, time and time again promises of money and infrastructure development to small communities have not been kept. In addition, the images produced through policy discourse and advertisements have continuously promoted Newfoundland with the same (mis)representations and stereotypes.

Specifically, Chapter four will show that the strategies and policies which have shaped Newfoundland's tourism industry in the past continue to be constructed and implemented in contemporary policy. In addition, the way Newfoundland is depicted in tourism ads by tourism boosters, specifically those of the state, has perpetuated particular themes and stereotypes in its promotion and representation.

Chapter four - Contemporary Tourism Policy: 1990 to Present

I Newfoundland's Cultural Tourism Policies and Strategies

In the past few decades the federal government has played a pivotal role in promoting “cultural tourism” for the Canadian tourism industry. The ultimate goal has been to develop strategies to increase foreign revenue. With the election of the Conservative government in 1984, the federal government started “the marketing of Canada as a cultural Other for international tourists, a policy which continues to the present period” (Harp 1994:184). Ironically, as Chapter three has revealed, Newfoundland had used this strategy throughout its history of tourism development and promotion. Newfoundland was always attempting to promote itself to North American and European tourists as a distinct “cultural other” in contrast to the other Maritime provinces.

In response to the federal government's advertised representation of Canada's distinct culture, the government of Newfoundland and Labrador devised a mandate or “vision” if you will, for its own tourism industry's goals.¹⁷ This was devised by the provincial Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

In its Strategic Economic Plan for 1992, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador identified tourism as an opportunity for growth. Consequently, through the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, a mandate was formulated to guide tourism policy and future industry goals and decisions. A 1994 report entitled A Vision for Tourism Newfoundland and Labrador in the 21st Century was “meant to stimulate a process of consultation and discussion among all the stakeholders in the Province who are involved in

¹⁷ For a detailed analysis of how this state directive was enacted, see John Harp, “Culture, the State, and Tourism: State Policy Initiatives in Canada 1984-1992”, in Culture and Policy, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp.183-210.

the future development of this industry; all levels of government, tourism industry groups, non-governmental preservation groups, the artistic community, etc.” (DTCR 1994:1). The Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation for Newfoundland and Labrador hoped that this document would initiate the development of “an in depth strategy to guide the tourism industry” into the 21st century (1994:1).

As we saw in Chapter one, tourism, especially in Third World countries, has been growing steadily since the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. Considering the increase in competition, it is pertinent to ask if there is room for Newfoundland and Labrador in the global tourism market place? Does Newfoundland have the necessary resources which would allow it to compete effectively, and, if so, what improvements must be made to these resources and the island’s tourism infrastructure in order to attract more visitors to the province? These have been the issues that policy-makers have been puzzling over: whether to reduce its investment and intervention in the industry, or whether to expand government intervention and funding. In 1986, *The Tourism Industry in Newfoundland and Labrador: Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, in Newfoundland and Labrador*, “addressed the suitability of developing tourism as a labour-intensive industry...” (Stuckless 1986:i). The Royal Commission came up with the following conclusions:

Tourism’s past performance in employment growth, and its high labour ratios and ease of entry, render it an effective instrument for employment, especially for unskilled workers, new labour force entrants, women and students trying to finance their education...[in terms of potential]...many development associations, municipal governments and other regional organizations believe that the scenery, wildlife, history and distinctive culture of Newfoundland and Labrador provide a virtually untapped resource.

(Stuckless 1986:i)

The Royal Commission also stated that the image of Newfoundland was of “utmost importance” and should be as “original as possible” (1986:12). The 1994 mandate voices identical views. Both the federal and provincial governments are trying to convince people that tourism development is a positive step, through the rhetoric of “preserving heritage,” “celebrating culture” and “capital accumulation.” Through such a discourse, government is seen to have the ability to reconstruct particular regions - areas become developed, renovated, or destroyed, all in the name of tourism development. Even though tourism magnifies differences between tourists and host communities, at the same time, it can “coexist along with local turmoil” (Craik 1994:158). For example, under a Cooperation Agreement on Tourism and Historic Resources signed by the federal and provincial governments in 1991 (Heritage Canada, November/December 1993:7), many fisheries exhibits were upgraded as tourist attractions. These types of facilities will be a bonus in terms of generating income for those communities involved in the project; but, on the other hand, one cannot help but wonder about the irony of it all. As tourists gaze upon these fisheries exhibits and interpretation centres representing the socio-political backbone and history of the province, and trek through supposedly quaint, traditional fishing villages, are they aware that these people are still struggling to revive the inshore fishery, should the cod stocks increase? ¹⁸Are they aware that the families in this quaint fishing village would not be able to survive any longer if it were not for the income from visiting tourists?

In another example, neighbouring communities in a joint venture with Canada/Newfoundland Tourism and Historic Resources have devised tourist attractions in

¹⁸ The federal government is presently offering buy out packages to small fisherpersons and their licenses. Many local fisherpersons have stated that they believe the incentive behind the federal government's offer is to accumulate more dollars for draggers and the larger fishing companies, such as Fishery Products International and National Sea.

acceptance with the stereotypic image of Newfoundland as authentic, unchanging and unique (Bonaventure English Harbour Development Association 1994).

Infrastructure development is happening all over the province; the funding comes from the \$100 million dollar Canada/Newfoundland Agreement on Economic Renewal, and a tourism-related infrastructure spending plan from the federal/provincial Strategic Regional Diversification Agreement (Flanagan, *The Evening Telegram* October 1996). The agreements were signed during Premier Brian Tobin's February 1996 election campaign. All of them seemed to be designed to tell the people that the transformations which are being implemented are good for them.

Yet, despite these funding agreements and infrastructure developments, and at the same time that the federal government has been promoting a tourism strategy to sustain economic development, federal support has begun to decline. Federal policy reflected the new role government was to play within the tourism industry:

As an alternative, the federal role is seen to be one of providing information services, marketing, and advertising for the tourism industry. As one policy text from this period states, "the challenge is to increase private investment in the industry from Canadian and foreign sources," and consequently the federal government's role is increasingly seen as "less a builder and more a blueprint maker" (Minister of State [Tourism] 1985:77).

(Harp 1994:188-189)

This new policy which has been gradually implemented by the federal government since the mid-1980's, and which focuses on marketing rather than infrastructure, has influenced Newfoundland's policy strategies of this past decade. For example, the DTCR text states that the people must be educated and reminded about the etiquette of hospitality and the proper attitude to maintain towards visitors. Hence, tourist training courses or hospitality

courses have been offered for tourism operators. There are also government commercials and ads about the importance of hospitality. John Omohundro's book about the people of Newfoundland, Rough Food (1994), discusses how government make-work projects, subsidized by rural development associations, have attempted to maintain the traditional craft trade by teaching women traditional home crafts such as knitting and needle-work. The purpose had been to market their outport traditions for tourists and mainland craft shops. Thus, government has joined kinship in passing on tradition among Newfoundlanders.

Another aspect of the DTCR text is the state's intentions towards rural areas for tourism; state officials propose that rural areas too remote to attract large numbers of tourists will be "provided with the necessary infrastructure to increase traffic, such as highway pull-offs with interpretation panels or "looping opportunities" (DTCR 1994:18). Yet, such changes have not occurred. Many communities have complained about breach of government promises with regard to loans and support for tourism. In one example, funding has been approved for the Bonavista Historic Townscape Project.¹⁹ Five million dollars have been allocated to the town over a span of three years. Infrastructure development was supposed to commence in 1999; but, as of yet, the money is nowhere to be found. Bonavista residents believe that the money is being withheld for political reasons. Locals have claimed that a shake up in Prime Minister Chretien's cabinet resulting in Fred Mifflin achieving a Senate position, means a new MP will be needed for the federal riding. Accusations have been made that the money promised to the town for renovations will appear during regional political campaigns.

¹⁹ See Chapter five for a detailed summary.

Control over local resources has been taken away from local people. Rural development associations, which are largely government controlled, are being installed in rural areas. Many of these associations are controlled by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency or ACOA (Carter 1988:225-226). ACOA approves funding for enterprises and provides assistance in various provincial make work projects. But, according to Overton, the rising affluence of ACOA and its “explicit private sector oriented regional development strategy”, may hinder development, especially provincial park development (Overton 1996:233)²⁰.

In 1997, Opposition Tourism critic Tom Osborne (PC) criticized the Liberal government’s three year budget which will cut the tourism budget from \$28 million to \$16 million dollars in three years. Osborne further criticized government for breaking promises about support for tourism. In its political campaign, government promised that tourism, because of the collapse of the groundfishery, was going to be one of the major revenue generators and employers of the province.

Lastly, the DTCR text boasts that tourism will aid in “raising the quality of life” of area residents (1994:8). Government rhetoric enumerates various benefits communities and their residents will receive as a result of developing a tourism infrastructure. For example, the development of museums, archives, restaurants, hiking trails, etc., are seen as ways of enhancing the recreational sector and providing jobs for local residents. The government of Newfoundland has promised that the integrity of the island’s resources will not be harmed.

²⁰ See Park Privatization discussion in this chapter.

In practice, the traditional activities of the outport and rural people are sometimes curtailed in the name of tourism and economic development, and very few reap the benefits from it. For example, in 1991, under the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act, Baccalieu Island was designated by the provincial government as a bird sanctuary. This was implemented without agreement by residents of the communities of Bay de Verde, Grates Cove, and Red Head Cove. The community members are upset because with the one-kilometre protective zone surrounding the island, residents are prevented from performing livelihood tasks they had been doing for decades. For example, residents are restricted from cutting wood, riding their recreational vehicles, or building cabins, traditional activities which did not interfere with the bird population (Flynn, *Sunday Telegram* January 1996:5). In addition, the community members were not consulted about the degree of involvement they would have in the daily operation of the site. Residents express concern over the fact that they have repeatedly asked that an interpretation centre be built on the island to serve as a tourist attraction; this would entice people to visit and help the neighbouring towns financially (Flynn, *Sunday Telegram* January 1996:5). Residents are angry that local resources and environment are being taken advantage of by government; yet, the people cannot make any money from the site themselves, nor do they have any say in its future development. Colin Michael Hall in his book Tourism and Politics: Policy, Power and Place, comments that, "public involvement in tourism planning can be more accurately described as a form of tokenism in which decisions or the direction of the decisions has already been prescribed by government...communities rarely have the opportunity to say no" (1994:169).

Residents are upset because the research station has interfered with their subsistence activities. These people have no other means by which to survive. Nor have they been given any alternatives or opportunities for involvement with the research station.

The government places economic incentives before community priorities, and often fails to educate and communicate with people about the disruptions and changes that will result from tourism development. For example, clean-up campaigns are promoted and local residents encouraged to clean up their properties; local land areas are roped off for tourist use only, preventing local residents from venturing onto land that they have used for generations.

According to the DTCR, “the Province’s natural resources need to be allocated among the various sectors on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis, and not on the basis of traditional use”

(DTCR 1994:24). This is reminiscent of the caribou game laws which affected rural

Newfoundlanders in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Overton comments:

...Game laws were enacted to protect and define the caribou as a tourism resource, but considerable conflict was generated between the ‘poor settlers’ engaged in the fishery (who relied on caribou as an important source of food) and the state (which acted largely in the interests of the tourism industry.

(1980:40)

Policies and laws have not changed over time: “As in earlier decades, the game must still be preserved for tourists because “sportsmen...pay significantly higher fees for their licenses...and contribute to the provincial economy through spending on outfitting, accommodation and transportation” (Overton 1980:47). Tourism demands were imposed on a traditional economy, and the result was that these game laws favoured the business sector of tourism over the traditional hunting practices of native and rural people (not to mention aiding in the depletion of the caribou herds).

What is more important? To preserve an area exclusively for tourists, or to preserve traditional resource usage for local people? In my opinion, the people should come first; yet, in the examples mentioned above, federal and provincial governments have made it clear that the tourist industry is their first priority.

In terms of tourism's potential for employment, the DTCR writes,

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) concluded recently that tourism has the ability to generate jobs on a scale that is matched by few, if any, sectors. A recent study by the Government of Canada supports this finding and suggests that the tourism industry absorbs unemployed labour at a rate that is around 1.5 times higher than its proportion of the labour force. Moreover, this comes particularly from among the young, unskilled and visible minority groups... The tourism industry includes many well-paying positions, such as tour operator, outfitter, chef, hotel manager and airline pilot...

(DTCR 1994:7)

The provincial government has always boasted of tourism's job potential for Newfoundland communities; throughout Newfoundland's history of tourism development, it was the main political tool used by politicians to generate expansion of the industry. The reality of it is that there are only a few who are benefiting from tourism in rural Newfoundland. The competition is fierce and there are never enough tourist dollars to go around. In any underdeveloped area, wages are never the equal of the wages found in the bigger cities. Because jobs are scarce and competitive, the people with the most skills dominate the job market. Rural residents with little or no education and without communication skills remain unemployed. The roughly five percent of small entrepreneurs who participate in the tourism industry, must contend with local and regional competition (Gordan Bradley, President Bonavista Historical Society 1997). In many cases the establishment of tourist attractions, sites, museums, shops, parks, etc., results in the rise of new political forces. These new forces tend to enforce dominant power relations and

hierarchical decision-making processes over the local people. For example, what usually occurs when a small entrepreneur begins to show a profit in the tourist industry, is that larger enterprises move in and either eliminate the competition or exploit the smaller businesses. One specific incident during the Cabot celebrations that many local tourism operators discussed was the unjust treatment of rural owners of tourist concession stands. On the day of the *Mathew* arrival, the Vista 97 Committee permitted concession stands only from the St. John's Conception Bay area location priority near the *Mathew*. Local business vendors were restricted from establishing craft stands, etc. on the dock where the *Mathew* was situated and where the majority of tourists were gathering. One Bonavista man who did set up his concession stand on the dock was later forcibly removed by event organizers. A larger tourism chain from a bigger city centre was permitted to monopolize concession space from local vendors.

Tourism research and statistics are full of optimistic projections, but sometimes leave out vital information when defining the success of the tourist industry in the province. In a 1993 Air Exit Survey of resident and non-resident air travellers who boarded flights in Newfoundland and Labrador between July 12 and October 31, 1993, the following information was gathered: the non-resident market, divided into three components - discretionary visitors, visiting friends and relatives (VFR), and business visitors - comprised 95.6% of all non-resident visitors (DTCR Planning and Research Division 1993:2). Of the non-resident visitors, only 13.1% were discretionary visitors - those "air travellers who were in the province to sightsee/tour, to attend a special event, to hunt, to fish, for a change of environment or climate, for outdoor adventure, wilderness or recreation, etc." (DTCR Planning and Research Division 1993:5). In contrast, 46.3% were VFR's - those who visit

the province to see friends and/or relatives; and the business visitors represented 36.2% (DTCR Planning and Research Division 1993:2). This study also concluded that overall, “non-resident visitors spent one-third (33.7%) of their in-province nights in St. John’s...business visitors spent more than one-half (51.9%) of their in-province nights in St. John’s” (DTCR Planning and Research Division 1993:59). If tourism promoters ignore these distinctions, their projections of the potential of tourism may be inflated.

In Newfoundland, state intervention has shifted its focus from economic support of infrastructure development towards marketing and promoting Newfoundland’s tourism potential in the global market-place. Brian Tobin and the Liberal government in its new policy strategy have emphasized the importance of developing a competitive marketing strategy for planning and profit enhancement in the tourism industry. Consequently, task forces and research groups have been set up to target the unique markets for the best capital return from the tourist industry.

In 1996, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, commissioned the preparation of the Newfoundland and Labrador Product Market Match Study (NLPMMS) by the Economic Planning Group of Canada (in association with D.W. Knight & Associates and Butler Research Associates, Inc.), “...to identify the niche markets and niche products which offer the best potential for the province, in the national and international markets” (1996:1). The conclusions drawn from the study were that Newfoundland’s primary core tourism product, “...is the traditional touring product, based mainly on the appeals of the province’s natural attractions and its heritage and culture” (1996:2).

This government-sponsored market study emphasized the importance of “authenticity” with regard to the tourist experience. It states: “Cultural tourism activities which are designed to provide visitors with an opportunity to “experience” the true culture of a destination *must* be authentic and realistic, not contrived” (The Economic Planning Group of Canada 1996:25). Thus, tourism expenditure by the DTCR on the cultural tourism industry, aims to:

...fully integrate the arts, culture and heritage of the province with the tourism industry. Sustaining cultural heritage resources, especially “living culture,” is critical to the realization of this objective. If done properly, the development and delivery of cultural tourism products can make a major contribution to cultural affirmation and preservation in the province as well as to the development of the tourism industry.
(1996:21)

Tourism boosters and tourism entrepreneurs attempt to market “authenticity” through visual and textual manipulation.

Conclusions from surveys conducted in the Newfoundland and Labrador Product Market Match Study indicate that cultural tourists are most drawn to historic sites/attractions (64%), and small communities (64%) (1996:21)²¹. State policy and practice reflects this conclusion. For example, it was suggested that a way in which to enhance the expansion of cultural tourism was to “build festivals and special events around such products and promote them internationally” (1996:17). Thus, an international celebration such as the Cabot 500 focused on the province’s history, heritage and culture, while promoting investment potential and opportunities.

In 1997 the federal government invested \$20 million dollars in the province for the Cabot 500 Celebrations in the hope of creating an infrastructure that would enhance global

²¹ Newfoundland and Labrador Product Market Match Study, Mail Survey of Consumers who have visited or are interested in visiting Newfoundland and Labrador, 1995 (Base: 694 respondents).

competitiveness and lead to a sustainable tourism industry. Never before had Newfoundland been so widely publicized in North American, European and especially in Newfoundland mass media. The Cabot 500 Celebrations were named the most important tourism event in North America for 1997 by the American Automobile Association (*The Evening Telegram* August 1996). The federal and provincial governments moved away from subsidization of tourism development toward marketing and promotions; yet, they continue to promote tourism as a means of economic development for disadvantaged marginal areas, regions and communities in Canada, including Newfoundland. Tourism is still viewed as a means of initiating community economic rejuvenation through development and job creation. The state continues to play a key - albeit somewhat inconsistent - role in this process.

i Representational Practices in Tourism Policy and Promotion

In today's competitive global market, it is necessary to be as unique and creative as possible in tourism promotion. Advanced technology and marketing skills have made it possible for a variety of countries and regions across the globe to present themselves very similarly, offering similar attractions and themes. The federal and provincial governments use these marketing tactics in an extremely competitive industry worldwide. Through representations in travel ads and brochures, Newfoundland has been promoted as "A World Apart" and "A World Of Difference."

In state discourse it is "product differentiation" which is important. At no time has this been stressed more than in the build-up to the Cabot 500 Celebrations. Both government and non-government agencies/organizations made it remarkably clear through advertising

that Newfoundland is special and unique and a major contributor to Canada's evolution and future.

One method by which the state promoted the cultural distinctiveness of Newfoundland was through tourism advertisements. The tourism industry and the provincial government propagated a "vision of rural Newfoundland, but only a certain kind of rural Newfoundland, one which is idealized and romanticized" (Overton 1996:119). Despite the cold reality of the economic and social conditions existing in Newfoundland today - as was the case decades ago as well - tourism advocates insist on capitalizing on a romanticized version of Newfoundland "culture" and "heritage". This image still persists in tourist advertisements and brochures today. For example, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation 1995-1996 Plan states:

Tourism promotion has been shown to play a positive role in raising the pride and confidence of the resident population by providing an outlet for its cultural heritage, and in raising the awareness of the need to preserve the natural heritage. Tourism promotion usually portrays what is most positive about a destination and presents it in a manner which is most attractive...

(DTCR 1995-1996:5)

The ads put out by the DTCR present a very homogenous version of the population. In most tourism ads and brochures, Newfoundland and its people are (mis)represented in the same way. Each of the ads either show majestic landscapes with ocean and mountains and whales, picturesque fishing settlements, or men and women dressed in "traditional" clothes, performing "traditional" tasks. Many ads show an old weather-beaten man fishing or a pleasant-faced woman baking bread. Here are some examples:

Go "off the beaten track", down roads that lead to its heart - the tiny villages and outposts that nestle in its sheltered coves and bays. Here you will encounter one of North America's oldest surviving folk cultures. The people living here on the doorstep of the New World, have preserved a rich tradition of language, music and

folklore that they brought with them from the Old World centuries ago. You'll hear languages and words not spoken since Shakespeare's day...Centuries of isolation in a unique natural environment have shaped and molded this legacy into a culture that is like no other.

(Newfoundland and Labrador Travel Guide 1991:11)

Labrador is steeped in history; a place where history invades the present and many cultural aspects of life go on as they have for centuries.

(Labrador Brochure n.d:1)

The world you know stops where the waves meet the scenic shores of NFLD...and Labrador. Discover the natural beauty that has stood unchanged since the Vikings arrived on these shores 1,000 years ago.

(Leisure Ways 1991)

Come to a place where the New World begins...Come to St. John's and take a walk on Water Street, the oldest street in North America...Our police don't carry guns. They don't have to...Meet some colourful characters...Here on the doorstep to the new world is a heritage rich in tradition...Housestyles, lifestyles, music and cuisine...all kept alive by generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who value the unique geographical location of their land and the centuries of isolation that have molded this legacy into a culture like no other...Who else but the people with a quick wit, endless charm and the saving grace of self deprecation...

(Newfoundland and Labrador Travel Guide 1996:8-9)

In 1997, the whole world is coming: Just like the Maritime Archaic Indians 7,500 years ago. Like the Vikings in 1,000 AD. And John Cabot 500 years later. The world keeps discovering Newfoundland and Labrador.

(500th Anniversary Festival and Events Calendar 1997)

Actual stresses and conflicts are swallowed up by tourism jargon and literature which represent Newfoundlanders as strong, proud, and independent, respectful of the past, essentially non-violent, and with "great community spirit and...above all they ..."have real culture" (Overton 1996:106). Unfortunately, these fabricated images of Newfoundlanders are radically different from current social reality.

For example, in Bonavista, many of the young community members lack any motivation towards the various tourism projects. The youth are more concerned with attempting to hunt moose without being arrested due to improper hunting licenses. There is

not a lot of optimism for the future; nor do many of them desire to have any real connection to their past. What I found in my interaction and discussions with the youth of the community, is that they see their traditional way of life as slowly disintegrating. The younger community members are having to move to city centres or out of province to look for jobs. Subsistence activities like hunting, fishing and wood cutting, are now largely illegal and many have been convicted of poaching. Young business owners are desperate for any financial aid or government support to help sustain them in the hope that business will pick up soon. Morale is low, and the young are not only desperate, but angry.

ii The Emergence of Privatization

The most recent structural change to occur in Newfoundland's tourism industry reflects the federal government's cuts in direct investment in tourism, and the transfer of ownership and control to the private sector. Following the federal government's movement towards creating a less dependent industry (Harp 1994:199), the provincial government was forced to, "identify the things government should be doing and to do them efficiently; to forge partnerships for the things government could do best in conjunction with the private sector; to privatize the things government should no longer be doing; and to end the programs which no longer served a useful purpose" (Boswell, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997:11).

The recent changes in the role of the state in promotion and development of tourism in Newfoundland not only reflects changes in Canada's federal policies, but also a global

trend. Colin Michael Hall in his book, Tourism and Politics: Policy, Power and Place, discusses growing collaboration between states and the private sector in tourism:

...government [is]...becoming entrepreneurial in its involvement with tourism in order to increase the financial contribution of tourism to government income. Therefore, government has increasingly been involved in the promotion and marketing of destinations, and in the joint development of tourist attractions or facilities with the private sector.

(1994:35)

Regardless of the changes the state has implemented in its tourism strategies, it continues to play a key role in tourism policy and decision-making. Federal and provincial changes in tourism policy are exemplified in the current debate on park privatization in Newfoundland.

iii Current Debate on Park Privatization in Newfoundland

The provincial government's public announcement that the private sector should take on more responsibility and control over provincial parks has had major implications for Newfoundland (Boswell, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997:11). The reduction of government involvement in park construction, maintenance, and financing reflects a growing trend in recent years whereby the state has cut back its financial support and social assistance to rural areas. These cutbacks are part of a general trend.

As Canadians became increasingly concerned about the high costs and numerous activities of governments and as governments became increasingly aware of the need to curb growing deficits, privatization of certain government operations offered an attractive solution.

(Boswell, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997:11)

Even though provincial governments in Canada were not always "ideologically inclined toward downsizing and privatization, they were forced to rethink their own program mix as a consequence of the federal downsizing and cuts in transfer payments" (Boswell, *The*

Evening Telegram March 1997:11). Clyde Wells, elected as Liberal Premier in 1989, was a believer in “free enterprise” and “limited government;” he represented Newfoundland’s “entry into government downsizing and privatization” (Boswell, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997:11).

... Wells put into motion a strategic economic planning process which, among other things, strongly supported the encouragement of private investment and the reduction of government involvement in many areas. While the 1992 Strategic Economic Plan did not specifically advocate the privatization of provincial parks and scenic attractions, it did recommend the initiation of private sector and private-public partnerships to develop tourist facilities.

(Boswell, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997:11)

In March of 1995, Clyde Wells’ government decided it couldn’t afford to operate the 75 parks and natural scenic attractions currently in use²². Consequently, 29 parks and attractions were closed. “The intention was that the money saved would be re-invested into the remaining parks to make them more attractive to visitors - adding showers, dumping stations, and laundry facilities” (Norman, *The Packet* March 1997). So far, there has been very little evidence of this type of restructuring.

Former Liberal tourism minister Roger Grimes reflected upon the government’s attitude towards the park situation in 1995: “We’re committed to protecting and preserving the province’s most important natural areas, selected to represent the ecological diversity of the province. We’re concentrating our effort to make the parks in the new system the best possible parks they could be” (Norman, *The Packet* March 1997). In 1997, however, Tourism Minister Sandra Kelly permanently closed down a further 33 parks.

²² A satirical characterization of “scenic attractions” is provided by Norman: “A natural scenic attraction being a beautiful place that would be there anyway except government puts out a few picnic tables and garbage cans and officially acknowledges that the site does indeed exist” (Norman *The Packet* March 1997).

She also announced the availability of 21 provincial parks and seven scenic attractions for non-governmental operation (Boswell, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997:11).

The only parks the government has decided to keep are the ones that are already attracting visitors with minimum government expenditure. Critics argue that the government is denying the people of Newfoundland their right to go to a provincial park with their families to swim, picnic, or camp. My own personal discussions with various community residents supported the conclusion that many Newfoundlanders are angry about the decision to privatize the park system because the government made no attempt to consult the residents of the province. Many residents feel that the government hoped to catch the people off guard, giving them little time for reaction in the midst of Cabot year. Residents' concerns include the loss of jobs and economic spin-offs associated with parks. In addition, they fear exorbitant admission fees and mass commercialism. Many residents believe that even though the provincial parks are to be leased to "private or community groups for operation, there is a strong perception that they are being sold off or given away" (Boswell, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997:11). One writer went so far as to suggest that the privatization of parks was one means of "Cashing in on Culture" (Beauchesne, *The Evening Telegram* June 1997:9). Another commentary on the subject had the title, "For Sale: One Province" (Harrold, *The Packet* March 1997).

Because these parks will be profit-driven, standards (as set out by government policy), may not always be adhered to or enforced – allowing littering and decline of facilities. There is concern that tourists and local residents will find parks closed or overly commercialized. This could lead to a decline in tourism. Thus, privatization may negate the provincial government's aim of preservation of Newfoundland's culture, heritage and

environment. The government argues that privatization will “provide those involved in the tourism industry with business opportunities...” (Overton, *The Evening Telegram* May 1997). Yet, previous attempts at park privatization have been unsuccessful. For example, of the 28 parks privatized in 1995, only 11 were functioning in the 1996 season (Overton, *The Evening Telegram* May 1997), because very few individuals were willing to invest in them. Sandra Kelly argued that, with limited resources, the government had to choose between funding parks and hospitals (Overton, *The Evening Telegram* May 1997).

Critics such as Boswell, McGrath, Norman and Overton criticize the government’s reasons for cutting back on the parks, commenting that the money saved would be minuscule in the overall budget - approximately \$1.8 million a year in salary and operational expenses (Overton, *The Evening Telegram* May 1997). The government has already invested \$30 million dollars in Marble Mountain (a provincial ski resort near Corner Brook) which has been turned over to the private sector; that money alone could have kept the public parks system operational for almost two decades.

James Overton, who is a professor of Sociology at Memorial University of Newfoundland, sees privatization of the parks system as a symptom of business influence on government. Overton believes that Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, a lobby group of approximately 500 representatives of the private sector of the tourism industry,²³ complained in February, 1997, to Finance Minister Paul Dicks about the low tourism budget of \$1.8 million dollars. HNL believed that if the tourism industry were to experience any growth after 20 unsuccessful years, the budget had to be increased. This was to be done by

²³ They claim to play a “leadership role in maintaining and developing world class quality products and standards within the Newfoundland tourism industry” (Onysko 1995:47).

“privatizing provincial recreational centres, arts and culture centres and the provincial parks” (Overton, *The Evening Telegram* May 1997). Tobin’s Liberal government implemented HNL’s park privatization recommendations less than two weeks later (Overton, *The Evening Telegram* May 1997).

According to critics, the business elite within the tourism industry effectively lobbied government and deprived the majority of the province’s residents of access to many parks. HNL is also presently lobbying against gravel pit camping²⁴ because they feel that this discourages use of private campgrounds. It is ironic that private parks may not survive unless government is prepared to provide a high degree of subsidization and/or advertising of privatized park facilities. This would contradict the government’s reasons for privatizing in the first place - to avoid these fiscal burdens and responsibilities.

With the precedent set for privatizing parks, critics feel that privatizing the Gander and Humber rivers to maximize profits from outdoor tourism may be the next step. This is not unlikely in light of A Strategy for the Development of the Recreational Fisheries in Newfoundland and Labrador. As McGrath notes,

This is a consultant’s report prepared for the provincial government in 1994...Read for yourself what’s being “suggested” to maximize the benefits of salmon and trout waterways. In last year’s provincial election, the Liberal’s Red Book [a federal document] gave a commitment to the ideas outlined in this “strategy” for developing recreational fishing. This report talks about things like controlling access to rivers and ponds (page 186) and over-crowding on rivers due to the presence of resident anglers (pages 165 and 175). The strategy for developing the recreational fishery recommends (page 170) that, “Local anglers will have to compromise in their use of quality fishing waters if economic benefits are to be realized from a non-resident fishery.” Thus, the privatization of provincial parks sets a dangerous precedent for use of, and access to the countryside of Newfoundland and Labrador.

(*The Evening Telegram* March 1997)

²⁴ A popular form of camping in Newfoundland whereby campers set up campgrounds/trailors in designated areas on the side of the road.

It seems to many that Newfoundlanders' assumption that they have a right to an outdoor heritage could be in danger. Many believe that the government plans eventually to move towards a river management system which would see sections of the Terra Nova and other rivers set aside for the exclusive use of outfitters and high-paying tourists. The local people are not against gaining economic benefits from the rivers. Most of the outfitters are Newfoundlanders - small businessmen trying to garner enough of an income to raise their families. What concerns the critics is that Newfoundlanders will not have the same freedom to fish in the province's rivers as they have in the past. They will have to pay very high fees to gain access to the best fishing rivers, and for many low-income Newfoundlanders, this means exclusion from an assumed 'natural' right. Critics claim that this is unfair because, tax dollars funded salmon enhancement projects.

Privatizing parks resulted in the laying off of over 100 park employees. Losing one's jobs leaves most Newfoundlanders with only two choices - welfare or emigration (McGrath, *The Evening Telegram* March 1997). In a time when Newfoundland's official unemployment rate stands at approximately 20% (twice the national average), park privatization has contributed to unemployment. Whether on a federal or provincial level, there are discrepancies between state discourse and actual policy implementation. As Harp has noted with regard to tourism in general,

“...it is not as an easy task to reconcile the requirements of “world class” tourist attractions with the reality of regional disparities and the specific needs of underdeveloped regions...the most competitive tourism products may not always be located where the government is most eager to spend industrial development money to reduce regional economic disparities”...

(Harp 1994:199)

Hence, a contradiction exists between tourism policy discourse and state practices.

In tourism promotional material, tourism boosters discuss the positive benefits of tourism and how development and expansion of the tourism industry are needed in order for the province to become a world class competitor. The Government has encouraged rural communities to get involved and to take advantage of all that tourism has to offer, pushing small businesses to ride the tourist wave. Yet, in reality, state practices have often contributed to the economic distress of rural Newfoundlanders.

In her article, "Outports and Outlaws" (1995), Kathryn Welbourn discusses the ongoing desperation of some 250,000 rural Newfoundlanders living in traditional outport fishing communities. As a result of federal and provincial policies, many rural Newfoundlanders have been forced to give up their traditional mode of existence. Some critics have even gone so far as to label the government's attempt to conserve wilderness areas, fish, and game as the "criminalization of rural Newfoundland" (Welbourn 1995:37). Welbourn elaborates on the policies set out by the government regarding wildlife and fisheries regulations:

For the first time in nearly 400 years, Newfoundlanders no longer have the right to feed their families from the sea...The locals have been read the environmental act, a sweeping assault on their traditional subsistence activities. Firewood and saw-log quotas have been cut. Controversial limits on the use of all-terrain vehicles keep outporters away from rabbit runs, berry patches, and moose trails...fishing connors and tom cods - small, inshore fish - off the wharf is now against the law.
(1995:36-37)

Due to the depletion of natural resources - rabbit populations are low, there is a moratorium on the cod fishery, etc. - government conservation policies aimed in part at promoting tourism now threaten the outport mode of living. Discursive practices have changed to justify these policies. For example, the heretofore legal food fishery is now being

called a “recreational fishery;” it is monitored and controlled by government officials (Welbourn 1995:38). This is not to say that some regulation may not be necessary; but large corporations appear to escape regulation. Pulp and paper companies such as Kruger and Abitibi continue to destroy huge portions of Newfoundland’s forests, “citing historic 90-year old agreements”, and tourism outfitters, with permission from the provincial government, provide services for clientele to hunt and fish for trophies (Welbourn 1995:37). Many rural Newfoundlanders believe that such policies are part of a tacit scheme by government once again to resettle the outport communities (Welbourn 1995:37).

For most outport Newfoundlanders, the changes noted above became most noticeable upon the closure of the cod fishery in 1992. “A policy of zero tolerance for poaching of any kind was adopted, and the governments began talking about new ways to use rural Newfoundland and its resources for tourism and industry” (Welbourn 1995:38). The government has been desperate to find and develop new industries with the resources rural Newfoundland has to offer. Premier Brian Tobin who at the time was the federal Fisheries and Oceans minister, “...offered relocation money as part of the federal fish aid package to entice at least half the coastal fishery workers to find employment elsewhere;” even though the vast majority of Newfoundlanders still live in rural areas, “...the province is now cutting back on essential services, such as snow clearing, in these regions - a subtle, yet effective, message that depopulating the outports is now under way” (Welbourn 1995:38). This is very reminiscent of Smallwood’s resettlement scheme of the 1950’s and 1960’s.

Critics believe that conservation policies and cuts to rural services are aimed at getting rural people to shift from the traditional economy into new and more flexible ventures

such as tourism (Welbourn 1995:37). If the people are unable to change, then resettlement or emigration is the alternative.

Private investors will want to develop parks in areas of high demand; thus, “isolated and less visited areas will not get the parks they desire...” (Overton 1996:233). This contradicts the initial rationale for park development - to bring recreational opportunities and employment to the more remote areas of the island (Overton 1996:233). Yet park privatization has depleted rural/outport communities. So far, there has been no comprehensive analysis of the present tourism policy on park restructuring (See Overton 1996:237 on this issue).

The government proposes to largely give up financial support and management intervention for the tourism industry, and let the private sector (ie: businesses/corporations) control the industry’s future growth and development to a greater extent. Where will that leave the outport businesses, craft artisans, and community development projects? Corporate ownership of tourism may involve sacrifice of small businesses in the rural areas. Smaller businesses and communities do not have the financial power, population, or political backing to compete against the bigger entrepreneurs or tourism organizations investing in the tourism industry.

The government seems to be influenced by corporate tourism interests rather than rural Newfoundlanders. Ralph Mathews’ characterization of government planners in the 1970’s seems appropriate to the current situation. “These planners and developers tend to focus solely on economic considerations and neglect to consider the social structure, culture and values of a people for whom they are planning” (Mathews 1976:48). Tourism boosters, including the state, apparently tend to consider the “social factors,” such as ordinary people,

as “obstacles to be overcome or altered if the economic policies are to be successful” (Mathews 1976:48). State practices continue to reflect this particular ideology towards tourism as a means of economic development. This is not only true for provincial policy toward parks, fish and game, but also at the federal level. For example, the residents of Sally’s Cove - located at the base of the Great Northern Peninsula - have been struggling against the federal government for control of local resources for years.

Sally’s Cove’s involvement with tourism dates back to the early 1970’s. When a national park was created in 1973, Parks Canada offered the 54 families who lived there at the time, a relocation package. Initially, around 12 of the families refused to leave; consequently, the federal government “set aside about 13 square kilometres of land as a community enclave and built Gros Morne National Park around Sally’s Cove” (Welbourn 1995:41-42). Welbourn claims that,

...Residents are fenced in by the rules and regulations of the park, which ban all hunting and set out inadequate rabbit-snaring and wood-cutting areas for local people. The Laings had to get rid of their sheep because the park did not want them grazing near the road or in the meadows...Two young men...have been banned from the park for refusing to give up their chain saw as evidence when they were investigated for allegedly cutting trees to build their new fishing boats. An 80-year old trapper had his snowmobile confiscated for setting his trapline back in the hills on park land.
(Welbourn 1995:42)

The people of Sally’s Cove are constantly struggling against the rules and regulations set out by Parks Canada; for the most part, residents are confused because the rules are randomly enforced and often changed. Welbourn quotes a park warden who claims that, “...[wardens] are just enforcing the rules set out by Parks Canada. You cannot advertise as a wilderness reserve and have tourists see moose entrails by the side of the road or locals cutting trees in the woods” (Welbourn 1995:42). Ironically, Parks Canada has constructed a

“fishermen’s interpretive centre” in Gros Morne Park to show tourists how fishing families lived “thirty years ago” (Welbourn 1995:42). While government tourism advertisements promote an unchanged, traditional, authentic society, Parks Canada policy seems to have destroyed the traditional lifestyle of the remaining residents of Sally’s Cove.

According to Welbourn, Newfoundlanders are not against tourism. In fact, they welcome tourism with open arms in a time of great economic crisis. State tourism policy, however, fails to promote “modern outpost life [as] - a clever combination of the old and the new” (Welbourn 1995:39).

State representations of tourism offer a biased simplified picture of contemporary Newfoundlanders. Blundell discusses similar concerns with regard to how First Peoples are (mis)represented through tourist attractions: “Too often aboriginal forms are employed as mere props in a universal(izing) narrative of Canadian History that obscures the colonial and post-colonial relations that form part of the context within which tourism practices take place” (1994:17). This “freezes them in time and offer tourists “heritage fantasies” rather than critical understandings of the past” (Hewison 1987 cited in Blundell 1994:17). To the extent that Newfoundland government tourism agencies promote such “heritage fantasies” in their policy texts and in their promotional materials, “they too contribute to the reproduction” of stereotypical and oppressive views of Newfoundlanders (Blundell 1994:17).

So why do rural Newfoundlanders continue to struggle against tourism policy? Why don’t they just get jobs in the tourism industry or look for work and a new home elsewhere? Many claim that fishing is their way of life and has been for hundreds of years; working in

tourism - if they could get a job - would never make them happy.²⁵ They are citizens of Newfoundland; they feel a life-long commitment to the land. Yet mass media sometimes portray Newfoundlanders as unyielding and a financial burden on the rest of Canada.

After a century, the people of rural Newfoundland are still struggling for control over their resources. Government has not changed the ideology behind its policies - local residents continuously lose out to government –backed tourism enterprises. Activities and projects like sport fishing, game hunting, and park development will continue to threaten the local people's way of life. As in the past, "The arguments used to justify the settlers' loss of rights were generally those of tourism development in the national interest and the need to obtain maximum economic benefit from the colony's resources" (Overton 1980:44). As Overton points out, this is one example of, "the subordination of one set of values to the dominant, monetary measure of value in capitalist society. Traditions and cultural values associated with different lifestyles are discounted and local relations of production destroyed (1978-79:40).

Once again it is important to stress that the people of Sally's Cove and elsewhere, are not against tourism or resource protection. In fact they are great advocates of both and are excited about the economic benefits tourism can bring to their province. The state refuses to see that rural Newfoundland represents both the old and the new; modern industry and technology aid in making traditional outport life more accessible and manageable. In reality, what government has done with park development and tourism policy implementation is make them part of the bigger campaign of resettlement and oppression.

²⁵ In 1995, only one person living in Sally's Cove had been hired by the park.

These problems are further exacerbated by state policy, which at one level claims to be preserving Newfoundland's natural environment and heritage; on another level, it is the government's "...continuing actions which either directly or indirectly promote the capitalist expansion which is destroying the environment" (Overton 1978-79:35). In essence, people are being denied any consultation to plan and participate in the representation and management of their resources and future.

Infrastructure resulting from the tourist industry, such as parks, attractions, sites, souvenir shops, etc., reflect capitalist ideologies. Tourism policy perpetuates underdevelopment in targeted areas, maintains the unequal economic relations reproduced in capitalist society, and controls the resources of the Newfoundland environment for industrial expansion and/or commodification. Those participants in the tourism business who attempt to break away from policy and practice of the business elite and adhere to a more locally-oriented business, experience a very long uphill battle.

Government support tends to favour the industry-oriented elite, not the small businessperson. Areas targeted by tourism boosters for tourism development, parks and attractions and sites, etc., continue to be areas of contention about tourism policy and utilization of local resources. It is through the manipulation of cultural forms and the hegemonic ideologies persistent in state-directed tourism policies that subordinate classes struggle for emancipatory socio-political relations and state practices. Sometimes they are successful, but more often, they are not. It is this ongoing struggle that is the economic, social, cultural and political reality of the rural Newfoundlander.

The privatization process of the province's provincial parks is still in the development stages; hence, it is too early to be able to see any definite results. The majority of residents

do not have a positive outlook on the future of the province's parks. Residents are concerned about the ability or desire of private park owners to ensure the conservation of the island's natural resources. Park costs may become so high that low-income people will be excluded. Provincial standards regarding facilities, cleanliness, etc., may not be enforced. Employees now hired at minimum wage, will probably not gain skill and knowledge. The government and various tourism boosters have certain financial and political goals in mind, and these pursuits do not bode well for the living standards of many rural Newfoundlanders.

II Conclusions

The rhetoric and strategies surrounding 1990's tourism policy for Newfoundland which have been proposed and implemented demonstrate that many of its elements are recurring themes found in government solutions since before Confederation. In fact one could say that, in the historical context of Newfoundland's strategies for tourism development as a means of economic rejuvenation, the more things change the more they stay the same. Through various governments and historic periods, tourism has consistently been promoted as a strategy for economic development in times of socio-economic crises. The state has historically played a vital role in the decision-making and in the implementation of policy with regard to tourism development and promotion. Throughout the state's changing rhetoric concerning tourism policy and goals, the strategies behind tourism development have remained consistent. For example, federal and provincial tourism discourse - in the wider context of promoting Canada's tourism industry - continue to assert that the development of Newfoundland's tourism industry will mean the creation of jobs, economic spin-offs, global exposure and development to the more marginal, underdeveloped

and economically challenged areas of the province.²⁶ The state has consistently supported those regions, sites, attractions, organizations or projects which only serve the economic and political agendas of the power elite in society. History has repeatedly demonstrated that it is the rural communities who continue to suffer the problematic consequences stemming from tourism policy and development. In addition, the state has consistently utilized tourism promotional material in the form of travel ads to promote a stereotypical image of Newfoundland.

The following chapter will examine the consequences for the people of Bonavista of state policy promoting cultural tourism as a means of economic development.

²⁶ Harp's analysis of the discourse on cultural tourism as promoted in federal text since the mid-1980's is reminiscent of past and present policies. Harp comments that these federal state texts "reveal several dominant themes which refer to the commoditization of cultural forms, tourism as experience, nostalgic themes and heritage, and tourism as a means of economic development. These themes are also part of cultural discourse on tourism promoting the notion that tourism can be commoditized and marketed as experience, in response to the alienation of work in industrial societies" (1994:203).

Chapter five - The Consequences of Cultural Tourism For the People of Newfoundland

This thesis critically examines the consequences of the development and representation of cultural tourism in Newfoundland in recent years, and compares recent developments with tourism strategies over the past century. Specifically, my thesis question asks the following: How is “cultural tourism” being promoted in Newfoundland as a means of economic development, and what are the consequences of such promotions? The previous chapters explored these issues paying particular attention to three major areas of concern: i) the effects of tourism development on local Newfoundlanders; ii) the involvement of the state in this process; and iii) the way Newfoundland is depicted through textual and visual tourism forms. By focusing on these major areas of concern, three problematic contradictions were repeatedly highlighted throughout the analysis: private versus government support, modern infrastructure versus rural environment and authenticity versus nostalgia.

In this chapter I explore the above issues, themes and questions through a case study of the town of Bonavista and its role as the host of the 1997 Cabot 500 Celebrations. The strategies and policies and representational material surrounding this major international tourism event lend credibility to my conclusions that little has changed over the past century regarding the strategies and themes utilized in the implementation of Newfoundland’s tourism policies, and that the consequences for the people continue to be problematic.

I Bonavista and The Cabot 500 Celebrations

In this case study, I will attempt to critically analyze and problematize the various effects and consequences of the development of cultural tourism as “good economics”, and tourism policy and its implementation on the residents of the Bonavista Bay area. What did the Cabot 500 Celebrations achieve for these people? What does this mean for their future?

i “The Town That Made History”²⁷

Many have claimed that Bonavista is where European settlement in North America began. John Cabot, born Giovanni Caboto in Genoa, Italy, left Bristol, England on May 2, 1497 and set sail across the Atlantic Ocean in search of the treasures of the far east. On June 24th, 1497, after nearly two months at sea, Cabot finally spotted land exclaiming, “Buona Vista” - an Italian expression meaning “O happy site.” Considered to be the first European to set foot on what is now Canada since the Vikings landed 500 years earlier, he claimed the New Founde Lande for King Henry VII and reported that the waters were teeming with fish. Upon his return, news spread quickly about the riches of the Grand Banks fishery and soon all of Europe was competing for her wealth.

On the earliest maps the town was marked Buona Vista or Buena Vista. Over almost five centuries the name has been anglicized to Bonavista. English, Spanish, Portuguese and French fishermen fished off Cape Bonavista in the 1500’s, and though Bonavista offered poor shelter and had less than ideal anchorage, it became one of the most important towns in Newfoundland. Bonavista is one of the oldest towns on the North East coast of the province. First settled by the British in the 1600’s, at one time Bonavista vied with St. John’s in

²⁷ This was the prime advertising theme directed towards Bonavista because of its historical background and its future place in history as host to one of the biggest tourism events in North America.

economic and cultural importance. In the last decade of the 19th century, Bonavista was a booming town that serviced the 20,000 people living on the peninsula.

Today, Bonavista has a population of 4,605 inhabitants, and despite its size and fishing industry, the town is still relatively unaffected by 20th century technology and retains much of its historic and rustic appeal. The lifeblood of Bonavista has always been, and still is, the fishery. The people of Bonavista are fisherpeople, and all the spin-off industries are tied to the fishery. Bonavista was the centre of the Northern fishery for most of its history, and remains one of the largest fishing communities in the province. Bonavista played an important role in the development and continuity of the fishery in the province. "It is the fishery which has been the backbone of Bonavista's economy, and its past is clearly evident in the family names, the heritage structures, historic properties, and the social fabric of the community" (Department of Canadian Heritage/Parks Canada 1997 Cabot 500 promotional material). In fact, many will agree that, "Heritage and history are to Bonavista what skyscrapers are to the Toronto skyline. It is an undeniable fact that the past is an integral part of the social fabric of this community..." (Dean-Simmons, Visitor's Guide May-June 1997:3). Many Old World traditions remain to this day, passed through the generations. The tales, songs and limericks of adventures past still linger in the daily rituals of much of contemporary Newfoundland.

Upon talking to many residents of Bonavista, you can sense the unease about the idleness present in the town, since the cod moratorium put many fishery workers on the dole year round. The people - both young and old - seem to be in a state of purgatory; not quite sure what the future holds, nor what to do to make it better. The people in the rural communities, just like the people of the Bonavista Bay area, do not want to leave their island;

but they feel they have no choice. Because there is no fishing to learn, and no father/family business to learn from, and no jobs or future prospects, the majority of the youth are leaving. The rural communities do not know what they are going to do because the youth are the future of the outports. Those who do have the leadership skill and intellect to lead their communities into the 21st century in industry and development are emigrating.

Consequently, rural communities like Bonavista seldom benefit from their talented younger generation. In his article on tourism and the economic state of Newfoundland, Bergman states, "In many ways, Bonavista today reflects the uncertain future that still confronts much of Newfoundland. Even as the town prepares for its moment in the spotlight, the supper table-talk is of friends and family who are leaving - or thinking about it - in search of better lives on the mainland" (1997:17). Most of the town's attention is still focused on the reopening of the fishery.

The strong tourism movement presently occurring in Newfoundland has provided the people of Bonavista and its surrounding communities with a desperately needed chance to cash in on their cultural forms and history. Newfoundland has the potential to become one of the greatest tourism attractions in North America, but there are many obstacles to overcome (e.g. isolation). The planning and hosting of the 1997 Cabot 500 Celebrations in Bonavista was the first real test of the province's ability to coordinate and facilitate a world class cultural event.

ii The Cabot 500 Celebrations

Nineteen ninety-seven marked the 500th anniversary of the European discovery of Newfoundland and subsequently the European settlement of North America. Promoted and

advertised as the “greatest celebration in 500 years,” the *Mathew* landfall has been described as “the historical event of the century” (Mathew Landfall Official Programme 1997:5). Tourism officials, government and the local people of Newfoundland in conjunction with Bristol, England, spent five years planning a tourism celebration like nothing ever done before in Canada and the world over. The focal point of the celebration centred on the reenactment of Cabot’s voyage from Bristol, England, to Bonavista.

With the announcement of its designation as the focal point of the *Mathew* landing, Bonavista became a perfect example of the use of tourism as an economic strategy for growth and development. Murphy, in his article, “Tourism Management in Host Communities”, comments:

Tourism is an industry which uses the community as a resource, sells it as a product, and, in the process, affects the lives of everyone. It applies great pressures to host communities, forcing them to assess their competitiveness in an international market as well as the place of tourism in their development aspirations.

(1980:1)

The community of Bonavista spent five years actively planning for the Cabot celebrations. In a town with a winter unemployment rate of over 60% due to the closure of the food fishery, tourism became a desperately needed alternative for employment, business growth, and development (whether it be resources, industry or infrastructure). In addition, celebration of Bonavista’s role in North American history gave the residents of Bonavista and surrounding communities a much needed sense of pride and accomplishment as a people. It gave the people purpose and direction for several years. It helped the residents to promote their island’s cultural value, potential resource development, and industrial expansion to the rest of Canada and internationally.

Residents of Bonavista will tell you that it seems like the weight of tourism and its significance as a viable economic industry came to them overnight. Previously, the fishplant was the centre of economic and development planning; then, the focus shifted towards developing their own distinct cultural tourism industry. One resident said that eight years ago she owned the only bed and breakfast in the region. Most of the townsfolk thought she was crazy. The people at the time did not know what tourists expected because they never had to worry about second and third careers; in previous generations people could survive on one career.

Recently, tourism has become a more popular career choice for those who have the knowledge and financial backing to be competitive in this industry. Now there are numerous bed and breakfast establishments in the region, and all are struggling to survive. Most of these operators are managing on their own, utilizing their own finances and managerial skills. Yet, this transformation of a small fishing town with a fishing town mentality into a major tourism destination did not occur without profound structural, economic and social changes and consequences for the community.

In 1997, John Cabot and his ship '*The Mathew*,' came to symbolize/represent and romanticize Newfoundland's history, culture, and heritage. The town as well as the province had succumbed to "*Mathew* mania," if you will. Bonavista became the source of endless souvenirs of the *Mathew* in the shape and form of mugs, cups, t-shirts, license plates, grocery bags, and hats, (In fact, when I visited Newfoundland in August of 1997, almost everyone was wearing the official *Mathew* hat). Labatt - the official sponsor of the Cabot Celebrations - even launched its own line of Cabot beer. Popular culture had attempted to define the

plight of Newfoundlanders by representing the people and environment as a concrete symbol - the *Mathew*. O'Dea comments:

Tourism puts an economic value on what we like to think of as invaluable because it draws an outsider's perception to what an insider takes for granted, refining the insider's perception. This frequently has the effect of transforming it into an object or practice commonly valued, that is, making it a cultural artifact which helps define the local community.

(Heritage Canada 1996:6-8)

The town of Bonavista was brought into this process during the Cabot 500 Celebrations.

Fisheries Minister Fred Mifflin initiated a federal government project to co-ordinate and provide support for the festivities in the form of employment and income opportunities for village residents; 30 jobs were developed as a direct result of these celebrations. Mifflin stipulated that, "These 30 jobs are only the beginning. The Cabot celebrations will be a major event, bringing Bonavista to the attention of Canada and the world with the ensuing tourism dollars and jobs" (*The Evening Telegram*, St. John's, April 1996). In addition, funding was provided to construct proper infrastructure for the celebrations. For example, through the Canada/Newfoundland Agreement on Economic Renewal, \$1.2 million dollars were allotted for structural improvements to the Cabot Stadium (where all the main celebratory activities would be taking place). Also, road improvements/construction were completed on the road from Ryan's Premises to the Cape Bonavista Light House, and the 10.5 kilometre section of Highway 235 between Keels and King's Cove.

From my discussions with various tourism operators and small businesses in the Bonavista Bay area, however, it became apparent that government and tourism investors only chose to get involved when there was financial or political gain for the individual or

institution. For example, residents were amused at how in the midst of economic depression, it was only when the Queen had confirmed her participation at the celebrations that initiatives were taken to repair and pave the roads. The roads that the Queen and delegates traveled on were beautified and reconstructed; the rest of the roads remain in a state of disrepair, nearly taking out the bottom of your car when you drive.

Many tourism boosters believed that the community needed total commitment to tourism development if they expected to make any profit in return. Thus, funding was awarded to the town to build a *Mathew* of their own. The \$1.8 million dollar project, jointly sponsored by Human Resources Development Canada in Clarendville and the Economic Renewal Agreement between the federal and provincial governments, has provided a year round attraction/facility for local residents and for visiting tourists. The town wanted their own *Mathew* to commemorate the Cabot celebrations, and as an attraction for future tourists. Town residents boast that their *Mathew* is more authentic then the one used for the celebrations, because the builders constructed the ship truer to its original historic form.

There have been many criticisms of the Mathew Legacy Project²⁸. One complaint is that money is being spent on building an attraction for tourists when there isn't even a decent hotel in the area. There are barely any facilities to accommodate visitors, and there are no road signs or designated information bureaus. Roads are in a state of disrepair; there are inadequate health facilities; adjacent communities cannot afford to have streetlights.

Critics argue that more investment should be designated to the infrastructure of the

²⁸ See Shane O'Dea's article "Conservation Priorities: Preservation in an Age of Need", in Heritage Canada, November/December, 1996, pp.6-8.

town itself; that state and tourism organizations should invest in what is already there, and rebuild the broken down communities (O'Dea 1996:6-8). Money has been spent on building new attractions instead of repairing or promoting heritage sites. Federal and provincial Tourism officials state that this type of project is an interpretive experience focusing on community development. The town will be completely responsible for the funding and maintenance of the ship for tourists. There will be no government aid apart from the initial funding support. In the meantime, the original *Mathew* utilized for the celebrations, which was previously up for private sale by its owner, is now back in Bristol as a tourist attraction. If the Bonavista *Mathew* is acquired by a larger city centre within or outside the province, or by the United States, the town residents from Bonavista will not benefit - regardless of how "authentic" their ship is.

While the replica of the *Mathew* may bring more tourists to Bonavista Bay and its surrounding areas, it will also entail "ongoing costs in operation and maintenance which those communities will have to bear while meeting other pressing local commitments" (O'Dea 1996:6-8). At a time when dollars must be used efficiently and be equally distributed, focusing on re-building is not good economic practice (O'Dea 1996:6-8).

Within the community itself it is important to remember that, "...some social groups will possess superior sets of resources and this may have the result that their conceptions of the interests of the locality become dominant..."(Urry 1990b:189). Also, there are many competing groups who presume to stand for the interests of the community, and deal with programs and development projects accordingly. Originally, initiative for the planning and promotion of the celebrations came from a few imaginative and energetic town residents. This small group of townsfolk formed a volunteer force called the "Vista 97 Committee."

This volunteer organization had absolutely no budget, and no government support. All planning, input, and organizing, was done on a community level. As the success of this committee grew, and the plans for the celebrations became a reality and not just words on paper,²⁹ the government stepped in and assumed control over the committee's planning (see below). All of a sudden, there was a \$1 million dollar budget allocated for the *Mathew* celebrations. Government officials and tourism offices were set up in the town, and the Vista 97 Committee became a government agency.

One local tourism operator - who was one of the original members of the Vista 97 Committee - went to the Tourism Convention Committee in St. John's, (a province-wide seminar for tourism officials, businesses and operators, etc.), and spoke out against government involvement. She said, "The people of Bonavista know what to do and know what has to be done for these celebrations. The townsfolk know they need to clean up the village and they know they need to be educated - just leave us alone and let us do it". Upon her return to Bonavista and at the next Vista 97 meeting, the Committee of government members asked her to resign because she was "too opinionated" and caused too much trouble. In protest against this, the entire staff of volunteers which comprised the original committee members resigned as well.

This tourism operator believed that the whole event was pre-orchestrated and planned. She believed that the government knew the other community members who held similar beliefs would leave with her. Thus, government was able to take over complete

²⁹ For example, the committee was able to obtain Royal support for the *Mathew* visit.

control of the organization of the Cabot 500 Celebrations; any community members who were involved in the festivities would essentially be puppets of the provincial and regional governments. Other tourism committees have had similar experiences. For example, another regional organizational committee - the O'Buona Vista John Cabot 500 Anniversary Committee Inc. - which represented the discovery trail region, signed a "letter of cooperation" with the provincial agency of the John Cabot (1997) 500 Anniversary Corporation (Countdown to 97 1994-95:6). This agreement provided for government officials replacing local and regional representatives in the planning, developing, marketing and representation of the *Mathew* and the Cabot celebrations.

In consequence, the townsfolk were relegated to subordinate positions, and stripped of direct governing control. Event organizers established clean-up committees, and a community newsletter called "The Vista Log" was mailed to each local household publicizing the importance of sanitation and aesthetics, so tourists would come and spend money. Residents were encouraged to take pride in their community; and acted accordingly - painting houses, garages and fences. People adopted streets to clean up and fixed up their properties. Promotional packages were sent to every household reminding the people of the significance of this event, encouraging them to get involved at all levels, asking them to invite family and friends to come and visit. Schools and land were transformed into temporary hostels and campgrounds. Families gave up their homes for tourists. The town was decorated with banners and flowers aimed at raising the "cultural awareness" of the residents. The town took on the persona of the *Mathew* visit - symbolizing resilience, strength, determination and hope for the future.

But at the same time that government was promoting tourism in the rural communities, government cutbacks were killing local tourism projects and businesses. One community member who owned a bed and breakfast, had received a historic designation for her house. It was the first home in Bonavista to be designated as a heritage house and she had sought this designation. Yet, in the year of the celebrations, the government terminated its funding for support of this historic property. Reservations were down 80% in 1997, despite the Mathew homecoming. In the meantime, there were no seminars or workshops on how to entice visitors to come to the town. The majority of seminars were held in St. John's or other urban centres. The tourist season focuses on the summer months, making it a very short year for profit making. The interference from politicians who promote specific aspects of the tourism industry or particular regions, towns, and attractions, sometimes hampers funding possibilities, promotion advantages local support for other towns and regions.

The president of Bonavista's Historical Society commented on the indifference from provincial and federal governments to tourism on the island. His family donated the Bradley House - Mockbeggar Property ³⁰ to the provincial government several years ago for the purpose of establishing the infrastructure to generate tourism in the town. Renovations on a shed (built in 1733), began 14 years ago; but in 1997, the government cut all funding. Nothing has been done to refurbish this historic site, and it sits awaiting potential ruin. This is just one example of the lack of commitment and organization characteristic of the state with regard to meeting rural communities' needs in promoting tourism.

In addition, resources once a natural part of the social fabric of community

³⁰ Home to one of the province's first Canadian senators, the site includes numerous buildings representing traditional outport lifestyle.

inhabitants' lives, have now been monopolized by state. For example, the designation of The Ryan's Premises as a National Historic Site, indicated the cultural importance the fishing industry had in the lives of Newfoundlanders as the economic backbone of the island, especially the fishing town of Bonavista. But now Parks Canada administers The Ryan's Premises. According to recent legislation, a fee of \$250.00 dollars must be paid to the federal government if any person(s) wishes to sell images of the site in any way for profit.

Local tourism operators are livid about this new government policy. They see it as another setback organized by the state to keep the small businesses from getting ahead. More importantly, the residents are outraged that the Ryan Premises, a landmark they grew up with (and their ancestors grew up with), is now "owned" by the federal government.

When I visited the town some two months after the *Mathew* arrival, it was hard to believe that anything of international significance had taken place there at all. There were no more banners hanging, and there were hardly any tourists. The tourists did not stay for any length of time in Bonavista. 40,000 people came for the arrival of the landfall and to hear the Queen speak; after the festivities of June 24th, the majority of tourists left the town, either to follow the *Mathew* to other ports or to visit other sites. The organizers and town residents only focused on the numbers of *Mathew* tourists that would come and the potential revenue this would produce for the town. Instead, the town was left with very few long term tourists and a substantial amount of money invested into the event without a whole lot to show for it. There had been no development of new hotels or campgrounds.

People were complaining about money lost because of the festivities, and heritage committee members noted the abandonment of renovations, restorations, and funding, by government. Local talk centred on optimism for tourist seasons in the years to come. Some

people believed that if they couldn't derive lasting benefits from the greatest cultural event the province has ever seen, they could not expect to succeed at any other time. In retrospect, the residents paid a high price for three days of cultural exposure.

iii "Everything Goes To St. John's"

According to the many local small tourism business people that I talked to, government and business in St. John's promote tourism only for their own benefit. There is a saying among rural community business operators that "everything goes to St. John's". This is because St. John's, the capital of the province, is home to the power elite of government, corporate business, industry, and specifically the arts and culture industry. St. John's is where policy is constructed and provincial and regional decisions are made. The elite of St. John's have continuously refused to acknowledge the importance of the rural areas. A 1970 Report of the People's Commission on Unemployment comments that since her discovery in the fifteenth century, Newfoundland has been "structurally underdeveloped" and her "great fishery exploited" (Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour 1978:63). The report further states:

...only St. John's as an administrative and commercial centre was granted official legitimacy. This overcentralization of power within the city continues the plague of today [outports] and helps to account for the persistent refusal of leaders of St. John's to recognize the economic potential of the inshore fishery and social viability of the outport community.

(Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour 1978:63)

Hence, it is no surprise that St. John's played a pivotal role in monopolizing the corporate, economic and cultural aspects of the *Mathew* and the Cabot celebrations.

For example, the people of Bonavista could not understand why St. John's had the *Mathew* for 6 days when Bonavista only had the ship for 3 days, considering the fact that Bonavista was the focal point of the celebrations for the island. The economic reality of the situation reveals that the elite were in St. John's and made the agenda for the *Mathew*. George Clements, chairman of the Cabot Celebrations and various people involved in the organizing committee were St. John's businessmen themselves or had vested interests in St. John's businesses. Therefore, they wanted to benefit and profit from the *Mathew*. For example, there were hundreds of conventions scheduled in St. John's at this time, the great majority of the international attractions were stationed in the capital (e.g. The Year of the Arts Festival, The Summit of the Sea Conference, and the Festival 500 Sharing the Voices Festival). Hence, because the spotlight was predominantly focused on St. John's, more profit was generated for these businesses/entrepreneurs.

At the same time, the town of Bonavista lost thousands and thousands of dollars and cultural exposure because the tourist attractions were not located in the town. Visitors witnessed the arrival of the *Mathew* and the Queen, and then headed off to other places - mainly St. John's. The National Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada chose to commemorate Cabot's voyages and landfall at Cape Bonavista. For Bonavista to be acknowledged for the Cabot landing celebrations, all the publicity had to come out of St. John's. Bonavista was not mentioned; thus, visitors did not know what to expect from the village. Rumours spread about the inadequacy of the infrastructure and facilities of the host community. These rumours were reported in newspapers and on television commentaries causing a lot of bad media exposure. Tourism promotion was controlled by St. John's, and only Cabot and the image of St. John's in the Cabot Celebrations were promoted. Bonavista

was promoted as a one-day celebration only, whereas, St. John's was promoted as a vacation in itself.

iv The Historic Townscape Project

In keeping with the outport image incorporated into the province's overall tourism advertising campaign, Bonavista, in light of Cabot's landing and its role in the province as a fishing centre, has implemented a number of projects for its future as a tourism destination. In particular, the historic town of Bonavista received \$50,000 dollars from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). This was to be used in accordance with the following guidelines:

To properly balance tourism and culture, it is crucial to the development of both that a heritage tourist infrastructure be created that is both authentic and viable. It must be authentic to create the cultural experience for the local visitor and the attractive sense of the past for the tourist. It must be viable in the sense that it must have an economic life that takes it beyond the tourist season, that does not entail expenditure beyond return... We must now start to make the whole cultural landscape into an attractive and vital resource - to make heritage structures not just something we visit, but something we live in, and live our lives around. Heritage cannot just be something outside ourselves, rather it must be part of ourselves if it is to have value for our communities.

(O'Dea 1996:6-8)

This "heritage ideology" has been what tourism boosters within the community have adopted as a means to entice visitors and generate economic activity in the Bay area.

Tourism boosters within the community are attempting to obtain funding and infrastructure to transform the entire village into a historic site, thus perpetuating the traditional fishing settlement image historically promoted in tourism ads. The main goal is to garner "substantial economic benefits from the conservation and development of Bonavista's unique heritage resources" (Bradley Bonavista Historical Society 1997). One must keep in

mind, however, that focusing on the past as a direction for the future can be extremely problematic.

Tourism boosters are attempting to portray the village of Bonavista in a particular way for tourist consumers. Bonavista may become an example where, “Whole communities... undergo a process of gentrification in order to attract tourists, making them conform to a particular aesthetic which values authenticity, the old, and the unusual” (Overton 1996:147). Therefore, what is “authentic” becomes a social and economic construction, and reality becomes a social situation to deny/pretend doesn’t really exist. The end result is that these developments empower the construction and maintenance of social identity, be it good or bad, real or false; this often mis-informs the general public and (mis)represents local people and cultures.

Community residents who have accepted this tourist image as their ‘national character’, are also participants in their own subordination. They believe they are celebrating their heritage and taking steps towards progress as an economically viable community. But, at the same time, by solely representing themselves through tourism imagery, they hide the realities in which true social relations govern their existence (Overton 1996:108-109), and perpetuate stereotypes. Consequently, they are decreasing their chances for a better life.

v “Summer in the Bight”: The Rising Tide Theatre

Trinity is a good example of what could happen to the Bonavista community when the Historic Townscape Project is implemented. Tourist attractions have become places of cultural politics where Newfoundlanders struggle for and against inequities established through tourism promotion and policy. One must be critical in analyzing the various forces

at work, and their role in perpetuating the “authentic” and “real lifestyle” of a people and place.

An example of how Newfoundland people and culture are stereotyped and (mis)represented through textual and visual forms can be found in the tourism attraction, “Summer in the Bight,” by the Rising Tide Theatre of Trinity. I participated in this theatrical attraction in August 1997 when I visited eastern Newfoundland as part of my fieldwork. The artistic director of the Rising Tide Theatre, among other things, stages plays and spectacles about the people and history of Newfoundland on natural landscapes and historical landmarks, and in actual heritage/historical buildings. The audience is invited to walk around to each performance and participate in each scene by the narrators of the play. The entrepreneurs of this theatre experience - through promotional materials - advertise the event as, “Bringing History Alive.” And indeed they do. For example, in one scene, the Trinity sealing disaster of 1892 is acted out telling of all the lives lost. The audience actually sits in a historic church singing hymns and participates in the funeral service, reading prayers and condolences. When I was there, the entire experience was so overpowering and emotional that some audience members cried.

It has been described as a play which interprets the history of Newfoundland by Newfoundlanders. On the front of the coloured brochures are the two narrators of the play, dressed in the stereotypical costume of the Newfoundland fisherman. Most of the historical stories that are dramatically re-enacted have to do with the traditional aspects of the Newfoundland people and their way of life - the inshore fishery, colonial control, tragedies of sealing and fishing disasters, merchant domination, and the plight of women.

The dramatization shows how all of these historical situations resulted in conditioning the character of contemporary Newfoundlanders. And of course, humour and play on words are a part of each narration. Newfoundlanders - including local residents and expatriates - as well as mainlanders, believe the theatrical experience to be unique and entertaining. It provides mainlanders with a glimpse of 'real' Newfoundland as if they had lived on the island themselves. Tourism entrepreneurs promise visitors a taste of real, authentic Newfoundland as told by Newfoundlanders themselves, as all the writers and actors are indigenous.

Visitors told me that they felt enriched and spiritually uplifted after participating in such an experience; it was almost as if they had experienced this history themselves. Tourism operators within the community of Trinity are able to make a decent living through the industry. In addition, related industries benefit from the tourists, sometimes numbering up to 500 people a performance. Local and area residents are employed, whereas before, they waited for Employment Insurance. At the same time, they feel a great sense of pride in being part of the telling of their rich history of their people and environment to the outside world. One local actor stated that at first he thought acting was the most stupid thing he had ever done to get his stamps.³¹ Now he talks with pride about "heritage," and "tradition," and "cultural survival."

The issues of (mis)representation arise because the images portrayed in the production are constructions of the past. These are not stories about modern times. References are made to the cod moratorium and to why people stay in Newfoundland, but,

³¹ A person must have 12-14 weeks of employment before they can apply for employment insurance. The weeks are measured in "stamps".

romantic and simplistic views are given as reasons. The final lines in the play are as follows: “We seen hard times before, and we weathered the storm, we’ll see them again but then some fine fall day, with the air just cool enough to put colour in your cheeks, and the woods ripe with decay you’ll think nothing could ever be wrong, or that there’s no storm you can’t weather.” In fact, it is this statement that is on the front page of the play’s brochure. These simplistic and stereotypical conceptualizations about the people and land are made even more real for the tourist by the fact that the audience is so involved in the production. The experience is very convincing for the tourists. The town has been restored to its historic roots. The image presented for tourists is a romantic vision of an entire modern day community somehow trapped in the past, forever unchanging.

The theatre group also performs numerous plays utilizing the same dramatic approach, concentrating on the history of socio-political issues in the province. One such play, in an attempt to lend authenticity to the experience of the story, tells a tale about the fishery, and is performed on an actual fishing shed/stage. The tourists are made to feel as if they have entered the “back region” of Newfoundland culture and are experiencing the true thoughts, feelings and habits of the fisherfolk. As a result, the moratorium on the cod fishery and all of the political, economic and social issues that accompany it, become de-politicized and romanticized. Most guests may have a stereotypical image that Newfoundland society is comprised of old fishermen. This play commoditizes the crisis of the fishery, and contributes to the biases of visiting peoples

The quaint fishing village of Trinity is a cultural construct promoted by tourism entrepreneurs to entice visitors to the town. Trinity in reality is a booming tourist town,

inhabited and operated mainly by tourism officials.³² In actuality, very few of the original inhabitants live there. Most residents are affiliated with the tourism industry (e.g. souvenir shop owners, tour operators, restaurant owners, actors, etc.). Tourism ads and media continuously brag about how successful the town of Trinity is and about how happy its residents are. Yet, upon talking to the residents one gets the idea that the masses of people walking through the village are not always a welcome sight. Many artists lament the province's cultural predicament. One artist states: "It seemed like some awful kind of travesty...Here we were watching a play about fishing, in a place where there was no more fishing"...he goes on to brood about the "commodification of the culture," the arts dumbed down into tourist attractions, outports turned into theme parks..."(Bergman 1997:21).

Many critics feel that the local people are living in a state of denial, stating that more has to be done and that, "not everyone can be actors" (Bergman 1997:21). Perpetuating the myth that Newfoundland is a fishing society through tourism sites and attractions and promotional material, allows for the tourists and the rural people as well, to live in romanticized fantasies of the past. Instead, energy must be focused on planning for the future – one that may not involve the fishery to the extent that it did in the past, if at all. What is "authentic" about Newfoundlanders presently, is not so much a society based on the fishery, but a society which is struggling to maintain both traditional and modern lifestyles within a very socially problematic and economically deprived situation.

Focusing on the past history of the island, community members are able to vividly portray and protest against the injustices and subordination their people faced, by satirizing and dramatizing different scenes - such as Britain's colonial power over the residents, the

³² See O'Hollaren (1985) MA Thesis "Strangers In Our Midst": Tourism As A Development Strategy In Newfoundland.

power and inequalities of the merchant system (the basis of their social, political and economic system up until the 1970's), and even the role women played in establishing the tiny colony. At the end of each performance, the actors encourage the audience to sing "The Ode To Newfoundland," which was at one time, and is still considered today, Newfoundland's national anthem. What could be more empowering for the continuing survival of outport culture?

The Rising Tide Theatre performances have gained worldwide recognition as an unique cultural event. This recognition has been transformed into a sense of empowerment for the community because it has allowed for the theatre members to gain financial benefits from their work; it provides employment for the community and surrounding region, and produces a personal interpretation of their history. The people are able to revitalize their culture in a unique and memorable way while making a profit. This project was something the people did themselves. Coming from a history of subordination, dependence and manipulation by dominating forces (Britain, fishing merchants, the state), this is something to be proud of- a source of strength and confidence for the future. The people of Newfoundland are able to celebrate and maintain culture in the face of threats of resettlement, urbanization or centralization, out-migration and the loss of the fishery.

Participating in the promotion of cultural forms through cultural tourism is a way for native Newfoundlanders to break away from dependence on government, towards self-determination. Borrowing from Blundell and her work on native peoples, I apply the same conclusions to the people of Newfoundland. Thus, Newfoundland's efforts at promoting their distinct cultural forms is not necessarily a longing for traditional outport life, but a way

for them to “ensure that their culture can continue to grow and change - in directions they choose for themselves” (Blundell 1989b:68).

Unfortunately, Trinity is a rare success story on the island. For the rest of the province’s outport communities, the effects of the tourism industry’s (mis)representation, may hasten their demise.

II Conclusions

The residents would like to see power wielded in their interests by the provincial government by representatives they have elected. But to date, those elected have been unsuccessful in implementing a practical tourism policy for a majority of the people. The majority of the town residents that I talked to believed that in order for tourism to work in any town, you need the majority of people to adopt a set of goals and objectives; otherwise, tourism will fail. This also applies to town councils and government. When you have each of these parties working against each other, vying for different goals, it makes the transition from fishing town to tourism, extremely difficult.

Too often big tourism projects are started and never finished; thus, money is wasted. Rural Newfoundlanders were never taught how to finish and maintain these types of projects. They have always relied on government support for developing and maintaining tourism infrastructure. In addition, a lot of these projects did not have the support of local people from the outset. Carter in his article, “Cooperatives in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador: An Alternative?” from Peter Sinclair’s compilation of essays on Newfoundland society, states that many of these tourism projects were initiated and planned by outsiders who “perceived a need for them”, hence, controlling their development and implementation

(Carter 1988:206). Consequently, even though these projects provided “short-term benefits,” it is no surprise that such projects have often failed to develop “long-term opportunities” (Carter 1988:207). It is up to the rural communities to sustain themselves independently and to adjust and adapt accordingly.

At the same time, it was not a realistic option for Bonavista Bay residents to form cooperatives to serve tourists. Many feel that in the rural areas there are not enough tourist facilities (e.g., hotels), and that the local population is too small to support a cooperative sector. In addition, many residents believe that it is the government’s unwritten policy to discourage cooperatives within the tourism industry because they produce too much competition for big businesses and banks.

In many of Newfoundland’s rural communities, there is a “...sharp conflict between the self-reliance embodied in the outports’ traditional economic and social organization, on the one hand, and the dependence on federal spending and regulation...The outports struggle to remain self-reliant and culturally coherent yet they want to fully exploit the new, government-mediated environment by winning all available federal development money” (Omohundro 1994:286). The manifestation of tourism development has only heightened this contradiction.

The promotion of Bonavista’s cultural tourism as a strategy for economic development came at a transitional time for the townsfolk. The fishery was closed and employment at the fish plant was meager. State and various tourism boosters were able to capitalize on this during the Cabot 500 Celebration year. As a result, an entire community was encouraged to think, act and look differently, even if only for a short period of time, than they had been doing for previous generations. There were a lot of people who were ready for

this move, but there were a lot more who were not. The residents of Bonavista had their hopes and dreams built up; money and time were invested into creating a new life through tourism; but, there was not enough commitment, communication and partnership between government, tourism agencies, investors, etc., and local residents to sustain cultural tourism. Also, Bonavista is remote and the tourist season is too short.

In general, the business sector of Bonavista was not happy with the *Mathew* visit. The community did not benefit economically from the celebrations promoted by government. The small businesses I talked to did not make a profit off the 1997 tourism season. There was insufficient investment and expertise to provide hotels, nightlife, and exquisite dining. Also, as a result of all the propaganda about the economic benefits of cultural tourism in Bonavista, a great number of small businesses were started. For example, one resident opened up a wildlife museum of indigenous animals. There were many craft shops opened up, and boating tours were offered. These enterprises were owned and operated by town residents trying to make ends meet. Consequently, there was too much competition and most, unable to make a profit and keep up the expenses of operating the business, closed after a year.

After the 1997 Cabot Year, tourism did not become Bonavista's economic saviour. And yet, tourism boosters are still insisting on developing the town and focusing economic revitalization on the cultural tourism industry. Only time will tell if this strategy will sustain the whole community, or create more financial strain and social conflict. One thing is for certain: the state needs to undertake strategies of economic development - like tourism - that work in partnership with local people, instead of excluding them, fighting with them, planning for them, or (mis)representing them.

Chapter six – Conclusion and Directions for Further Research

Throughout history, Newfoundland's "heritage of unemployment and poverty" initiated and perpetuated the "social and cultural basis for developing a tourist industry" (Overton 1996:126). Within this context, two trends developed: the continuous promotion of tourism by the state as a means of economic development; and, the construction of a particular image of Newfoundland through textual and visual forms which have focused on the island's unique characteristics - its tradition, heritage, outport culture and rustic nature. As Chapter Three illustrated, these strategies and ideologies have continued to be advocated and developed during times of political, economic, social or cultural crises, regardless of changing governments, time periods or class relations. Thus, what has resulted in Newfoundland is the perpetuation of a tourism industry where the infrastructure has developed, the policies have been implemented, and the relations between the state and the local people, have followed unchanging lines resulting in similar consequences .

Today, as Chapter four has shown, the state continues to play a key role in promoting tourism as a means of economic development; and the strategies and policies implemented to achieve these goals have not changed. The tourist gaze continues to be socially constructed within a context of "commodification of otherness," and a direct avenue has been provided for this by advertising the Newfoundland people's distinct cultural forms through the promotion of "cultural tourism".

Chapter Two addressed some of the problematic themes and issues found in the critical literature on tourism which were revealed to have contemporary social, cultural, and political consequences. Some of these were explored in my critical analysis of Bonavista and the Cabot 500 celebrations. This final chapter will discuss these consequences in more detail.

It has been argued that the Newfoundland ruling elite's cultural tourism and tourism policy effectively results in control of resources, monitoring of outport culture and maintaining class differences. Leyton's article in Rex Clarks' book Contrary Winds: Essays on Newfoundland Society in Crisis (1986) elaborates the hidden function of the myth promoted and perpetuated through Newfoundland's tourism ads and policy: the "myth that living in a kind of restored outport will keep us [Newfoundlanders] unaware of the new realities of inequality, injustice and exploitation" (1986:76). But why has this myth endured over time and why does it continue to be tolerated in present day conditions?

One may say that this myth serves the interests of the power elite by diverting attention from the real socio-economic crisis (Leyton 1986:78). At the same time, continued promotion of the traditional outport Newfoundland culture can help to undermine the state's initiative towards centralization and regulation of the outport people. Mathews summarizes the thoughts of Herbert Gans:

...poverty remains, despite our attempts to eradicate it, because it is "functional" to large segments of our society (Gans 1972)...the presence of poor people in a society means social, economic, political and cultural benefits for those who are in more favoured positions.

(1976:133)

On the other hand, cultures are always being invented and always changing. It is usually in periods of rapid social transformation or economic and political decline that the "invention of traditions" takes place (Hobsbawm 1992:4-5). Tourism critic Philip McKean, stated in Valene Smith's book Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism that, in fact, tourism "may...strengthen the process of conserving, reforming, and recreating certain traditions," through the manipulation and construction of cultural forms for tourists by tourism agencies and the guests themselves (1989:120).

Specifically, Cabot 500 provided the Newfoundland government with a number of financial and development opportunities. Numerous countries and corporations were involved in the planning of these celebrations, and joint partnerships were formed for resource and capital development. For the local people, the tourism industry and its campaign efforts dedicated to promoting the Cabot 500 celebrations initiated a cultural revival of the 1990's. At a time when most Newfoundlanders believed the fate of the island and the existence of her people and their heritage to be on the brink of extinction, tourism has gotten people excited again. Cabot 500 allowed the people to advertise the uniqueness and strength of their culture and way of life in addition to promoting its economic, industrial and natural resource advantages.

There are those Newfoundlanders who are making a profit from tourists. There are also Newfoundlanders who see this promotion of outport culture as added support, because as long as government cheques keep coming, whether in the form of Employment Insurance or pensions, or government grants for tourism-related development projects, outport Newfoundland will survive a little longer.

People will always find innovative methods to contest the many inequalities that remain hidden in society. The people of Newfoundland have come to utilize "cultural tourism" as a means by which to save their traditional outport way of life. Discourse on "tradition", "culture", and "history" have become words of empowerment in this fight against economic decline and erosion of traditional culture. Clark comments that, "today, with culture...coming increasingly under the control of the state to shore up a failing economy and entertain a swelling underclass," the local people are, "capable of reminding us that culture can be enlisted on the side of the oppressed too, for their struggles" (1986:8). As long as the

people continue to utilize tourism as a means to romanticize and celebrate the past, to the point of making it a necessity to their future, the Newfoundland heritage will continue to depend on a world where capitalist values continue to dominate.

But it is paramount that one realize the irony and danger in what is being celebrated - the very qualities which many feel are the reasons for Newfoundland's state of existence in the first place.

The Newfoundland tourism campaign has constructed an idealized image for the tourist gaze - focusing on nostalgia and authenticity in tourism ads and policy. Rather than acknowledge and explore the contradictions and variations within Newfoundland's contemporary social, political and economic relations, the world is encouraged to focus on the island's history, its glorious past, and its promising future.

For many, this is not an acceptable world view because it generalizes and accepts as the status quo, class differentiation and inequality, poverty and social injustice. It depoliticizes and romanticizes contemporary social relations. It makes underdevelopment and unemployment issues unreal for people both inside and outside the province. Tourism policies and state practices continue to perpetuate the ideology that unemployment and seasonal work are acceptable; that this is the way it should be because it is their "culture". It does not do anything to try and rectify these problems. Class conflicts, social inequalities and regional disparities are ignored.

Newfoundland's relationship with the tourism industry is similar to that in many underdeveloped regions in the world. Similar themes can be found in most tourism campaigns where an underdeveloped, poor region or people are promoted as tourist destinations. State officials say that tourism development will be a means of economic

rejuvenation for the locals; and a particular image of the host people is promoted for market awareness and for commodification. Usually the image promoted has the power to simplify and depoliticize the host people. The people are subjugated as these images either reproduce unequal class relations or justify existing ones.

In addition, it is common for those subordinated to struggle against such exploitation through the utilization and transformation of cultural forms; but they do so confined within the economic, political, social and cultural barriers set up and perpetuated by state and power elite in society. As a result, the tourism industry's power elite continue to exploit and regulate the rural people and their environment, who in turn, continue to struggle against such regulation and exploitation.

Can this trend be broken? Hopefully, this thesis will contribute to exposing the underlying social relations, politics and inequalities reproduced in and perpetuated throughout the history of Newfoundland's tourism development. In addition, by informing the people of the processes at work, they can take direct action in the implementation of policy and infrastructure development that creates equal opportunities and empowerment for all.

In this context one must ask: In the end, will it all have been worth it? Will the people of rural Newfoundland have benefited or improve their lot? What does this mean for similar communities and states around the world? Cultural tourism provides the means for disadvantaged groups (e.g. in rural Newfoundland) to develop and progress economically. Yet, at the same time, cultural tourism plays a significant role in the maintenance of social, political, and economic inequality. Such diverse implications of tourism in disadvantaged communities/regions are areas for further critical research with regard to the power

relationships reproduced in issues of representation and consumption, in culture contact and culture change.

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Appendices

Appendix I: List of interviewees

1. Anonymous Retired fisherman born and living in Bonavista, Newfoundland, age 80 (August 1997).
2. Anonymous Fisherman, Bonavista, Newfoundland, age 45 (August 1997).
3. Anonymous Local family, fisherpeople, Bonavista, Newfoundland, ages 36, 28, 13 and one year (August 1997).
4. Anonymous Fishplant worker with Fishery Products International (FPI) in Bonavista, Newfoundland, age 32 (August 1997).
5. Anonymous Employee at the town museum, female age 42, Bonavista, Newfoundland (August 1997).
6. Anonymous Retired Sociology professor from Memorial University, who has written a book on tourism in Newfoundland and operates a sightseeing/excursions company. St. John's, Newfoundland (August 1997). I also conducted phone interviews with this individual prior to my visit.
7. Anonymous Owner of craft store in Trinity, Newfoundland (August 1997).
8. Anonymous Local area actor in the Rising Tide Production "Summer in the Bight", Trinity, Newfoundland (August 1997).
9. Anonymous Toronto, Ontario crew member sailing with the *Mathew*, Trinity, Newfoundland (August 1997).
10. Anonymous Local resident employed at the National Historic Site, Ryans Premises, Bonavista, Newfoundland (August 1997).
11. Anonymous Local resident employed at the Provincial Historic Site, The Cape Bonavista Lighthouse, Bonavista, Newfoundland (August 1997).
12. Anonymous Local resident who opened his own small business, a Wild Life Museum of indigenous Newfoundland animals, Elliston, Newfoundland (August 1997).
13. Anonymous Local resident volunteer with the "Vista 97 Committee", Bonavista, Newfoundland (August 1997).

14. Anonymous Local resident volunteer involved with the “Countdown to ‘97” committee, Bonavista, Newfoundland (August 1997).
15. Anonymous Government tourism official with the Cabot 500 Corporation, a temporary organization set up to plan the festivities, St. John’s, Newfoundland (August 1997). Coordinator of the Vista ‘97 committee, Bonavista, Newfoundland.
16. Anonymous Small businessman who is owner of a local variety store and tourism gift shop, Bonavista, Newfoundland (August 1997).
17. Anonymous Owner of Silver Linings Bed and Breakfast, originator of the Vista ‘97 committee, Bonavista, Newfoundland (August, 1997). I also conducted phone interviews with this individual prior to my visit.
18. Anonymous Employee with the Management Plan, Ryan’s Premises, Parks Canada, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Department of Canadian Heritage (August 1997). I also conducted phone interviews with this individual prior to my visit.
19. Anonymous Employee with the Planning and Research Division, Tourism, Culture and Recreation Planning and Research Division, St. John’s, Newfoundland (August 1997). I also conducted phone interviews with this individual prior to my visit.
20. Anonymous Director, Marketing Division (Tourism), Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, St. John’s, Newfoundland, (August 1997). I also conducted phone interviews with this individual prior to my visit.
21. Anonymous Employee with the Historical Resources Division, Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, St. John’s, Newfoundland, (August 1997). I also conducted phone interviews with this individual prior to my visit.
22. Anonymous Owner of restaurant and private boat excursion tours, Clarenville, Newfoundland, (August 1997).
23. Anonymous Employee with the Rural Development Office (Avalon Regional Office), Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, St. John’s, Newfoundland, (August 1997).

24. Anonymous **Small businessperson/owner of local tourism craft store, Trinity, Newfoundland, (August 1997).**
25. Anonymous **Unemployed local resident, male, age 21, Traytown, Newfoundland, (August 1997).**
26. Anonymous **Construction worker/part-time fisherman, age 56, Culls Harbour, Newfoundland, (August 1997).**
27. Anonymous **Employee at provincial tourism information office, female, age 37, Gander, Newfoundland, (August 1997).**
28. Anonymous **Unemployed fisherman who now runs a boat excursion tour company, King's Cove, Newfoundland, (August 1997).**
29. Bradley, Gordon **President of the Bonavista Historical Society and head organizer for the Historic Townscape Project, Bonavista, Newfoundland, (August 1997).**
30. William Doody **Local resident who retired in Bonavista after 20 years of living in Ontario. He is a craftsman for the various local tourism shops and designer of the town flag for the Cabot celebrations, (August 1997). I also conducted phone interviews with this individual prior to my visit.**

Appendix II: Map of Newfoundland

Map of Newfoundland: MapQuest www.Mapquest.com