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**“Skippers of the Shore Crew”:
Women and a Fish Plant Closure**

BY

**Sheila M. Keefe
BA (Hon), Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, 1997**

THESIS

**Submitted to the Department of Psychology
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts degree
Wilfrid Laurier University
2002**

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Dedication



I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandmother, Maud Keefe, mother of 16 (of which she reared 14 to health), grandmother of 31, and great-grandmother of 14. I believe Nan exemplifies the extraordinary perseverance and integrity typical of many women in Labrador's early cod fishery. She is a rock, an anchor for her family, and a role model for her community. Nan, I look forward to many more games of 2100's with you in the future! Keep smilin', love Sheila.

ABSTRACT

The closure of the east coast cod fishery in 1992 resulted in the largest industry lay-off in the country, stripping 35,000 newfoundlanders¹ and Labradorians of their source of livelihood -- 12,000 of whom were women, employed predominately in the processing sector. While the impacts upon newfoundland women have been the subject of considerable research (e.g., CMHA, 1994), little to no information has been gathered about Labrador women displaced by the closure of fishery. This is a serious gap in the literature -- one which the present study attempts to address.

The present study examined how senior women fish plant workers in the Labrador Métis community of Black Tickle were impacted by the cod moratorium and the subsequent closure of the local fish plant. Impacts upon the families of these women and the community in general were also investigated. Using a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, participants and key stakeholders were involved throughout the research process. Personal, familial and communal impacts were discussed during in-depth qualitative interviews with seven senior women plant workers. Health and community key informants were also interviewed for their expert opinions regarding the health and well-being of these women in general, their families and the community.

A key finding was that the plant workers and their families are holding together well and that the women have developed several effective coping strategies which protect their

¹

Throughout this text, the word newfoundland, as well as the names of newfoundland communities, will be spelled in lower-case letters to denote my resistance to the newfoundland government's traditional and ongoing neglect of Labrador people and communities.

health and well-being. This contrasts with the findings of several Newfoundland studies (e.g., CMHA, 1994; Robinson, 1994). However, the plant workers and key informants identified several negative community impacts, most relating to escalating poverty, which has led to increased drinking. In a focus group meeting with the plant workers, several alternatives for community-based economic development were identified and deserve further study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to express warm appreciation to many people who played a vital role in the completion of this thesis. Firstly, I wish to thank both the women plant workers of Black Tickle and the key informants who participated in this study; without their time, patience, openness and willingness to share, this thesis could not have been completed.

Secondly, I would like to thank my advisors, Dr. Susan James of Wilfrid Laurier University and Dr. Barbara Neis of Memorial University of Newfoundland, for their valuable suggestions and supportive encouragement throughout the lengthy process of completing this thesis.

I also thank Joanna Ochocka and Juaane Clarke, both members of my Thesis Committee in Waterloo, for their helpful feedback about Participatory Action Research (PAR) and qualitative research. Abundant gratitude is expressed to my Steering Committee in Black Tickle; I tip my hat to locals Alice Jane Keefe, Eileen Keefe, Tina Morris and Wanda Dyson for helping to guide the research process, especially for helping with the interpretations of the findings.

I gratefully acknowledge the financial support I received from the Coasts Under Stress Research Project; without those much-needed fellowship monies, this thesis would have resulted in great personal debt. I also appreciated the opportunity to learn from other researchers who are equally concerned about the impacts of social and economic restructuring on health.

My warm appreciation is extended to all those organizations that provided, free of charge, space and/or materials that permitted me to carry out my interviews and write this thesis. I would especially like to thank St. Peter's School and the Family Resource Centre in Black Tickle.

Last, but one of the most important of all, I thank my partner and very best friend, David Sampson, for his unyielding support and patient encouragement over this difficult journey. David not only encouraged me to keep going when times got tough, but he also spent countless hours editing every page of this thesis and provided invaluable suggestions. Most importantly, however, I could count on David to recognize and alert me whenever my thinking became too narrow or pessimistic. Not bad for a "hard scientist"!

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Chapter One: "It's Not A Bad Dream!": Introduction

1.0 Background

I once had a dream, a nightmare rather, that I had suddenly lost my ability to communicate with others. I could not speak, write or use my hands to make motions. Others began to make important decisions for me without really trying to hear or see me. All they saw were my deficiencies. The world around me was chaotic and cold, swiftly moving and spinning in circles without concern for my new desperate situation. I wanted to somehow voice how I was feeling inside but no one offered to help. I was convinced that I could overcome my physical challenges, but I could not get my ideas across to those who were responsible for my care. I became angry and frustrated with my failed attempts to communicate with others who refused to listen. Eventually, I gave up trying and began to hold everything inside -- all my hurts, disappointments and loneliness. When I thought I would surely lose myself in the chaos, I finally awoke to find that it was just a bad dream and that my life had not really changed at all. I was relieved and did not give it a second thought -- until now!

When I think about the cod moratorium and how it changed forever the lives of thousands of people dependent upon the fishery for their livelihood, I cannot help but remember my nightmare and wonder whether they, in some small or strange way, felt the same helplessness as I did in my dream. Unfortunately, fishers and plant workers were unable to wake up from a dream -- the cod moratorium was, in fact, a cold and inescapable reality. It has been almost 10 years since the federal Minister of Fisheries, the Hon. John Crosbie, officially shut down the cod fishery in the designated fishing zones of 2J (southern Labrador),

3K (northeast Newfoundland shelf) and 3L (northern Grand Bank). Hundreds of tiny fishing villages in the province were devastated and many elders watched as their young people left in search of a better life “on the mainland.”

Restructuring of this magnitude worried many people in academia, the political sphere, and advocacy groups (e.g., Canadian Mental Health Association). The primary area of concern was human health and, in order to determine the damage, several studies and workshops were carried out in communities almost exclusively on the island portion of the province (e.g., CMHA, 1994). While these studies are important and will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, it is important to note here that not only Newfoundland communities and women were impacted by the closure of the cod fishery. Many coastal villages in Labrador were equally dependent upon the fishery for a livelihood and so they too stood to be equally affected by the moratorium. Yet, their voices and stories remain unheard and undocumented.

Consider, for example, the small Métis community of Black Tickle located on the southeast coast of Labrador -- the once recognized capital of the cod fishery. When the ban on fishing northern cod was imposed, the people were devastated. Approximately 75 plant workers (the majority of whom were women) and 50 fisher persons were thrown out of work and forced to rely upon government compensation programs -- first, the Northern Cod Adjustment and Recovery Program (NCARP) and later, The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS). Since the end of those programs in 1998, residents have become largely dependent upon government-sponsored make-work projects to obtain the minimum number of insurable hours (410) to qualify for equally minimum employment insurance (EI) benefits (as low as

\$94 per week). Although the local fish plant has been recently reopened as a crab processing plant, not everyone in the community requiring hours receives them and so people continue to rely upon low-paying, oftentimes demeaning, make-work projects each year.

The purpose of this study was to determine how the death of the cod fishery may have affected displaced women fish plant workers between the ages of about 40 and 60, their families and the community of Black Tickle in general. Specifically, I was interested in the unique experiences of these relatively senior, Labrador women -- their stories of their everyday lives since the closure of their fish plant. I believe that these "local" stories can and will help to illuminate how broad economic and political forces and restructuring can have tremendous and long-reaching impacts upon a small community far removed physically from business and political boardrooms. This study may be applicable to any rural, single resource-dependent community in the country, if not the world; this thesis reminds us that we are all susceptible to global economic forces, and that sometimes fairness and respect are tossed out the window when money and jobs are at stake.

Studying the impacts of large economic and social changes is important to policy makers, social scientists, and activists alike. While we know that in many urban, industrialized societies, unemployment tends to carry with it a heavy psychological burden (e.g., Warr, Jackson & Banks, 1988), relatively little is known about the response and coping strategies of displaced workers in rural, especially native, communities in Canada. This thesis attempts to fill in some of these gaps and at the same time, fulfill many of my personal goals.

1.1 Personal Interests/Reasons for this Study

There were several personal reasons for embarking on this journey with women fish plant workers in Black Tickle. At the risk of sounding overly altruist and biased, I must admit up front that one of the important reasons for doing this research was my sense of social and moral responsibility to Labrador and to Black Tickle in particular, my home community. With the closure of the cod fishery and, subsequently, the local cod processing plant, I became concerned about the potential impacts upon senior women plant workers -- my mother being a member of that group.

Rightly or wrongly, I believed that these women face the most barriers to obtaining employment outside of the cod fishery because of their relatively low levels of formal education, their advanced age, and, perhaps, their emotional attachment to the industry, after having worked in it for many years. I also became concerned about the families of these senior women and the community of Black Tickle in general. Thus, this study was my attempt to not only document any impacts, positive or negative, but also to empower these women by giving voice to their experiences and documenting their strengths. Although there is a general lack of research concerning how the cod moratorium may have affected Labradorians, I wanted these women to know that their experiences are equally important as those of their Newfoundland counterparts.

Secondly, I hoped that a research study focusing on the coping strategies and strengths of these women would leave a proud legacy of perseverance to the future generations of Black Tickle. I have a special interest in fostering Labrador identity and pride and I believe that this will become more possible as we begin to write more about our history and experiences.

Black Tickle is one of Labrador's best kept secrets in the sense that relatively little has been written about it. I hope that this thesis will serve as a living testament to the experiences of the women living through this time of economic hardship and uncertainty. I also hope that the children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of these women will be reminded, and come to appreciate, years from now what their mothers and grandmothers had to go through to preserve their unique cultural traditions.

Thirdly, I am very interested in how unemployment affects individuals (particularly in the area of health), their families and their communities. Because I grew up in a community where seasonal unemployment was, and continues to be, the norm, I was interested to know whether long-term, year-round unemployment led to differences in responses. Certainly, seasonal unemployment in Black Tickle was the norm -- apparently associated with few of the negative impacts found in the literature on unemployment carried out in the United Kingdom (Eisenberg & Lazarsfeld, 1938; Warr, Jackson & Banks, 1988; Dew, Penkower & Bromet, 1991). In fact, I would argue that seasonal unemployment has become institutionalized and embedded into the fabric of the culture of Black Tickle and in other fishing communities along the Labrador Coast. There is research suggesting that unemployed people in high unemployment areas do well because they are able to make external attributions for the unemployment (Harding & Sewel, 1992). These same researchers also note that the unemployed in rural areas are healthier than the unemployed in urban areas because of higher levels of social support, sense of community, and greater opportunities for informal economic activities (Harding & Sewel, 1992).

Although such seasonal dependency is often scorned in the industrialized areas of the country, I believe that it is an important cultural adaptation. The pattern that they have etched out for themselves is one based upon survival and necessity, because there are few other employment opportunities in Labrador. Individual and family income are generally low, often below the poverty line, but their combination of work, unemployment insurance, and subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping ensures their survival.

Finally, I wanted to carry out this study because I thought it would help me to learn more about myself and where I come from. This study has forced me to take a critical look at the history and culture of my community and of how women fit within that context. I believe that I have learned about myself in the process since I am a product of that history and culture passed on to me through my mother.

1.2 Chapter Summaries

Chapter Two provides a discussion of the proposed causes of the collapse of the profitable cod fishery and a review of the literature concerning the impacts upon women, families and communities. Through this review, a number of gaps will become evident and an outline of the goals and objectives of the present research project will be identified.

In Chapter Three, an outline of the underlying theory and methodology is presented. Specifically, theories of patriarchy, unemployment, and participatory action research (PAR) are described, as well as conventional methodological issues such as sampling, ethical considerations, stakeholder involvement, and data analysis.

Chapter Four provides the reader with a brief history of the Labrador cod fishery and an introduction to the research context – Black Tickle. The theme of the first part of this

ongoing saga (Part I) is that the Labrador cod fishery has been historically exploited by numerous foreigners without much, if any, concern for the rights of the Aboriginal People of the land and, later, the non-Aboriginal Labradorians. Part II of the story describes the history and culture of Black Tickle, including a treatment of seasonal transhumance and settlement, the early cod fishery and its collapse, and, finally, a snapshot or bird's eye view of the community today.

In Chapters Five and Six, the findings resulting from in-depth personal interviews with seven senior women fish plant workers and two key informants are presented and compared. These findings pertain to the perceived impacts of the cod moratorium upon the senior women plant workers, their families and the community of Black Tickle. Also in Chapter Six, a dream for revitalizing Black Tickle will be presented, as well as an outline of the perceived strengths and needs of the community.

Finally, in Chapter Seven, I will offer my personal interpretations of the findings and compare them with the literature described in Chapter Two. It is also in this chapter that I present a number of overriding or overarching themes, which summarize the trends, and suggest areas for further inquiry.

Chapter Two: “Now that the Fish are All Gone!”: The Cod Moratorium and Its Impacts Upon Women

Draggers, over quota dumping but, most of all, a technology gone crazy and driven by greed. Once thriving coastal communities are now on the brink of collapse and the saddest problem is there's a whole new generation growing up with only government make-work programs to look forward to. (Howgate, 1995, p. 75)

2.0 Introduction and Chapter Outline

The decimation of the once thought endless northern cod stocks off of Canada's East Coast has led to the largest industry layoff in the history of the country. On July 2, 1992, Federal Fisheries Minister, John Crosbie, announced a two year moratorium on fishing northern cod in the once fertile fishing zones of 2J (southern Labrador), 3K (northeast Newfoundland shelf) and 3L (northern Grand Bank). Less than a year-and-a-half later, the cod moratorium was extended and no end date was given for the people to look forward to. Over 35,000 fishers and plant workers lost their jobs and became completely dependent upon government transfer payments for daily survival. Of this number, 12,000 were women and although they only made up 12 percent of harvesters, they accounted for 50 percent of the processors (Williams, 1996).

In this chapter, I hope to provide a glance into the conditions precipitating the collapse of the cod fishery and the subsequent impacts of the moratorium upon women who worked in the processing industry. Through my review of the literature, I discovered disconcerting gaps in the knowledge base and these will be identified to support the goals of the present study.

2.1 What Caused the Cod Fishery to Collapse?

... any legitimate examination of temporal changes in northern cod, or any other fish species, prior to the northern cod fishing moratorium is incomplete if it fails to account fully for the potential influence of the single factor known to effect the greatest mortality of commercially harvested species - fishing. (Hutchings, 1999, p. 271)

A devastation as profound as the collapse of an entire fish species does not happen by accident or over night. Sinclair and Murawski (1997) argue that “... *groundfish [cod fish being only one species of consideration here] abundance in most of the NAFO area has shown a long-term downward trend from the 1950's to the present*” (p. 75). Hutchings (1999) agrees and argues that the introduction of the “factory freezer” stern trawler in the late 1950's and early 1960's compromised the ability of northern cod to sustain themselves as catch rates increased dramatically with this new technology. For example, 200,000 to 300,000 metric tonnes were apparently sustainable throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; however, after the introduction of the stern trawler, catch rates increased to an historical high of 810,000 tonnes in 1968 (Hutchings, 1999).

Since 1962, the biomass of available cod for harvest actually declined by 82 percent and the reproductive portion of the stock (cod seven years old and older) declined by 94 percent (Hutchings, 1999). Although the imposition of the 200 mile limit in 1977 permitted a modest stock recovery, harvestable biomass also increased, in fact doubled, during 1977-1985. According to Hutchings (1999), the northern cod stock declined thereafter, leading to the emergency closure of the fishery in 1992.

Government officials and scientists are slowly beginning to understand the causes of the cod fishery collapse. Initially, a number of environmental/ecological (e.g., water

temperature, ocean salinity, freshwater runoff from land, and atmospheric pressure) and biological (e.g., spawning components, weight at age and condition, and changes in maturity) variables were scrutinized and blamed for the devastating collapse. However, it has become evident that these variables cannot adequately explain why the cod stocks had declined so drastically. For example, with regard to popularly held beliefs about the role of the environment, Hutchings (1999) argued that *“There is to date no direct evidence linking the mortality of northern cod to changes in the environment or ecosystem”* (p. 266). Further, Sinclair and Murawski (1997) maintain that *“... they [changes in the environment] cannot, by themselves, account for the general declines in groundfish harvests over the past 40 years or the precipitous declines that have occurred since 1990”* (p. 81).

Species interactions (e.g., species composition and marine mammal predation) also failed to produce satisfactory answers, leading Sinclair and Murawski (1997) and Hutchings (1999) to the same conclusion:

... that overfishing was the primary significant cause of the collapse of northern cod and of other Northwest Atlantic groundfish stocks. The decline in northern cod through the mid-1980's occurred at the same time that offshore and inshore fishing effort was increasing. (Hutchings, 1999, pp. 268-269)

Thus, it would appear that the primary responsibility for the fishery crisis rests with the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), since it is their mandate to establish harvesting regulations that conserve fish stocks. Hutchings (1999) argues that Canadian government officials are finally beginning to acknowledge that over fishing was the primary cause of the collapse.

With the subsequent closure of the industry, many people became concerned about the potential impacts upon fishery workers, their families and communities. Already there is a wealth of research suggesting that unemployment has a negative impact upon health, particularly mental health (e.g., Dew, Penkower, & Bromet, 1991; refer to the next chapter for a more comprehensive review of the literature and theory surrounding this area of research). The present study concerns itself with women and their unique responses to the moratorium. As you may recall, women made up 50% of the processing sector.

According to Neis and Williams (1996), many women sought work in the new, corporately owned fish plants following the industrialization of the fishery (which took place largely during and after World War II). In the 1950's, the provincial government subsidized fish processors' fresh-frozen fish plants to take advantage of the growing demand in North America (Williams, 1996). Not only young, single women participated in the new wage labour, but also wives, to meet their families' needs for additional cash income (Williams, 1996). Thus, in the next section, a review of the available literature relating to the impacts upon women who worked in the industry will be presented.

2.2 The Impacts of the Cod Moratorium Upon Women: A Review of the Literature

In 1991, a consulting firm in St. John's, Andy Rowe Consulting Economists, completed a report for the Women's Policy Office (of the provincial government) concerning the effects of the impending fishery crisis upon women who worked in the industry. From their analysis of 1986 census data, it was clear that women worked mainly in direct processing jobs, while men were largely employed in indirect processing jobs (e.g., maintenance, transportation, office). The significance of this finding for women during a looming industry

shutdown was great:

The clear implication of this is that if fish processing is reduced, and the jobs occupied by women are probably more likely to be cut, then the skills that women have are least likely to be transferrable to other employment sectors. Thus, while men and women both share the immediate effect of job loss or reduction, this situation will probably persist with women because the skills that they developed in fish processing are less likely to be in demand elsewhere. (Andy Rowe Consulting Economists, 1991, p. 9)

The cod moratorium was announced on the heels of this report -- causing some women activists to worry about the future of women fish plant workers in the province. For example, in a brief news article published by *Herizons* magazine in 1992, Muzychka shared her fears about how women could be affected by the cod moratorium:

... I can see domestic violence and alcohol abuse increasing as people try to cope ... It's a scary time for women to have to start over. The job market is shrinking and the opportunities are really limited. (p. 7)

Initially, politicians worked hard to assuage the fears of angry mobs of displaced fishers and plant workers, assuring them that the shut-down was temporary and that they would be back to work within two years. However, on December 20, 1993, the new Federal Fisheries Minister, the Hon. Brian Tobin, announced that the moratorium on fishing northern cod in 2J3KL would remain indefinitely. Unfortunately, the seriously depleted cod stocks had not recovered as anticipated. On February 22, 1994, a new five year income support and training program worth 1.9 billion dollars, The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS), was announced; TAGS replaced the Northern Cod Adjustment and Recovery Program (NCARP), the income support program provided the previous two years. With no date for the reopening of the fishery, people became concerned about the potential impacts, and several studies aimed at documenting the effects began. As will become evident, only a few studies focused

exclusively upon women.

2.2.1 Impacts Upon Families and Communities

In a study by Davis (1991) carried out in a small community on Newfoundland's southwest coast, which she called Grey Rock Harbour, changes in the division of labour resulting from the impending fishery crisis were observed. During her initial visit to the community in pre-moratorium years (1977-1978), she observed a very traditional division of labour within families which seemed to complement each other:

The women's work domain was the house, the men's work domain was outside of the house and the sea. (p. 3)

The result of this clearly defined domestic division of labour was strong, closely knit families and a hard-working and generally equalitarian society.

However, upon her return to Grey Rock Harbour in 1989, she found that things were much different – in a word, they were “dismal”: *“There were no fish. There was no work. Prospects for the future are very dim”* (p. 2). The looming fishery crisis brought with it a change in the “sexual geography” of Grey Rock Harbour – specifically: *“... [it] dramatically undermined the traditional complementarity of gendered labour in Grey Rock Harbour ... [and led] ... to a system characterized by gender antagonism”* (p. 2).

With the fishery crisis, men began to spend more time at home -- traditionally women's domain. Davis (1991) noticed that men were now spending more time in front of the television, drinking more, and spending more “free” time at the local bars which, in some cases, *“... place a great deal of stress on meagre family budgets”* (p. 9). This created resentment and conflict between partners. This study illuminated one important change

affecting families resulting from the fishery crisis. Many similar studies would come.

About a month after the five year extension was announced in 1994, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) (newfoundland division) released a report entitled, *“Working it Out: The Challenge of Change from Within: A Needs Assessment for Community Self-Help.”* This report detailed the findings of a comprehensive study carried out in two newfoundland in-shore fishing regions -- Upper Trinity South and the Southern Shore. The purpose of this study was to determine the impacts of the cod moratorium upon people, their families and these communities. It was particularly concerned with determining the impacts upon mental health and how it could be protected; thus, researchers investigated peoples’ coping mechanisms. The needs for the future were also examined.

The project was carried out using a participatory research process consisting of 97 open-ended interviews (46 with families and 51 with community leaders) and community forums (to provide and seek feedback). As will be discussed in the following chapter, the methodology adopted in the present study builds upon that used by the CMHA – with the primary difference being a greater emphasis upon women’s individual response to the cod moratorium. Thus, the present study utilizes individual as opposed to family interviews and includes a focus group meeting with the women fish plant workers. Finally, a community forum was also used to provide feedback and seek input from local residents.

The remainder of this section will be devoted to describing the findings of the CMHA study which are relevant to the present study. As will be outlined later in this chapter, many of the variables investigated in the present study were adopted from the CMHA study and, therefore, the pertinent results will discussed in detail below for the purpose of drawing

comparisons later in Chapter Seven.

Regarding impacts upon mental health and well-being, most of the participants talked about missing the activity of work and its routine, and some even spoke of resulting changes to their self-image and self-esteem. For example, comments about self-image included feelings of uselessness and powerlessness while being unable to provide for one's family lowered the self-esteem of some participants. Such negative consequences of unemployment are commonly found in the unemployment literature originating in the United Kingdom (refer to Chapter Three for a thorough review).

CMHA researchers also found that nearly two-thirds of the families reported experiencing stress, worry and anxiety, which they attributed directly to the cod moratorium. Nearly half of the community leaders also noticed an increase in stress and anxiety, as well as an increase in substance abuse, weight gain, boredom, suicidal thoughts and self-esteem/confidence problems, which they too attributed to the cod moratorium.

It is noteworthy that the most serious, stress-related health problems were reported on the Southern Shore – where there is a greater reliance upon the fishery than in Upper Trinity South. This finding suggests that the greater the dependence upon the fishery, the greater the impacts of the cod moratorium. Based upon these and other findings about the health impacts of unemployment (to be explored in Chapter Three), similar negative responses are anticipated in the present study where there is an equally strong dependence upon the cod fishery. This assumption will be explored more fully in my discussion of the methodology in the following chapter.

It was also found that over half of the families reported a drop in their household income; however, over half of these same families reported additional income to their NCARP compensation packages from the wage labour of one or more family members. While families reported *“hav[ing] to budget very carefully. [and] plan for each purchase”* (p. 33), overall they experienced few major problems and reported getting by on “the package” (i.e., NCARP). Although exactly half of the women and over half of the men were employed, people still complained of boredom and of having difficulty filling time. In fact, over half (56%)

... spoke of “losing motivation, boredom, “one day runs into the next”, frustration, “not sure why I’m getting up in the morning,” loss of goals, loss of seasonal time frame, the tendency to procrastinate because they felt “there’s always tomorrow,” and depression. (p. 26)

Related to this, women fish plant workers were the most likely to mention isolation, as described by a field worker during one family interview: *“She doesn’t see her friends (co-workers) since she stopped working, losing contact with them all, doesn’t see anyone”* (p. 31). Contributing to their isolation is the fact that women reported being even more confined to the home, whereas men continued to busy themselves with outdoor activities. Very few men reported caring for children or doing housework, despite the fact that they were around the house more often. Thus, there were few changes in gender roles, and no change in the primary wage earner role.

Regarding family relationships, couples gave no indication of difficulties; in fact, three-quarters of the families felt that they had actually drawn closer together since the moratorium. Leaders generally agreed that serious problems had not emerged. The majority

of families felt that their children were not experiencing any additional problems, only that they "*they are being denied things*" (p. 40). Although families did report arguing more and being more tense, only one person discussed the break-up of a relationship and attributed it to the cod moratorium.

Finally, researchers looked at the effects of the cod moratorium upon the communities of the participants. Representatives in health and protection (RCMP) reported no change in the need for their services. Those involved in private businesses such as stores and clubs had either seen business fall or remain roughly the same. Overall, community groups did not feel that there was an increased need for their services.

However, just over a third of the family participants felt that the moratorium had a negative impact upon community spirit while nearly half of the community leaders reported lower morale, less enthusiasm and activity, and a general loss of goodwill within the community. This supports the theory that unemployed people in high unemployment areas experience greater psychological distress because job insecurity and lowered incomes lead to impaired mental health at the aggregate level (Warr, Jackson, & Banks, 1988; see Chapter Three for an explanation of an alternate theory). The cause seemed to be divisions about eligibility for compensation and fewer opportunities to come together and socialize because of the lack of work. Ideas about coming together to work and play seemed to define community spirit.

With reports of lowered morale and loss of goodwill, one might worry about potential increases in certain social problems. However, only 38 percent of the participants reported such an increase since the moratorium and, when there were reports, they mostly related to

alcohol. While beer sales had risen on the Southern Shore, the distributor in Upper Trinity South reported decreases; however, he attributed this drop in liquor sales to increased home-brewing rather than to decreased alcoholic consumption. Nevertheless, many families (42%) reported no major increase in drinking as a result of the cod moratorium (it should be noted that 33% of the participants did not answer). With regards to crime in general, participants did not feel that rates had increased, but when it was mentioned, vandalism was the most commonly reported problem. Finally, although leaders identified family violence as a problem, families did not.

With respect to the future of the community, nearly half of the family participants felt uncertain about their future. An additional 20 percent felt that things would be worse in the future, and only 13 percent were optimistic; this is consistent with Eisenberg and Lazarfield's (1938) second and third stages of unemployment to be discussed in Chapter Three. The CMHA researchers also found that almost all of the families had considered leaving their homes and extended families in search of employment.

The present study adopts many of the variables examined in the CMHA study discussed thus far. In addition to family interviews, the researchers in the CMHA study also carried out community forums (two in each region) after preliminary analysis of the interview data. During these forums, participants expressed anger, grief, uncertainty and feelings of powerlessness. Participants also voiced their concern about the lack of opportunities to come together and the lack of leadership in community issues. It was agreed that the future of their communities depended upon local people coming together to form their own unique responses to their problems and challenges. Likewise, a community forum was utilized in the present

study as a means through which to share the findings with community residents and to seek their feedback.

While the CMHA study was successful in elucidating some of the impacts upon families and communities early in the cod moratorium, it was not as successful in illuminating the plight of displaced women fishery workers. Because participants were interviewed as a family unit, women's responses were not always separated from those of their families. Thus, we are not able to get a picture of how women, as individuals, may have been impacted by the cod moratorium. Yet, the researchers argued that women are impacted differently by the fishery crisis than men. I see this as a shortcoming of this study.

Fortunately, a few other studies and reports have focused upon women's unique experiences of the moratorium -- utilizing primarily interviews and community forums. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the present study incorporates these methods and adds a focus group meeting to discuss the future of the community.

2.2.2 Impacts Upon Women

A study by Robinson (1994) dealt specifically with the effects of a plant closure upon women. She conducted interviews with laid off women plant workers in the community of trepassey, located on the southern avalon peninsula of newfoundland. This study is unique in that the plant closure occurred a year before the cod moratorium. Robinson (1994) interviewed women of various ages, but the majority had been seasonally employed at the plant for 15 to 20 years.

As in the CMHA (1994) study, Robinson (1994) found that many women were preoccupied with the decision to move away. While some women were interested in moving

to larger centers to train for careers outside of the fishery, many felt that family obligations prevented them from doing so. Most often, it was the older workers who counted upon the plant re-opening, either because they felt it was inappropriate for them to retrain at their age or because they felt too uneducated to go back to school. This is significant for the present study since the average age of participants was 52 and their dependence upon the fishery was great due to their low levels of formal education and the lack of alternative forms of employment in the community. Thus, I expected to find many negative impacts as the senior women waited for the plant to re-open, which was highly uncertain.

Robinson (1994) found that financial strain was affecting many families. For example, women talked about having difficulties with budgeting and having to cut back on material things for their children (e.g., toys, clothes). Many women also spoke of how their friendship networks seemed to have fallen apart since the plant closure. Feelings of boredom and frustration with staying at home reflected women's desire for work.

At the community level, women felt that fund-raising to meet local needs was at risk. One woman spoke about an increase in alcohol and drug abuse and several women feared that marriages would break up as family members moved away for training.

Overriding Robinson's (1994) study was a desire to give voice to the experiences and concerns of women affected by the fishery crisis:

I knew that women had a lot to say that rarely got recorded or reported. I also felt that ordinary people in small communities were often overlooked. In the context of the fishery crisis, I was concerned that this would result in women's disempowerment" (p. 30).

The dangerous silencing of displaced women fishery workers concerned many other female researchers and activists, who equally understood the need to provide these women with a

forum in which to share their experiences and provide support.

In 1994, the Women's Committee of the Fishermen, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW) brought 1,000 women in more than 20 communities together over a 10 week period for small group discussions. During these discussions, women identified a number of barriers to "adjustment", including the inflexibility of government programs, limited mobility, family responsibilities, a lack of education, low self-esteem, and age. Although there was a sense of powerlessness and loss, women appreciated the opportunity to come together as a group and discuss their common frustrations. Thus, one of the recommendations of the Women's Committee was that Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) make available funding for other workshops throughout the province. A similar small group discussion was carried out in the present study in order to identify, among other things, both the barriers and strengths of the community.

A second round of such workshops, *Gathering Voices: Women in Fishing Communities Speak*, was carried out by the Women's Enterprise Bureau in six Economic Zones in 1995. The purpose of these two-day workshops was to provide women with an opportunity to come together to discuss how they were impacted by the fishery crisis and to identify alternatives. The facilitators found that a lack of awareness, information, and self-confidence prevented these women from taking a more active role in community development. However, when asked, they were able to come up with many ideas about alternatives for economic development in their communities. For example, they mentioned fish farming, tourism, outfitting, agriculture, mining, aquaculture, agrifoods (berries), and spring water as potential areas for development.

Regarding the impacts of the cod moratorium, women who participated in this second set of workshops reiterated many of the same concerns expressed by their “sisters” in previous workshops. For example, they worried about being cut off of TAGS, were distressed about possibly having to move away from their communities, missed paid employment and the companionship it brought, and were uncertain about a future in the fishery.

In an interesting study carried out by Robbins (1997), the experiences of displaced women, as expressed in the *Gathering Voices* workshops, were compared with the construction of the fishery crisis in a St. John’s daily newspaper. Robbins (1997) conducted a quantitative and a qualitative content analysis of selected articles appearing in *The Evening Telegram* between 1991 and 1995. Her quantitative analysis revealed a number of disturbing statistics: firstly, only 9.7 percent of the articles on the cod moratorium were written by women (suggesting sex bias in the production of the news); secondly, only 12.6 percent of all authorized knowers on the fishery crisis were women (this difference was highlighted in a special edition of the paper on the fishery crisis where only four women appeared as authorized knowers compared to 37 men); and thirdly, women were practically non-existent in news photos associated with the cod moratorium. This led Robbins (1997) to conclude that:

The media reflects a wider societal bias that states that women are not instrumental to the fishing industry and are instead, only found in the unpaid sector as mothers, wives and daughters. Women in the fishery are “forgotten” in news photos just as they are ignored as a vital part of the fishing industry by government and by fishery policy makers. (pp. 50-51)

Her qualitative analysis cemented this view. For example, she found that not one article examined women’s views on the end of the cod fishery or explored who or what

women blamed for the moratorium. She also found that the issues raised by women in the workshops (e.g., late cheques) rarely made it into the news and when they did, they were not emphasized. Whereas one special edition article focused exclusively upon one man's experience of the cod moratorium, no similar article focusing upon a woman ever appeared. Further, Robbins (1997) found sexist language (e.g., *fishermen*) and irrelevant reference to physical appearance and domestic relationships (emphasizing women's roles as the mothers and wives of fishermen -- thereby, downplaying their role in the fishery).

Also noteworthy is that the cultural symbols of the fishery (e.g., boats, wharfs) were often associated with men in photographs and, although women have their own symbols (e.g., fish plant clothes, plants), these were not highlighted. Thus, Robbins (1997) notes: "*The mainstream print media has silenced women's voices and told a different story from the one offered by these women*" (p. 114). It would be interesting to investigate how often displaced women fishery workers in Labrador were represented in *The Evening Telegram*, as well as in *The Labradorian* (serving exclusively Labrador) and *The Northern Pen* (serving the Northern Peninsula and Southern Labrador).

Although women were effectively excluded from the mainstream print media, workshops revealed that women were very worried about themselves, their families and their communities. Among their issues were financial insecurity, a lack of acknowledgment for their hard work in the fishery, and the uncertainty about their role in the future fishery. These issues were largely absent from the newspaper examined -- giving the impression that only men had been affected by the moratorium or that women had been impacted in the same way as men. Again, it would be interesting to investigate whether Labrador women have been

excluded from the public discourse on the cod moratorium and, if so, does this suggest that they have been impacted in the same way as Newfoundland men and women? I would argue that this is an example of institutional and intellectual patriarchy, as the formally educated elite of the province control access to the news, to be discussed again in the following chapter.

A second study on trepassey was carried out by Chapman (1997) three years after Robinson's (1994) study. Whereas the first study examined the general impacts of the plant closure upon laid off women plant workers, this second study by Chapman (1997) specifically investigated the effects of the fishery crisis on the domestic division of labour. Through observations and personal interviews with female and male plant workers, and offshore fishermen, it became clear that the fishery crisis resulted in definite changes in the domestic division of labour in fishery family households.

More specifically, Chapman (1997) found that both unemployed women and unemployed men with employed partners spent more time on domestic labour after the closure of the fishery. However, although the men were spending considerably more time on these tasks than in the past, they were still not spending nearly as much time as the women. In fact, most of the men in this study reported that their partners remained predominately responsible for routine housework and child care. Thus, the rigid domestic division of labour remained in tact after the collapse of the cod fishery.

Furthermore, in households where the women were affected by the fishery closure, most of the male partners relinquished some of their responsibilities for routine housework and child care. However, in households where male plant workers and offshore fishermen were affected by the moratorium, men increased their responsibility for domestic labour. This

resulted in a situation whereby

... male plant workers and offshore fishermen households were less segregated, female plant worker households were more segregated.

Finally, in a study by Neis, Grzetic, and Pidgeon (2001), the implications of industrial restructuring within the Newfoundland fisheries for women's work and health were investigated. Both qualitative and quantitative tools were used to determine the impacts of the restructuring upon women in the Conception-Trinity Bay area of Newfoundland. Through a combination of in-depth interviews with 37 women and an analysis of completed health questionnaires, Neis et al. found a definite negative impact upon participants' mental health. This finding supports the research discussed thus far and will be compared with those of the present study in Chapter Seven.

Although only about 30% of the women were unemployed at the time of the interviews, and 12 (of 28 or 43%) had husbands employed in the fishery, these women nonetheless reported being very or somewhat stressed (58%), depressed either most of the time or some of the time (34%), and worried very often or often (33%) before getting out of bed. Further, 12 out of 31 (or 39%) of these women were rarely or never able to relax. These women reported that income shortages and lack of income security and work, among others, were their main sources of stress. When asked which of these problems they attributed to the moratorium, they identified worry and depression. However, walking and talking with friends and family members were identified as important coping mechanisms – also to be explored in the present study. When asked to identify what they would like to do over the next year to either improve or maintain their health, 10 of 22 (or 45%) said “learn to cope better with worry, nerves or stress” (Neis et al., 2001, p. 35).

2.3 What's Missing in the Story?: Gaps in the Literature

Although the review provided above may seem limited, nearly all of the relevant research has been discussed. While the use of qualitative interviews and community forums was impressive, it was discouraging to find several gaps in the current research on the moratorium, two of which will be addressed in the present study.

Firstly, the research that has been carried out to date has been restricted mainly to the island portion of the province. For example, the first set of workshops carried out by the Women's Committee were delivered in 20 communities – only three of which were in Labrador, all located in the Labrador Straits. The second set of workshops carried out by the Women's Enterprise Bureau for Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) were delivered in 12 communities in six economic zones, none of which were in Labrador. Recall that the study carried out by CMHA (1994) focused upon two regions on the Avalon portion of the island. Also, the studies conducted by graduate students have invariably been in island communities (e.g., Robinson, 1994; Robbins, 1997; Chapman, 1997). Finally, when women from the Labrador Straits have participated in workshops, their voices rarely appeared in the written reports, although there was no indication from the facilitators that Labrador Straits women participated any less than their counterparts on the island.

Thus, I argue that there is a definite gap in the literature in that the voices of Labrador women have been neglected, particularly those in Southeastern Labrador communities. This study proposes to partially fill this gap by examining the experiences of displaced women fish plant workers in the Southeastern community of Black Tickle. A detailed discussion of the history and culture of this community will be provided in Chapter Four.

Secondly, based upon my assumption that displaced senior women plant workers in Black Tickle have been negatively impacted, this study proposes the establishment of a women's self-help group. Recall that many women who participated in the workshops on the island had expressed appreciation for the opportunity to come together to discuss the impacts of the moratorium. Many women were relieved to know that others were experiencing the same frustrations and thought that more meetings should be held in the future. Women in some communities were so impressed with the workshops that they later decided to set up a women's committee or group of their own. While this is encouraging, there was no indication that facilitators provided any assistance to these women following the workshops. I feel that this is a second shortcoming of the "action" research conducted to date. While I believe that women must be encouraged to do this for themselves, I also think that ongoing support and training can be very empowering to participants. I hope to deal with this issue in this project by working with women plant workers after the data has been gathered to form their own a self-help group.

2.4 Goals/Objectives of the Present Study

As outlined in the previous section, there is a definite gap in the available literature regarding women and the cod moratorium. From what I have been able to gather, the experiences of women fishery workers in coastal Labrador have been neglected, or assumed to be the same as those of women in outport communities in Newfoundland. However, people in Labrador have a special culture and, arguably, more barriers to adjusting to the industry shut-down. I believe that it is only reasonable to presume that they would have their own unique responses to the cod moratorium. I also believe that they deserve to have their stories

documented for future generations. Thus, the purpose of this study is twofold:

1) To obtain in-depth information about how the northern cod moratorium may have affected senior (aged approximately 40-60 years) women fish plant workers with a long term attachment to the industry (defined here as having worked in the fish plant for a minimum of 10 years) in the community of Black Tickle, Labrador. Also, their perspectives regarding the impacts upon their families and the community will also be explored:

2) To facilitate information sharing and support among these displaced women and to encourage future participation in issues affecting them and their community by forming a women's self-help group.

With these broad goals in mind, a set of more specific objectives were developed to guide the research process. Naturally these objectives were influenced by the literature I had read and my analysis of its strengths and shortcomings. Out of this came ideas for how I thought the knowledge base could be expanded and further clarified to improve our understanding of the impacts of the cod moratorium on women. I believe that the impacts on women do not occur in a vacuum. Thus, I particularly admired the holistic approach adopted by the researchers of the CMHA (1994) study described above (see Section 3.3.1) where the impacts upon families and communities were examined through family level interviews. Therefore, similar objectives and variables were incorporated into the present study. A problem with the CMHA study, however, as outlined above, is that the family interviews prevented an understanding of women's unique experiences. To this end, I sought to ask women directly about their responses to the cod moratorium. Thus, the following objectives were developed:

a) To understand how these women's personal lives may have been impacted by the cod moratorium. Areas to be investigated include personal income, physical and mental health, self-image, social networks, education/training, spirituality, and personal coping strategies;

b) To understand how their families, from these women's perspectives, have been impacted by the cod moratorium. Areas of interest include family income, family relationships, and roles/identities, and family coping strategies;

c) To understand how the community of Black Tickle, from these women's perspectives, may have been impacted by the cod moratorium. Areas of inquiry include community spirit, social problems (e.g., alcoholism, crime, family violence, family break-ups), out-migration, services, leadership, and community coping strategies;

d) To work with these women to identify solutions to some of their common problems/concerns brought about by the cod moratorium;

e) To encourage and support women in their efforts to come together to support one another and take action.

2.5 Summary/Conclusion

In this chapter I strove, firstly, to provide a brief introduction to the cod moratorium and its causes as determined by scientists. Secondly, I sought to provide a review of the available literature on the impacts of the cod moratorium upon women who worked in the industry. Since most of the research has been concerned with women in Newfoundland fishing communities, it will be interesting to compare these responses with those of the Labrador women in the present study (see Chapter Seven). Finally, I attempted to clearly

outline the goals and objectives of the present study, derived from a critical analysis of the available literature and the gaps in our current understanding of the different effects of this environmental and social disaster.

Chapter Three: “Asking People About Their Experience is the Respectful Thing To Do”: Underlying Theory and PAR Methodology

The kind of research we're recommending provides an analysis of issues based on a description of how people actually experience those issues. Asking people about their experience is the respectful thing to do. It also makes sense. It makes it possible to learn about social structures and their impact on people. This process can help us to see why the problems are so hard to solve, and what can be done about them. (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992, p. 13)

3.0 Introduction and Chapter Outline

The first part of this chapter will provide a discussion of the underlying theories informing this research project. In Chapter Two, I illustrated, through my review of the literature, that there is a dearth of research concerning the impacts of the cod moratorium upon Labrador women who worked in the fishery. I believe that this neglect of Labrador women's experiences is an expression of ongoing cultural oppression, and that the lack of academic inquiry, which impacts upon government policy, into the experiences of Labrador people and communities is a form of patriarchy. Thus, Neis' (1999) theory of familial and social patriarchy is useful but could be expanded to include institutional patriarchy. Secondly, because the cod moratorium brought with it wide-spread and long-term unemployment to many Labradorians, theories about how unemployment impacts upon health are also appropriate. Finally, due to a history of oppression in Labrador in general, a theory of emancipatory research methods (PAR) guides and informs this research project. The second half of this chapter will be devoted to methodology including a discussion of stakeholder involvement, sampling, ethical considerations, underlying assumptions, analysis and verification of data, and uses for the setting.

3.1 Patriarchy

Indeed, the cod moratorium has been a difficult blow to bear for many thousands of newfoundlanders and Labradorians who either directly or indirectly relied upon the cod fishery for their living. Although they may share a common attachment to the fishery, individuals and communities naturally differ from one another in many important ways (e.g., degree of dependence upon the fishery, opportunity for participation in other fisheries, the local unemployment rate, the number of opportunities for employment outside the fishery, educational levels, access to various resources, and standard of living). These differences, then, may influence how newfoundlanders and Labradorians respond to, or are impacted by, social and economic restructuring. Therefore, it is important that we not lump all fishers and fish plant workers together when we talk about how people have been affected by the closure of the fishery.

Yet, within government and the media (see Robbins, 1997) there is an implicit assumption that the impacts of the cod moratorium have been uniform across gender, community, and region. Thus, some women researchers and leaders of women's organizations have become concerned about the relative inattention paid to women's unique experiences of the fishery crisis. Although women made up one third of the fishery labour force (12% of all fishers and 50% of plant workers), their voices have been rarely heard in the public sphere where fishery issues are debated and the decisions made. Essentially, women's contributions to the industry have been minimized and their work devalued.

Barbara Neis, a sociologist at Memorial University in st. john's, newfoundland, has written about how women have been traditionally and contemporarily excluded from the

fishery. She attributes this oppression to two forms of patriarchy within the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery: Familial Patriarchy and Social Patriarchy. Within familial patriarchy, Neis (1999) argues that:

Husbands and fathers dominated women and children's access to the wealth from the fishery through their control over houses, land, fishing technology, and access to the fishery resource itself. As well, there were patrilineal inheritance laws ... women learned early in their lives that their comfort and economic survival depended on the strength of their ties to men and on the willingness of those men to act responsibly. (Neis, 1999, pp. 35-36)

With confederation in 1949, Newfoundland gained many new social welfare programs (e.g., family allowance, unemployment insurance) which, according to Neis (1999), later undermined familial patriarchy:

In order to qualify for family allowance payments, for example, children had to remain in school instead of going in the boat. Because family allowance cheques were paid to women and not to men, women received new financial independence ... Women gradually disappeared from the cod-drying flakes in those communities where they had laboured for generations. Some young women stayed in school and then took jobs in the expanding education and health sectors; others left their communities to work in fish plants. (pp. 39-40)

However, familial patriarchy was soon replaced by a new form of oppression -- social patriarchy. Social patriarchy limited women's access to the fishery and the wealth it produced through discriminatory government policies and practices. For example, when the federal government first introduced unemployment insurance for seasonal inshore fishers, women were ineligible for the benefits despite their work in the industry:

Like familial patriarchy, however, the UI generated by the extra work of drying the fish - women's work - went to men. By the same token, the new system made no distinction between fish sold in the form of salt bulk and higher-quality, lightly-salted dried fish. The processing of light-salted dried fish was more labour intensive, and the labour involved was often women's. In short, the UI system credited women's work to men by allowing only the fishers to qualify for UI and failed to reward women's extra work. (Neis,

1999, p. 41)

Nearly all of the plant workers in the present study had assisted their parents and/or husbands in the stages and on the bax ns -- spreading, salting, and collecting fish -- for little or no pay. However, this practice did not seem to be considered discriminatory, at least by some of the women. For example, a senior plant worker in the present study talked about how her unpaid labour as a young girl ensured the survival of the entire family, which was ultimately to her own benefit.

The paternal belief that the fishery is “men’s work” (familial patriarchy) was also evident in Black Tickle. One of the key informants described how girls were expected to be “brainy” but the boys “brawny”, fostered through their labour in the fishery:

... very often we tend to, as a people for some reason and I don't know why, think that it's alright for girls to be brainy and smart but the fellers got to be brawny as opposed to brainy, and they got to do muscle work ...

However, since the collapse of the fishery, this participant has observed a change in the community’s attitude regarding the value of a formal education. Today, there is a general belief that a high school education is essential for the future.

Neis’ (1999) model is, I think, an interesting one in that a parallel can be drawn between her ideas of familial and social patriarchy and the newfoundland government’s relationship with Labrador. The newfoundland government has tended to treat Labradorians as children requiring constant supervision and authoritarian decision-making. As will be illustrated in Chapter Four, a good example of this attitude is the newfoundland government’s adoption of a domineering and paternal role in the management of the Labrador cod fishery. This continues to play out in present day government policies; for example, the persistence

of land-fast ice in Labrador only became worthy of compensation after it had imprisoned the shores of Newfoundland fishing communities. Thus, too often the measuring stick that is used in Labrador is the applicability of it to Newfoundland people. This may be considered a form of institutional patriarchy, extending back to the beginning of European exploitation in Labrador.

However, what is even more interesting is patriarchy observed within academia, a form of intellectual patriarchy if you will, and this is evident even within feminist circles! Recall that only the first set of workshops, carried out by the Women's Committee in 1994, reached Labrador. The lack of research on the impacts of the cod moratorium upon Labrador women gives the impression that they have not been impacted at all or that their experiences are the same as those of Newfoundland women. Thus, not only are women's experiences in general rarely acknowledged by government and the media, but Labrador women are particularly excluded from the public discourse on the cod moratorium.

I argue that such patriarchy is so profoundly ingrained in the Newfoundland mentality that even some feminist researchers and writers are oblivious to their neglect of their sisters in the Labrador portion of the province. For example, while these feminist researchers and writers work diligently to provide opportunities for Newfoundland women to voice their concerns, which, I might add, is a worthy cause, I am not aware of any research which recommended further study in Labrador (at least beyond the Labrador Straits). I can only presume, then, that such neglect stems from one of two sources, or a combination of the two: (1) the researchers themselves, who propose research studies which exclude Labrador people or, at least, does not fully include them, or (2) government and other sponsoring agencies

which provide limited funds to the researchers, thereby indirectly excluding Labradorians because of the high cost associated with carrying out research in such a geographically isolated region. Either way, the decisions are often made by distant people in privileged positions, who often have little knowledge of or input from Labradorians.

Importantly, this largely Newfoundland-based research impacts upon government policies and regulations, that are often grounded in one-size fits all thinking, which may or may not be appropriate for women in Labrador. For example, research which documents the needs of Newfoundland women and proposes resources to meet those needs are helpful to governments when designing response programs or when allocating funds to support adjustment. However, these response programs would not necessarily be appropriate to women in Labrador, especially if they have not had input into the components of those programs. I can only wonder would these researchers ethically carry out a study in Labrador and then attempt to apply and enforce it upon Newfoundlanders? Responses designed from a one-size-fits-all approach may be inappropriate for a number of reasons, including cultural variations and additional financial considerations (e.g., isolation makes women's conferences within Labrador more costly).

I believe this thesis makes two significant contributions. Firstly, it provided a rare opportunity for women fishery workers in Labrador to voice how they have been impacted by the cod moratorium and to discuss their ideas for culturally appropriate and meaningful community-based economic development. Hopefully, these ideas will be used in the development of future government policies and response programs. Secondly, this thesis afforded an opportunity for collaboration and partnership between a Labrador researcher

(myself) and researchers from Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). Thanks to the Coast Under Stress Research Project, which provided me with a partial fellowship and supervisory support, there is now a recognition of the gaps in the research and support for bridging them.

3.2 Unemployment and Health

I've applied for lots of jobs, things I like to do, things I'm good at ... But I don't seem to be getting anywhere, and it's discouraging sometimes. (Wattie, 1994, A2)

A second set of underlying theories informing this project relate to how unemployment impacts upon health. As outlined in Chapter Two, one of the objectives of this project is to illuminate how the cod moratorium may have impacted upon the physical and mental health of senior women fish plant workers in Black Tickle. Thus, research pertaining to people's responses to unemployment, the mediating variables, and the theories attempting to explain the relationship between the two, are all relevant to the present study and will be discussed below.

In a 1938 review of over one hundred studies, Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld argued that *"the general conclusion of practically all workers in the field is that unemployment tends to make people more emotionally unstable than they were previous to unemployment"* (p. 359). The general finding from recent cross-sectional, longitudinal, and prospective studies is that unemployed people are more distressed and have higher levels of depression and anxiety (as shown through scores on the General Health Questionnaire and the Beck Depression Inventory) than employed people (Dew, Penkower, & Bromet, 1991). This relationship between unemployment and mental health is mediated by such factors as age, sex, prior

economic and social status, employment commitment, length of unemployment, place of residence, and the local unemployment rate.

With respect to age, a curvilinear relationship has been observed, with unemployed people between the ages of 20 and 59 experiencing the most deterioration in mental health (Warr, Jackson, & Banks, 1988). This finding makes sense because often there is a greater pressure on people to be employed during these years than at other times in their lives, particularly in industrialized societies. The role of gender in determining the impacts of unemployment upon mental health appears to be changing. Although Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld (1938) reported that women are not as affected by unemployment as men, recent studies indicate similar distress levels (Dew, Penkower, & Bromet, 1991). This discrepancy may be explained by the changes in women's roles since the 1930's.

It has also been found that men from lower occupational strata, prior to unemployment, experience poorer morale, discouragement, and hopelessness (Eisenberg & Lazarsfeld, 1938). Recent studies have found that blue-collar couples are more likely to report lowered marital adjustment and communication following the husband's job loss (Dew, Penkower, & Bromet, 1991). This may be due to the greater financial constraints of working class citizens.

In addition, unemployed people with a high employment commitment have been consistently found to experience greater deteriorations in mental health (Warr, Jackson, & Banks, 1988). However, the length of the unemployment period has been shown to affect the impacts of unemployment. Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld (1938) described the course of unemployment in terms of three stages:

First there is shock, which is followed by an active hunt for a job, during which the individual is still optimistic and unresigned; he still maintains an unbroken attitude. Second, when all efforts fail, the individual becomes pessimistic, anxious, and suffers active distress; this is the most crucial state of all. And third, the individual becomes fatalistic and adapts himself to his new state but with a narrower scope. He now has a broken attitude. (p. 378)

According to Banks (1995), the deterioration in mental health experienced by the unemployed tends to stabilize about six months after job loss; this may correspond to the third stage of adaptation in Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld's model.

Place of residence has also been shown to impact upon people's response to unemployment. Specifically, the unemployed in urban areas have been found to be less psychologically healthy than the unemployed in rural areas (Harding & Sewel, 1992). This difference in favor of rural areas was attributed to the higher level of social support, sense of community, and greater opportunities for informal economic activities (Harding & Sewel, 1992). Most importantly, however, the stigma often associated with unemployment in urban areas may not be as strong in rural areas, where the value of unemployment may be different (Harding & Sewel, 1992).

Finally, the influence of the local unemployment rate is less clear. Essentially there is empirical support for two contradictory hypotheses: (1) that the unemployed in high unemployment areas experience less psychological distress since it is easier to make external attributions and to develop a resilience in the face of a common threat; and (2) that the unemployed in high unemployment areas experience greater psychological distress since job insecurity and lowered incomes may give rise to impaired mental health at the aggregate level (Warr, Jackson, & Banks, 1988).

In light of these mediating variables, a number of theories or models have been developed to explain individuals' largely negative reactions to unemployment. Perhaps the most well known of these are Jahoda's *functional model*, Warr's *vitamin model*, and Fryer's *agency model*. Essentially, Jahoda argues that the negative effects of unemployment stem from the loss of benefits, including imposed time structure, shared experiences, external goals, status, and identity; these are typically gained from employment and meet important psychological needs (Ezzy, 1993). Warr, on the other hand, argues that the negative impacts of unemployment can be explained in terms of low levels of environmental features or "vitamins," including opportunity for control, opportunity for skill use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity, availability of money, physical security, opportunity for interpersonal contact, and valued social position (Ezzy, 1993). Fryer, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of internal meaning-making and interpretation.

Jahoda's model, then, is one of psychological needs, met through participating in the institution called employment. Warr's model, in contrast, relates to environmental needs necessary for optimal mental health. Despite some overlap, the models differ in their degree of emphasis on the individual versus the environment: Jahoda's model is largely person-centered while Warr's model is situation-centered. While both models contribute to our understanding of how unemployment affects mental health, they have serious limitations. One such limitation is addressed in the agency model developed by Fryer and his colleagues. The agency model focuses on the cognitive processes influencing one's response to unemployment. Unlike Jahoda's and Warr's passive models, the agency model highlights the importance of meaning and interpretation of unemployment (Ezzy, 1993).

I believe all three theories aid in our understanding of how unemployment affects health; however, none of these theories takes into consideration the inherent seasonality of certain occupations (e.g., fishing, farming, teaching, construction work). Thus, I would add one other factor: historical/cultural considerations. I think this factor is an important one to keep in mind when discussing communities such as Black Tickle where, because of a growing dependence upon a cash economy and the unavoidable seasonality of their source of cash (i.e., fishing), people have incorporated Employment Insurance (EI) into their cultural way of life.

3.3 Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Barnsley and Ellis (1992) argue that research is a process of change and that "*It's an aid to action and a tool for empowerment, not an end in itself* (p. 9). In light of the fact that many people in Black Tickle have rarely been included in important decision-making processes, I felt that a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach would be appropriate. I reasoned that such a methodology would allow participants and other key stakeholders maximum control of the research process while at the same time provide them with ongoing opportunities to provide feedback and input. The methods utilized in this research project capitalize on the idea that "*Asking people about their experience is the respectful thing to do*" (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992, p. 13). PAR has been defined by Nelson, Ochocka, Griffin and Lord (1997) as:

... a research approach which consists of the maximum participation of stakeholders, those whose lives are affected by the problem under study, in the systematic collection and analysis of information for the purpose of taking action and making change. (p. 7)

PAR makes primary use of qualitative methods which provide descriptions of situations and communities (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992). Unlike quantitative methods, which

generally seek to provide aggregate, numerical information about a large population, qualitative methods tend to concentrate:

... on learning about how people actually experience the specific issue or problem. This knowledge is the key to knowing what actions will make a practical difference to peoples' lives and why. (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992, p. 9)

There are many reasons why I felt a PAR approach would be appropriate for this project. Firstly, a PAR approach places ownership of the research into the hands of those who experience the problem. This is not only the respectful thing to do, but it also helps to increase stakeholder buy-in and problem-solving, since participants can then see the relevancy of the research and their stake into it, thereby possibly increasing the likelihood of action (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992).

Secondly, PAR affirms people's right to be listened to and understood – important for traditionally dis-empowered and neglected groups. Thus, PAR has been used with people with disabilities and Aboriginal people (e.g., Balcazar et al., 1999; Chataway, 1997).

Thirdly, PAR strengthens community members' connections with each other (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992) – possibly increasing the likelihood of collective/collaborative action. Fourthly, the process of participation helps to build skills, confidence and knowledge.

Fifthly, PAR enables the development of realistic strategies and programs based upon real life experiences, rather than upon theories or assumptions. This basic tenet is respectful of *"... the fact that we all have different upbringings, play different roles in the world, have different expectations, and that we don't experience the world in the same way"* (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992, p. 14). Consequently, researchers need to build their analysis from peoples' experience rather than trying to fit peoples' experiences within their theories (Barnsley &

Ellis, 1992).

Finally, a PAR approach supports the idea that the feelings and opinions of the researcher are important and that their viewpoints cannot, and should not, be put aside in an attempt to appear objective (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992). This is an important point since I come from the community under study and I have known the participants all of my life. Barnsley and Ellis (1992) argue that PAR:

... acknowledges that people who are working to bring about change or deliver a service often share the experience and interests of the people they work for and with. Their perspective and knowledge is valuable in defining the research questions and in carrying out the research. (p. 13)

3.4 Methodology

Research that begins with learning about people's experiences of a particular issue or problem enables us to build realistic strategies. (Barnsley & Ellis, 1992, p. 14)

In this section, I will provide a synopsis of the methodology I followed in carrying out my research. As the above quotation suggests, and as I outlined in the previous section in my description of PAR, the underlying goal of this project was to learn about the impacts of the cod moratorium upon displaced women fish plant workers by asking women with those experiences. The use of PAR, and in particular the use of in-depth qualitative interviews, gave voice to the women who experienced the cod moratorium first hand. This way, their unique experiences will be illuminated.

3.4.1 Overall Research Design

The first phase of this research project involved conducting seven in-depth, individual interviews with women who had worked in the fish plant for a minimum of 10 years prior to the cod moratorium and who were also between the ages of about 40 and 60 (mean of 52).

I decided to focus upon these relatively senior women because they are probably the least likely to gain employment elsewhere due to their age and lower levels of formal education. Thus, I reasoned, correctly or not, that the potential for impact would be greatest among these women. My initial plan was to conduct interviews with 10 women, however the data became redundant after seven interviews. The purpose of these individual interviews was to learn from these women how the cod moratorium may have impacted certain key areas of their lives, their families and the community of Black Tickle (see Appendix B).

Interviews with these women were conducted using a combination of an interview guide and a standardized open-ended approach. Thus, while a number of specific questions were asked in a certain sequence (see Appendix B), I was able to explore important comments with additional questions. This approach not only allowed me to obtain a large amount of information while minimizing interviewer effects, it also respected the oral culture of my participants and hopefully helped to make them feel more at ease. This combination approach also facilitated data analysis, since individual transcripts could be organized according to questions, thereby making comparisons across participants easier. Finally, because the interview questions can be reviewed at any time, the credibility of the study is greatly increased (Patton, 1990). Every attempt was made to keep these interviews as informal as possible, since this was likely to increase the comfort of participants (CMHA, 1994).

Secondly, I conducted a two-and-a-half hour focus group, attended by five of the seven participants. During the first hour, I provided feedback to participants regarding my preliminary analysis of the interview data and sought their input regarding whether the analysis “fit” with their experiences. There was a general agreement among the participants

that my analysis was accurate. The remaining time was devoted to discussing seven pre-planned questions (see Appendix C) about the future of the community. For the two participants who chose not to attend the group meeting, I later visited them separately to provide feedback and to seek their input. They also agreed that the main points were true to their experiences. Finally, my local Steering Committee was also briefed on my preliminary findings and they too provided helpful insights that answered many of the questions I had. This Committee was comprised of four local women, two of whom had been senior fish plant workers; the third member was a close family member of a displaced senior fish plant worker, and the fourth was a young community leader (see section 5.3.2 for further details).

The second phase of this research project involved two in-depth interviews with key informants (see Appendices D and E). The first informant was a health care worker who had worked in Black Tickle prior to the cod moratorium and who continues to provide services to the community. Thus, this informant was a good source of information about the health of residents over a long period of time. The second informant was a community leader who has a wealth of experience, gained through many years of involvement in various community groups. In my original plan, I had hoped to carry out three other key informant interviews. However, these did not materialize either because the information could not be obtained, a suitable informant was not available, or simply because it was later deemed unnecessary.

Finally, a community forum was held to share the findings of this study with the general public. A poster advertising the event was posted one week ahead of time and everyone was invited. A summary of the research purpose, questions, and major findings were presented in both oral and written (in the form of a one-page fact sheet) formats.

3.4.2 Stakeholder/Participant Involvement

The primary stakeholders in this study are women fish plant workers between the ages of about 40 to 60 who had at least 10 years of experience in the plant prior to the cod moratorium. In keeping with a PAR approach, these women were involved at all phases of the research. Firstly, I sought their participation on a small Steering Committee where they were encouraged to provide input relating to many aspects of the research process. Fortunately, I was able to recruit two former women fish plant workers to this Committee, both of whom were of a similar age and background as the participants. Other key stakeholders, including a family member of a senior woman fish plant worker and a community leader, also participated on this same Committee -- both were women, but were considerably younger than the former fish plant workers in this study. I purposely selected a greater number of women fish plant workers for the Committee since they are the most knowledgeable in the subject area and are the primary beneficiaries of the research. Participation on this Committee provided all stakeholders with an opportunity to shape the research since they were involved with many aspects of the project including protocol design, sampling, and interpretation of the findings.

Secondly, the research participants also received continuous feedback and several opportunities to provide input. Once their interviews had been transcribed, they reviewed them with me to ensure accuracy and to clarify comments which I could not discern from the recording. Then, following preliminary data analysis, these women were given the opportunity to review and comment upon the emergent themes, five of whom did so as a group during the focus group meeting and the remaining two during separate home visits. Finally, once the

draft version of this report had been prepared, the plant workers were again invited to review the document; however, none of them chose to do so. Key informants also reviewed their transcripts and were given an opportunity to comment upon the major points arising from their individual interviews.

Finally, in an attempt to further involve the primary stakeholders in the research process, I asked one of the women fish plant workers to be the recorder during the focus group, which she kindly agreed to do. I can only hope that this experience was a positive one for her. As a gesture of appreciation, I gave her a culturally appropriate craft item.

3.4.3 Sampling

Participants were selected **purposively**; that is, they were selected based upon three criteria - their age, their seniority at the plant, and their information-richness. I was interested in displaced women between the ages of about 40 and 60 because they are the least formally educated of the plant workers in Black Tickle and, therefore, are likely to have the fewest transferable skills with which to compete for other employment (Andy Rowe Consulting Economists, 1991). Yet, they are not old enough to retire, but too old, perhaps, to pursue skills training when many would have to start at Level I in an ABE program. Thus, these senior women seem to be “stuck” between a rock and a hard place. I selected women with a minimum of 10 years experience in the fish plant because they likely maintain the strongest attachment to the industry and, therefore, when combined with their low employability in other, non-processing jobs, are at the highest risk for negative impacts. Finally, I chose women who could provide the depth of information I was seeking for this study.

Essentially, I sought a **homogeneous sample** because I wanted to describe in great depth the experiences of a particular sub-group of women fish plant workers in the community of Black Tickle. As outlined above, I sought a sample of relatively senior women with a similar seniority at the fish plant and of a similar background (i.e., they had grown up together).

I began by independently compiling a list of women who had worked in the plant for a minimum of 10 years and who were also between the ages of approximately 40 and 60. I then took this list to my Steering Committee and asked them for the names of other women who fit with my criteria. A number of names were added and I explained to the Committee that I alone would select the participants so as to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. From the new list, I contacted eight women via telephone and requested a face-to-face meeting to discuss the Study Information Form -- only one woman declined such a meeting. When the data became redundant after seven interviews, no additional participants were solicited.

The majority of the women were brought up in Black Tickle and spent their entire lives there. Many married young and started families as there was little schooling available in those times. Also, when these women were growing up during the 1940's, 50's and 60's, the cod fishery was still quite a viable enterprise, resulting in a greater value being placed upon an informal education (for both men and women) than on a formal one. For women, this meant an education in maintaining a household, rearing children, and assisting in the fishery, which ensured mutual survival. Thus, the majority of the participants have less than a grade 6 education (Level 1 of ABE) and none have completed high school. In fact, several of the senior plant workers only recently learned to read and write their own names and to count.

However, each participant is naturally bright and adaptable. On average, they raised five children and devoted their lives to rearing and supporting their families. Most of the women in this study are very skilled craftswomen (particularly in knitting), homemakers and financial managers of the home.

Key informants were also selected purposively. As is the case in many small communities, there are few people in Black Tickle who have the expert knowledge I was seeking; this limited the pool from which I could draw key informants, and eliminated the option of randomization. Fortunately, I was able to solicit two key informants who had the expert knowledge I was seeking and who had worked in Black Tickle for many years; thus, they were able to make comparisons between the pre-and-post cod moratorium years. In keeping with a woman-centered perspective, both key informants were female and only slightly younger than most of the senior fish plant workers.

3.4.4 Ethical Considerations

The issues of anonymity and confidentiality posed on-going challenges throughout this study. Because Black Tickle is a small community with close kinship and friendship networks, it can be difficult to keep matters private even for the most vigilant person. In fact, it is common for people in Black Tickle to visit each other in an attempt to find out the “news.” Thus, I could not guarantee participants that others would not discover their involvement in this study, and this limitation was clearly reflected in both the Study Information Letter and the Informed Consent Form (see appendixes F and G). During my first visit with participants, I took ample time to review, page by page, both forms and stressed the limitations of anonymity.

To address this issue, I left it to each participant to decide where she wanted to meet; in most cases, I met with participants in their homes at times when few other people were around. Although I was unable to guarantee participants that their involvement would be kept strictly anonymous, every attempt was made to keep their particular comments anonymous. Through careful and sensitive screening of quotations by myself and the participants, others in the community will be less likely to guess the identity of each speaker.

The possibility of others discovering the identities of the two key informants was perhaps greater since they occupy special positions within the community and have special knowledge of the areas investigated. Again, this risk was clearly highlighted in the Study Information Letter and Informed Consent Form (see appendices H and I) and a similar process of screening was taken to protect participants' anonymity and confidentiality.

With respect to confidentiality, the names of participants never appeared in or on any document relating to this thesis. Transcripts were coded with numbers and safely stored in a locked room at all times. I was also careful never to talk with participants about the study in the presence of other people; however, whether they talked with others about their involvement was beyond my control. At the beginning of the focus group, participants were given the option to write and sign their own agreement stipulating that whatever was said during the meeting would be kept confidential. All participants signed a handwritten agreement that was constructed with input from everyone. Also, participants were clearly cautioned, both during my first visit with them and just prior to the focus group meeting, that by participating in such an exercise, they would be agreeing to reveal their identity to fellow participants.

Perhaps the biggest risk to participants that I had to consider was the potential of them experiencing psychological and/or emotional distress caused by thinking and/or talking about the cod moratorium. However, this risk was minimized by providing participants with clear options up front. Specifically, all participants were informed that they could decline to answer any question and withdraw from the interview/focus group at any time. Participants were also provided with a list of resource people and their contact numbers at the end of the interview; I explained that these resource people could be contacted at any time if they should wish to talk with them about any negative feelings resulting from the interview.

To a lesser extent, there was also the risk that some participants might be embarrassed to share their ideas and feelings with a much younger and more formally educated person. Related to this is the concern that some participants might be embarrassed by the fact that they could not read and sign the Informed Consent Form themselves. Others might simply be too shy to tell me if they did not understand a question. I attempted to minimize any discomfort caused by a discrepancy in formal education by conducting interviews in an informal “conversational” style and by watching my language use. I believe that the fact that I am originally from the community with family still there helped these women to feel more comfortable with me than if I were an “outsider.”

Although I had suspected that some of the women might feel uncomfortable with being tape recorded, none objected when I explained that the tapes would be securely stored in a locked room at all times and accessible only to me. I also explained that my only reason for wanting to tape record was to ensure that I did not miss anything important and that the tapes would be destroyed immediately after transcription.

Finally, there was a risk of some focus group participants becoming overpowered by their more outspoken and educated peers, resulting in possible feelings of devaluation and futility. I attempted to deal with this by laying appropriate ground rules at the beginning and by sensitive facilitating so that everyone's opinions could be voiced.

3.4.5 Underlying Assumptions

An important assumption underlying this study was that the participants are the teachers and I am their student; that is, they are the experts and my goal is to learn from their life experiences. Although I am part of a fishing family that was directly affected by the cod moratorium, I cannot claim to fully understand the experiences and everyday reality of my parents. Thus, in order to learn about the impacts upon women who worked in the fish plant, I must go to them and ask them to share their experience with me. Underlying this assumption of participant as expert-knower, then, was a call for an inductive approach:

Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis. (Patton, 1990, p. 390)

Secondly, due to these plant workers' age, limited formal education and transferable skills, and, likely, attachment to the cod fishery, I assumed that there would be many negative impacts to their health and well-being.

A third assumption was that, by using a PAR approach, learning and skill development would occur for everyone involved, including the members of the local Steering Committee who would learn about research through guiding me in my project. Similarly, I assumed that women plant workers would learn about research by participating in it, and that the focus group would provide them with an opportunity to learn from each other.

Fourthly, I assumed that a PAR approach would lead to the empowerment of participants. Empowerment has been defined by Zimmerman (1995) as "*a process by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over issues of concern to them*" (p. 581). This definition reflects three levels of empowerment, two of which are applicable to this study: individual and community empowerment. I assumed that the manner (or process) in which this study is carried out would lead to the psychological empowerment (PE) of participants. PE "*integrates perceptions of personal control, a proactive approach to life, and a critical understanding of the sociopolitical environment*" (Zimmerman, 1995, p. 581). According to Zimmerman (1995), PAR exemplifies empowering processes, "*those where people create or are given opportunities to control their own destiny and influence the decisions that affect their lives*" (p. 583). PAR provides community members with an opportunity to solve problems together, develop skills, become critically aware of their socio-political environment, and create support systems (Zimmerman, 1995).

Similarly, I assumed that the development of a women's group would lead to both psychological and community empowerment. Community empowerment refers to "*individuals working together in an organized fashion to improve their collective lives ...*" (Zimmerman, 1995, p. 582). I suspected that the support gained through a group would break down the isolation that some of these women may be experiencing and lead to greater community involvement.

However, I am not that naive to think that this small project will lead to the complete empowerment of participants. I agree with Kieffer (1984) that empowerment is an ongoing process. Nevertheless, I assumed that the collaborative processes of this research project

utilizing PAR would lay the groundwork for further empowering experiences and lifelong learning for these women.

A fifth underlying assumption was that, because I am from the community, the women would be willing to share their experiences with me. I also assumed that they would be interested in joining a women's group because there are few other social groups in the community for them to participate in. Finally, I assumed that this study would benefit the women and the community.

3.4.6 Analysis and Verification of Data

According to Patton (1990), there is no single right way to organize and analyze qualitative data. However, many qualitative researchers use the method of content analysis, described by Patton (1990) as "*the process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data*" (p. 381). Although this process can be highly laborious and frustrating, the results are known to be very rich and rewarding. In carrying out my analyses, I used a combination of content analysis and methods advocated by the Women's Centre (1992).

In performing the analysis on the data collected from the women fish plant workers, I found it necessary to carry out several steps due to the high volume of data. At first, I organized participants' data by question and saved this as a new document. For example, under question #8 pertaining to any changes in personal faith in God, I cut and pasted the responses of all seven participants, still identified by code numbers. This way, I could read all seven responses to question #8 without having to interrupt my train of thought by shuffling between seven bulky transcripts to find question #8 in each. This master document also made

it easier to see points of agreement and disagreement between participants relating to a single question.

With the data organized by question, I then wrote simple, summative notes in the margins. These notes gave me, at a single glance, the gist of how a participant had responded to a particular question. For example, near the end of participant #1's response to question #3 relating to mental health, I wrote "no effect", to denote that the cod moratorium had not led to a change in her personal sense of well-being or happiness.

The next logical step for me was to construct a table summarizing the frequencies of certain responses to the questions – this illuminated the areas of agreement and disagreement. This table contained four columns: "Question", "# of participants experiencing a change", "# of participants experiencing no change", and "Comments." In it, I recorded not only numbers but also short, descriptive notes. For example:

Table 1: Example of table summarizing frequencies of responses to questions from the plant worker interviews.

Question	# of P's Experiencing a Change	# of P's Experiencing No Change	Comments
#4. Re identity	- 1 P does not feel good about herself b/c of having to depend upon her husband for S. She called herself "right good" when she was making her own money.	- 6 P's reported no change in their identities as a result of the cod moratorium.	Of the 6 reporting no change: - One explained that she is "all da time at it" (housework) and that she sees no difference in the work (other than not being paid for it). - A second P felt that "that was all she could do" and, therefore, her identity as a worker was not threatened. - A third P explained that because there is a lot of housework to keep busy at, she still considers herself a worker.

I also completed a list of 10 key phrases, statements that kept popping up as I read through my master document. This list was very helpful in that it illuminated an important theme which later helped to explain my findings. Next, I completed a list of key quotations organized by question. This exercise was extremely valuable because it not only helped me to form an overall picture of what the data was telling me, but it also provided me with a very useful tool for later use. I found this list to be particularly handy when it came to writing up my findings since most of the significant quotations were at my immediate fingertips; thus, I did not have to waste time by rummaging through seven thick transcripts in order to locate supporting quotations.

At this point, I had managed to condense my data from 255 pages of transcript to 41 pages of summarized information. However, this was still not succinct enough and so I worked to condense it further in order to more clearly illuminate the major themes. After

reviewing my summary data several more times, I was able to shrink 41 pages down to only 4 pages. I called this document “My Thoughts and Gut Feelings” and I later took it to the seven senior plant workers and local Steering Committee to seek feedback on my key findings.

Analysis of key informant data was not nearly as lengthy as that carried out on the data collected from the senior plant workers. For each key informant, I simply made notes in the margins of her transcript and drafted up summary notes of the major points and the supporting quotations. Then I compared their responses with each other, as well as with the women fish plant workers to get a sense of whether the women’s self-portrayals were supported by the “experts.” These summaries were also “checked” by the key informants.

Several measures or precautions were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. Firstly, all interviews were tape recorded and, therefore, I was able to work directly from my participant’s own words. Secondly, all interview transcripts were reviewed by the participants to ensure accuracy and to clarify missing points. Thirdly, an “audit trail” was developed during data analysis, allowing me to keep track of precisely where each quotation came from and each step taken during the analysis process. For example, key quotations were identified according to a system of coding that I developed (e.g., 7[participant #]/3[question#]/5[page number for that question]). Thus, I could explain my findings to anyone who might question them (Taylor & Botschner, 1998). Finally, emergent themes were verified by participants and, therefore, they were able to ensure that I had reflected their experiences accurately.

3.4.7 Uses for Setting

There are many benefits to carrying out this study. Firstly, while there have been many studies documenting the stories of displaced women fish plant workers in Newfoundland (e.g., Robinson, 1994; Chapman, 1997), stories of women's "adjustment" in Labrador have been neglected and implicitly assumed to be the same as that of outport Newfoundland stories. However, Labradorians have a distinct history and culture, and, arguably, more barriers than Newfoundlanders. I believe their stories deserve to be told and their courage documented for future generations.

Secondly, it is my hope that these women, who are often denied a voice and excluded from public affairs because of their low levels of formal education, will gain a renewed sense of pride in their knowledge and ability to adapt and survive during this difficult time. It is also my hope that the participatory nature of the research process will provide women fish plant workers with a new set of practical skills and self-confidence. The ultimate goal of this study is empowerment of women leading, if necessary, to the formation of a women's group devoted to self-help and greater community action.

Thirdly, this document could be used for political and lobbying purposes on behalf of the people of Black Tickle. This study may help to draw public attention to the situation in this fishery dependent community and highlight the need for greater partnerships between citizens and governments, hopefully leading to culturally appropriate and meaningful action. Finally, this thesis documents a piece of Black Tickle's history, recorded for future generations.

3.5 Summary/Conclusion

In this chapter, I sought to provide a brief overview of the underlying theory and methodology used in carrying out this research project. The overriding theory informing this project is PAR and every attempt was made to abide by the guiding principles of this approach; for example, key stakeholders and participants received ongoing feedback and many opportunities to provide input. It is now time to examine the historical context and the community of Black Tickle.

Chapter Four: A History of the Labrador Cod Fishery and an Introduction to the Research Context – Black Tickle, Labrador

... the codfish of southeastern Labrador have long been extracted chiefly to benefit the small capitalist classes of England, and later Newfoundland.
(Kennedy, 1995, p. 238)

4.0 Introduction and Chapter Outline

Jacques Cartier could not have been more wrong when he described Labrador in 1534 as the “land God gave to Cain.” Such a slanderous description implies a darkened barrenness or a damned wasteland. This was to be Cain’s eternal punishment for his wicked and evil deed – banishment from his God-given lush and fruitful lands and exile into an impotent desert. Although Cartier’s offensive statement is by far the most famous and hotly protested by present day Labradorians, he was not the first person to suggest that Labrador was barren and worthless. In fact, a map from 1529 declared that Labrador “had nothing of much value.”

Yet, “... white explorers found fish² as thick as black flies near the shore ...” (Fitzhugh, 1999, p. 22) and this attracted thousands of fishermen from all over western Europe. Indeed, one may argue that Labrador’s fishing history has all the necessary drama and intrigue of a five star Hollywood film or even an award-winning novel. It has ambition, treachery, intermittent peace and prosperity displaced by sudden chaos and poverty, conflict, and, a necessary ingredient for any great drama, romance and the eventual creation of a new nation.

In this chapter, a brief history of the Labrador cod fishery will be presented – including an examination of the fisheries carried out by the French, British, Americans and newfoundlanders. However, due to space considerations, my survey will focus exclusively

²

Throughout this text, the term fish will mean cod fish, as is consistent with the culture.

upon the fishery that developed in the Strait of Belle Isle and on the southeast coast between Cartwright in the north and Cape Charles in the south (see figure 1 for a map). These areas were chosen because their histories in the fishery are crucial to understanding the research area, the community of Black Tickle, also discussed in this chapter.

However, it should be noted that there has not been a lot of research on Labrador in general, or on the early history of Labrador's cod fishery in particular, thereby preventing an elaborate discussion. As will become evident, much of the information for Part I of this chapter was drawn from John Kennedy's book, *People of the Bays and Headlands*, a current and relatively comprehensive history of Labrador from the earliest times to the 21st century. I also drew heavily upon a paper written by Jamie Butt, a history student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Finally, I was able to glean some information for this chapter from Lynn Fitzhugh's book, *The Labradorians*, a compilation of stories from Labradorians adapted from *Them Days* magazines. Finally, the information for Part II on Black Tickle was drawn from both local (e.g., *Black Tickle Through the Years*) and academic (e.g., Kennedy, 1995) sources.

Part I: "Fish, Who's Fish!": An Historical Overview

4.1 Enter the Foreigners!

... the French initiated European exploration of southeastern Labrador and established precedents after the fall of New France in 1763. (Kennedy, 1995, p. 23)

Although the Basques were the first known Europeans to exploit Labrador's natural resources in a sustained fashion, their prominence in the lucrative whale industry in the Strait of Belle Isle was short-lived -- lasting at most 50 to 60 years and concluding by the 1620's

(Butt, 1998, on-line). With the withdrawal of the Basques and the death of the bloody whale industry, the Labrador fishery became increasingly important to the French who "... *collect[ed] important quantities of cod there*" (Butt, 1998, on-line).

In 1702, Augustin Le Gardeur de Courtemanche was the first Frenchman to be granted a concession in Labrador (by the Governor of New France), enabling him to access valuable seal oil, to trade in precious furs, and to fish in a vast coastal area (Kennedy, 1995). Louis Bazil was equally blessed in 1736 when he was awarded similar rights to trade with the Inuit in Chateau Bay (near the community of Mary's Harbour on the southeast coast) (Kennedy, 1995). Other affluent Frenchmen, including merchants and civil and military leaders, were also awarded sections of the Labrador coast to enjoy non-exclusive fishing and exclusive fur trading and sealing rights (Butt, 1998, on-line). However,

"Sieur Antoine Marsal's concession at Charles River, established in the early 1730's, was the end of the line. Beyond it lay the forbidding 'Land of the Esquimaux.'" (Fitzhugh, 1999, p. 26)

As will become evident throughout this report, the state of affairs in Labrador has often been influenced by the events and decisions of countless and unknown others in distant places. For example, when the Treaty of Utrecht expelled the French fishermen from Placentia (in Newfoundland) in 1713, the effect was plainly felt in isolated Labrador. Suddenly, the displaced fishermen began flocking to Labrador to engage in its abundant fishery (Butt, 1998, on-line), leading to permanent French settlement on the Strait of Belle Isle by about 1715 (Fitzhugh, 1999).

Up to this point, the French pioneers seemed to enjoy a near monopoly on the Labrador side of the Straits, exploiting not only the fish, but also the migrating whales and

seals (Fitzhugh, 1999). However, with the subsequent conquest of New France by Great Britain in 1760, the industrious French would suddenly find their profitable enterprises threatened.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 (also referred to as the Treaty of Paris) placed the Labrador coast into the hands of the governor of Newfoundland, Hugh Palliser, an advocate of an exclusively migratory fishery at Labrador and an enemy of the French (Butt, 1998, on-line). Now that Labrador was officially under the paternal control of Newfoundland, she suddenly found herself subject to the Newfoundland Act of 1699 (Kennedy, 1995). According to this Act, ownership of property, such as fishing rooms and stages, was strictly prohibited (Kennedy, 1995). Thus, the profitable land concessions in Labrador previously awarded to the French by the Governor of New France were in dispute and, according to Palliser, nullified by the Newfoundland Act as:

The British tried to enact policy and to bring order to their newly won Labrador amid older geopolitical and economic traditions in the territory.
(Kennedy, 1995, p. 24)

Palliser would remain governor of Newfoundland from 1764 to 1768 and during that short time he worked diligently to advance the interests of the motherland in its newly acquired Labrador. Clearly, his policies were geared towards gaining exclusive control over Labrador's rich fishing grounds and training future seamen (Kennedy, 1995). He wasted no time in making his intentions (and power) known in Labrador by expelling the merchants and property holders; he also restricted the French to the French Shore between Cape Bonavista and Pointe Riche in Newfoundland, as outlined in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) (Butt, 1998, on-line). However, as will be shown later, the French continued to participate in the Labrador

fishery until the mid-1800's.

As hopeful as this action might have been for the motherland and her dutiful child in the New World, there was yet another obstacle to be conquered before an unchallenged British migratory fishery could be possible in Labrador: the New Englanders (Americans), who had an equally long and prosperous acquaintance with both Newfoundland and Labrador.

According to Kennedy (1995), American exploitation of Labrador began with the whale industry in the Strait of Belle Isle, which remained largely ignored until after the Treaty of Paris (1763). However, New Englanders had fished in Newfoundland as early as 1645 and even supplied Newfoundlanders with important American, European and West Indian products (e.g., molasses and sugar; Kennedy, 1995). Yet, despite Newfoundland's dependence upon the Americans for crucial supplies unavailable at home "on the rock", the migratory fishery at Labrador was apparently more important (and profitable) to the new governor of Newfoundland. To protect his interests in Labrador, Palliser evicted the Americans from the Newfoundland fishery, including the fishery in Labrador. To justify his rash and impulsive action, he held fast to his belief that a successful British migratory fishery at Labrador depended upon the expulsion of the Americans – who caused trouble by arousing the Inuit (whom he saw it necessary to form friendly relations with) and conducted illicit commerce with the French. Such trade between the French and the Americans provided England with strong competition in the fishery (Butt, 1998, on-line). However, the Americans were not discarded so easily, as will be shown a little later.

At last, the Labrador fishery could be exploited for the full economic benefit of the British and, at the same time, could be used as a training ground for future seamen. Now,

British merchants who had already established themselves in Newfoundland began to infiltrate the Labrador side of the Strait with determined ruthlessness. Some would remain in operation in Labrador for quite a long time. For example, the firm Noble & Pinson “... *proved the most tenacious, and some say ruthless, of the original adventurers, remaining active on the south coast for over fifty years*” (Fitzhugh, 1999, p. 30). According to Fitzhugh (1999), these Bristol and Dartmouth adventurers brought, in 1772, 150 men mostly from Ireland to their Labrador headquarters at Chateau. However, before the end of their reign in 1830, their fishing and sealing empire had stretched from L’anse au Loup in the Straits to Sandwich Bay in the north, employing over four hundred people a year from distant Bristol, Dartmouth, and Ireland. Other notable merchants at the time were Slade & Company at Battle Harbour and Jeremiah Coghlan and George Cartwright in Sandwich Bay. Finally, order had been brought to Labrador and a migratory fishery could begin – couldn’t it?

4.2 Enter Captain George Cartwright and the Idea of Year-Round Settlement!

Captain George Cartwright is probably the best known of all Labrador merchants; he established a salmon post at Charles River and a sealing post at Cape Charles (both on the southern portion of the southeast coast) around 1770 (Kennedy, 1995). According to Fitzhugh (1999):

... Cartwright manned his stations with teams of artisans, fishermen, and labourers from the docks and prisons of mother England. They were a diverse lot, ranging from criminals to social idealists, beggars to borderline bourgeoisie, but nearly all were men” (p. 33).

At this time, competition between merchants was fierce and it was common for rival merchants to raid each other’s premises. Cartwright’s rival was the prosperous cod fishing company Noble and Pinson who aspired to expand into the salmon and seal fisheries. What

better way to keep start-up costs low than to seize already established posts! With this logic in mind, and armed with a belief that “...every adventurer should be allowed to take ‘quiet possession’ of any salmon or sealing post provided that they man such posts with crews leaving England each year” (Kennedy, 1995, p. 32), Noble and Pinson seized Cartwright’s prosperous salmon post at Charles River and sealing post at Cape Charles!

I imagine that Noble and Pinson anticipated little, if any, retaliation from Cartwright considering that private property was still officially prohibited in Labrador. However, in early January of 1773, Cartwright took decisive action against his adversaries by submitting a formal protest to the Board of Trade in England (Kennedy, 1995). Contrary to Palliser’s restrictive policies, Cartwright insisted that year-round settlement in Labrador was necessary for the success of business. His argument rested upon two practical considerations; firstly, the challenging environment of Labrador, in particular the persistence of land-fast ice delaying arrival (and, thus, business and profit), and secondly, the need to prepare essential equipment such as nets and barrels for the fisheries (Kennedy, 1995).

With such common sense arguments, the Board of Trade agreed with Cartwright that year-round residence was necessary -- provided that they supply them from Great Britain (Kennedy, 1995). The effect would be enormous:

This compromise between Palliser’s ideal of a migratory ship fishery and Cartwright’s plea for year-round residence changed British policy towards Labrador and inadvertently cleared the way for eventual permanent settlement. (Kennedy, 1995, p. 33)

The implications for the cod fishery would be great; with year-round settlement, overwintering men would eventually seek wives, creating through their children, a new nation of people, the Metis, to be discussed later.

However, pressure for Labrador's fish continued to mount and previously expelled (by Palliser) Quebec-based merchants and concession-holders began to advocate for Labrador's return to Quebec. Although the Quebec Act of 1774 did achieve this end, the actual supervision of the cod fishery in Labrador continued to be the responsibility of the now commander-in-chief in Newfoundland (Butt, 1998, on-line). Even with the shift in ownership,

... competition for Labrador's coastal resources continued to mount. In 1775, about a hundred British ships fished off the Labrador coast, while Quebec merchants, though less prominent, continued to participate in the seal and salmon fisheries. (Butt, 1998, on-line)

Although Quebec returned Labrador to Newfoundland in 1809, people continued to flock to Labrador to participate in its cod fishery and the number of stakeholders continued to steadily increase.

4.3 Headin' North: Enter the newfoundlanders!

Newfoundlanders themselves saw how inappropriate Palliser's restrictive policies were and blatantly ignored his 1765 regulation prohibiting any inhabitant of Newfoundland from going to Labrador (Kennedy, 1995). In fact, British fishermen based out of Newfoundland fished in Labrador as early as 1766 and by 1800, Newfoundland vessels crewed by *residents of Newfoundland* were fishing for cod along Labrador's cold and rugged coastline (Kennedy, 1995). However, according to Hutchings and Myers (1995), the Newfoundland-based Labrador fishery did not become a large, established fishery until the late 1820's.

According to Kennedy (1995), two events outside of Labrador caused an increase in the number of Newfoundlanders fishing in Labrador. Firstly, the repeated failures of the Conception Bay fishery which, by 1813, saw the number of vessels in Labrador doubled from the previous year. Secondly, the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, after which the French

began to assert their rights along the “Treaty” or “French Shore” (on Newfoundland’s north and west coasts) -- essentially, “kicking out” the Newfoundlanders who had conveniently moved in there during the war. Now, it was the Newfoundlanders who looked to Labrador, resulting in a sixfold increase in its fishery between 1814 and 1829 (Kennedy, 1995; Hutchings & Myers, 1995).

By 1825, 60 vessels from St. John’s and another 200 from Conception Bay (totalling 5,000 men) sailed to Labrador to fish (Kennedy, 1995). According to Kennedy (1995), Newfoundlanders caught approximately 1,000,000 quintals of fish in Labrador annually (totalling 11,200,000 pounds of dried fish, as each quintal consisted of 112 pounds!). Further:

In 1828, the Labrador catch comprised more than one-fifth (21 per cent) of the total [Newfoundland catch]. During the last quarter of the century, this percentage increased from an annual average of 26 per cent between 1874 and 1883 to 46 per cent in 1890. During the first half of the 20th century, one-fifth to one-half of the total Newfoundland/Labrador catch continued to originate from Labrador waters. (Hutchings & Myers, 1995, p. 52)

Despite this relative success “on the Labrador”, the Newfoundland fishermen continued to be pestered by the French and the Americans – who continued to fish in Labrador long after Palliser. As Fitzhugh (1999) notes, the “British government made policies which neither they or the merchants obeyed or could enforce” (p. 34).

4.4 Re-enter (and Exit of) the French and Americans!

Although the French were legally restricted to fishing on the French Shore in Newfoundland, they continued to (illegally) participate in the Labrador fishery on a modest scale on the Strait of Belle Isle (Kennedy, 1995). They maintained their involvement in the Labrador fishery by cunningly trading cod liver with the locals for permission to fish and for the use of their stages (Kennedy, 1995). Although the French fishery was smaller than the

American fishery, their numbers were sufficient to cause trouble for the British and Newfoundland fishermen.

Between 1834 and 1855, the French had acquired, from their British competitors in Labrador, a nasty reputation as lawless tyrants and rabble-rousers. The British believed that they had a serious “French problem” on their hands, consisting of treaty violations, overfishing, and the prevention of their men from fishing “on the Labrador”, as vividly illustrated by a customs collector in 1841:

The encroachment of the French on the rights of our Fisheries on the coast of Labrador is also a subject of just complaint. From Blanc Sublons [sic] in the Straits of Belle Isle to Henley Harbor - the shore is literally lined with French boats; protected by their numbers, it is useless for the inhabitants to order them off or show the least resistance; nothing but a ship of war will intimidate them, or can protect the interests of British Fishermen. (Elias Rendell, p. 43 as cited in Kennedy, 1995, p. 56)

The apparent need for “a ship of war” demonstrates, I think, the lengths the British would take to protect their fishing interests in Labrador. Although the British painted a picture of French oppression in Labrador, it is perhaps reasonable to propose that the French were merely acting on similar vested interests (i.e., protection of their perceived share of the wealthy Labrador fishery). Thus, the land God gave to Cain had become a bountiful land with many suitors.

The Newfoundland fishermen found themselves in conflict with the French at about the same time as the British. Preferring to take direct action against their provocateurs, Newfoundlanders presented a petition to the Newfoundland House of Assembly on April 3, 1845, accusing the French of burning and destroying the stages, flakes and houses they had built (Kennedy, 1995). The Newfoundlanders, as did the British, entreated the protection of a British warship.

After 1870, the French fishery in Labrador declined -- now, the only competitor was the Americans, who had found their way back into the Labrador fishery through the second Treaty of Paris in 1783, ending the American War of Independence (1775-1783). That Treaty confirmed their rights to fish on the Grand Banks and to take fish in parts of Newfoundland used by the British, including Labrador. The Americans were also permitted to dry and cure fish on shore in unsettled harbours, but they were not allowed to buy fish from the locals. Because of a treaty made with the French not to disrupt their French Shore fisheries, the early American fishery was confined to Labrador (Kennedy, 1995).

Much to the ire of Newfoundlanders, the Americans arrived in Labrador earlier in the year and this was significant because early access to the good fishing berths could mean the difference between a prosperous and disastrous season. According to British estimations, which Kennedy (1995) argues may have been inflated, the American fishery was indeed a large and prosperous one (one that interfered greatly with their colonial control of Newfoundland and Labrador):

In 1820, Captain Robinson of the Royal Navy estimated 530 American vessels on the (Labrador) coast, carrying 5830 men. That year the Americans took 530,000 quintals of fish, compared with the 134,000 quintals taken by the Newfoundland and English ships. (Rowe, 1980, p. 469 as cited in Kennedy, 1995, pp. 49-50)

The Labrador fishery not only sustained large numbers of American fishermen and their families by providing direct employment, but the processing and shipping of Labrador fish also generated a great deal of work at home in American ports, as described by Captain Sandborn:

We used to have great times here [Newburyport] when the vessels came in from Labrador. All the men and boys we could scare up were employed in washing, hauling, drying, and packing the fish, and shipping them to market.

(as cited in Kennedy, 1995, p. 53)

However, the massive tidal wave upon which the Americans were riding was soon to crash against the shore and be replaced by the unrelenting Newfoundland fishermen. Although the Americans held the upper hand until the 1840's, the Newfoundlanders soon began to outnumber them. By 1873, there were no US vessels fishing in Labrador (Kennedy, 1995), possibly because of the demand for larger codfish and the introduction of offshore trawling in the US (Goode, 1887 as cited in Kennedy, 1995).

4.5 We're Still 'Ere: The Newfoundland Fisheries

By the end of the [19th] century there were nearly five thousand Newfoundland vessels on the coast and over twenty thousand floaters and stationers each summer. (Fitzhugh, 1999, p. 105)

With the French and Americans now out of the way, the Newfoundland fishermen were finally free to develop their fishery in Labrador. Essentially, they carried out three distinctive types of fisheries in Labrador: the floater, stationer and banker fisheries. Fishermen participating in the large **floater fishery** operated out of anchored schooners and either used cod seines (Poole & Cuff, 1991) or the cod trap (Kennedy, 1995). They salted their catch in the ship's hold and later brought it back to the home port "green" to be dried (Poole & Cuff, 1991). According to Kennedy (1995), many of the floaters in Labrador were from the Conception Bay area, but some were from Trinity, Bonavista and Notre Dame Bays. Floaters normally left their home ports for Labrador in June and employed girls or women as cooks (Kennedy, 1995).

The **stationer fishery**, however, was characterized by fishermen who fished from "rooms" or "premises" along the Labrador coast and who dried their fish on shore (Kennedy, 1995). Like the floater fishery, many stationers came from Conception Bay outports and

usually travelled to Labrador in June. However, stationers sailed to Labrador on passenger-mail ships and either brought their boats and gear with them or stored them in Labrador over the winter (Kennedy, 1995). According to Poole and Cuff (1991), stationers normally fished using handlines. Kennedy (1995) argues that “... *family members performed essential duties ranging from helping at the fishing stages to cooking and cleaning*” (p. 61).

Finally, the **banker fishery** operated out of schooners that were much larger than those used by the floaters. This fishery was often described as, “... *the aristocrat of the Coast*” (Tanner, 1944, p. 761 as cited in Kennedy, 1995). The banker fishermen fished out of dories using baited trawls, sometimes having as much as 20 miles of lines out (Kennedy, 1995). Bankers originated from the larger towns on Newfoundland’s south coast and usually arrived in Labrador around mid-August to September and fished for only a month (Kennedy, 1995). Unlike the floater and stationer fisheries, the banker crews were exclusively male (Kennedy, 1995). The great mobility of the banker fishermen aroused resentment from the sedentary fishermen:

Fish were plentiful in the summer of 1926 around Spotted Island but were not approaching inshore waters; the Settler trap fishery was a failure. In contrast, Grenfell writes: ‘The banking vessels with their dories, running in and out from the same [as the trap fishers] harbours daily and going only a few miles to sea, come home every night with a big haul’. (Kennedy, 1995, pp. 60-61)

According to Hutchings and Myers (1995), a decline in the inshore stocks in Labrador, evident as early as the late 1930’s, led to the retreat of the Newfoundlanders from Labrador. As described earlier, large amounts of fish were taken from Labrador by Newfoundland-based vessels, likely contributing greatly to the observed decline in stocks. However, as will be shown below in Part II, Newfoundlanders, when pushed by scarcity in their own backyards,

did not hesitate to return to prime fishing grounds in Labrador to ward off poverty and ruin.

This caused hardship for the nation of Métis people and their families.

4.6 The Mixed-Race Labradorians!

... Inuit enclaves existed along the southeastern coast during the nineteenth century. This fact, together with the absence of European women during the early part of that century, leads me to conclude that, as in more northerly parts of Labrador, Inuit women became wives of many first-generation Settler males. (Kennedy, 1995, p. 86)

In 1742, Sieur Jean-Louis Fornel of Quebec obtained a concession from the French Crown for the Baie des Esquimaux (Hamilton Inlet) in central Labrador. Finally, the wild north was opened up and exploitation of that land could begin! Gradually, men began to overwinter in Labrador in order to trap furs, hunt seals, guard fishing stations and prepare fishing equipment (Fitzhugh, 1999). The result: frequent intermarriages between overwintering European men and primarily Inuit women, creating a new nation of people and fishers – the Metis. The question regarding whether Inuit were present in substantial numbers and for substantial periods of time prior to the arrival of Europeans is outside the scope and purpose of this paper. However, prior occupation and land use by their Aboriginal ancestors is fiercely argued by present-day Métis (6,500 strong), concentrated in Central and Southern Labrador, and the Labrador Métis Nation in their land claim submission to the federal government.

According to Fitzhugh (1999), Cartwright, who is suspected of fathering a child with an Inuit woman, encountered mixed-blood families as far south as Cape Charles and present day St. Lewis as early as 1775. By 1835, most of the non-native settlers in Hamilton Inlet had Inuit partners and half of the children were mixed-blood (the rest presumably Inuit) (Fitzhugh, 1999). According to Fitzhugh (1999), *“By 1850 Inuit blood ran in the veins of nearly all*

Labrador families from Hopedale to Cape Charles” (p. 36).

These mixed-blood Métis came to be known by outsiders as a kind and generous people. In 1823, Rev. U.Z. Rule at Battle Harbour wrote that “... *he preferred to lodge with the mixed-race families, as opposed to the Newfoundlanders or Europeans. Their houses were cleaner and more comfortable, he said, and the men treated the women and children more kindly*” (as cited in Fitzhugh, 1999, p. 36).

4.7 Labrador Women in the Labrador Fishery

The women in Labrador fishing families knew the true meaning of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. Prior to government programs aimed towards settling the Labradorians into permanent communities (1967 to 1970), most, if not all, Labrador families moved according to the seasons, practising what has become known as **seasonal transhumance**. This meant that they would spend the spring and summer on the outer coasts to participate in the fishery and the fall and winter in the sheltered bays hunting and trapping animals.

I can only imagine that this nomadic lifestyle was wearisome for the women who were likely responsible for organizing the annual moves to and from the bays and headlands. Unfortunately, there has been a shocking neglect of the lives and experiences of Labrador women from fishing families in the existing research on early Labrador. Some accounts of early life between the bays and the headlands will be explored later in the section on Black Tickle.

When on the coast during the fishing season, I suspect that an average woman’s day consisted of not only cooking, cleaning and caring for children, the sick and the elderly, but

also of assisting her husband in the stage³ and on the bawns⁴ – retiring long after sunset after having helped to clear away the fish in the stage or after having collected them from the bawns.

In addition to the hard physical labour she endured, she also most likely had to contend with the worry of an unpredictable fishery and what a bad fishing year could mean for her family. This fear was magnified by their dependence upon fish merchants to provide food and fishing supplies. As one evangelical preacher observed in 1906:

To an unscrupulous merchant such a system offers temptations to defraud with impunity, for the keeping of accounts to an illiterate fisherman is an unfathomable mystery. Thus it often happens that some of these men are in debt all their lives and never seem to get ahead in spite of seasons of plenty.
(Moody, 1906, as cited in Kennedy, 1995, p. 97)

Although Kennedy (1995) argues that the Newfoundland fishery in Labrador declined, many Newfoundlanders did not hesitate to return to prime fishing grounds in Labrador in order to ward off poverty and ruin when their fishing grounds became barren. This history on the Labrador cod fishery is relevant, in fact critical, to this thesis because it provides a background against which to consider the ongoing exploitation of the cod resource in Labrador right up to the imposition of the cod moratorium in 1992. In the following sections, Newfoundland's continuing reliance upon Labrador for fish will be demonstrated using recent events in Black Tickle – the research setting – as a case in point. There, the patriarchal dominance of the Newfoundland fishery in Labrador continued through the final years of the

³

A *stage* is a rectangular-shaped wooden building measuring approximately 20' x 30' built on the edge of the shore and connected to the wharf or stage head; they are mostly used to store fishing gear and salt bulk fish.

⁴ The *bawns* were piles of rocks on which fish were laid to dry in the sun.

cod fishery resulting in the loss of work, money and security for the villagers who lived adjacent to the resource and were dependent upon it for generations. The Newfoundland government, which disallowed Labradorians from fishing in fishery zones on the island, did not create similar policies to protect Labradorians from newfoundlanders' exploitation. Institutional patriarchy was alive and well in Black Tickle and may help to explain one of the key findings of this study – that a patriarchal government may breed indifference, and even acceptance, from the very people who are forcibly oppressed. As one woman in this study explained to me:

... if you goes and asks da government so many times and dey keeps sayin' 'no' why go back and get 'no' again?

Please see Chapter Six for further details regarding this and other findings.

Part II: “They’ve Breathed Life Back into the Saying ‘Basic Survival’”: The Community of Black Tickle, Labrador

For us mere mortals the term “basic survival” has been dispatched to the history books, but here on the island [Black Tickle] they’ve breathed life back into the saying. (Howgate, 1995, p. 73)

4.8 Shaped by History and Children of the Land

In his arduous travels from Red Bay in the Straits to Nain in the North, the writer of the above quotation, Bernie Howgate, experienced the rigours of life “on the Coast” firsthand. A daring and adventurous traveller from Toronto, he snowshoed the long stretch from Red Bay to Goose Bay in the dead of winter and kayaked from Goose Bay to Nain the following summer, all the while relying upon the generous hospitality of the people. After a short visit to Black Tickle, he did a fine job in describing the way of life of the people there -- “basic survival” in the face of considerable hardship and adversity. This will become apparent throughout the remainder of this chapter as I attempt to provide a bird’s eye view of the

history and culture of Black Tickle, with an emphasis upon its cod fishery. It is my hope that this story will lead to a better understanding of the findings of my study.

4.9 “Can’t See the Forest for the (Lack of) Trees”: Location and Physical Description

Black Tickle is located on the north east arm of the Island of Ponds off of the southeast coast of Labrador approximately 192 air miles east of Goose Bay in Central Labrador and 425 air miles north of the provincial capital of St. John’s, Newfoundland (see Appendix A). Between the Island and the mainland of Labrador is a narrow stretch of water referred to as “The Run” approximately 5 kilometres in width at the narrowest place. The lack of a bridge or causeway across “The Run” means that the Island is truly isolated and can be accessed year round only via a twin otter bush plane, ski-doo or dog sled over the frozen ice in winter, and commercial or private boat in the summer. Also located on the Island is the twin settlement of Domino and the abandoned cod fishing community of Batteau, resettled to Cartwright during Newfoundland’s resettlement program in the mid-1960’s.

The terrain of the Island can be best described as tundra, only without the negative connotations of “wasteland” or “badlands”, as this would suggest that the Island supports little, or no, life. Certainly most of the Island does consist of bare igneous rock and bog or peat land. However, there are also many grass marshes surrounding hundreds (some say 365, “one for every day of the year!”) of shallow ponds which provide important nesting grounds for many different species of ducks and geese in the spring. In the summer, there is also an abundance of bakeapples (cloud berries), blackberries, partridge (red) berries and, to a lesser extent, blueberries, which are easy to access as the Island is mostly flat and completely unencumbered by trees or shrubs. In fact, the entire Island is naked of trees, leaving it fully

exposed to the merciless winds which often blow at staggering speeds of up 110 km/hour. In the winter time, such gales make for a blinding blizzard.

Although wind is the predominant feature, Black Tickle is also often blanketed with fog (and rain) in the spring and fall, rising in off the cold Labrador Current. However, the plentiful rainfall nurtures a wide variety of colourful plant life, including bright buttercups, dandelions and purple fireweed, white and pink yarrows, lush green hemlock, and Indian tea leaves. Other, not so abundant, plant life on the Island includes marsh grass-of-parnassus, comb and marsh cinquefoil, silverweed, hemp nettle and arnica ragwort/leavy ragwort.

4.10 “We were the People of the Bays and Headlands!”: Seasonal Transhumance and the Beginning of Year-Round Settlement

I used to live in Reed's Pond ... there were about seven or eight families. We would go to Reed's Pond in the fall and come out around the last of March. We used dog teams then to go back and forth. (Mary B. Morris, as cited in Black Tickle/Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 19)

Mary B. Morris, a Métis Elder of Black Tickle, passed away this year but her words will live on forever in Black Tickle/Domino's only oral histories booklet made possible through a literacy project. This tiny booklet was a tremendous contribution to the cultural life of the community and an enjoyable means through which to learn of Black Tickle's history. The Reed's Pond to which Mary refers in the above passage is located on the mainland of Labrador approximately 29 km northwest of Black Tickle in a sheltered area blanketed with primarily black spruce trees and shrubs. This is where many of the early Métis families (primarily the Keefe family) moved to in the fall; they moved with dog teams after having fished in Black Tickle during the summer. They made this seasonal migration to seek protection amongst the trees from the long, cold Labrador winters and to hunt and trap animals for food and furs:

When we'd go back into the Bay in the winter ... We'd be hunting partridges, rabbits, and porcupines then too. (Allen Keefe, as cited in Black Tickle/Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 26)

“In the Bay” families also had a steady supply of wood to heat their homes and water was more plentiful than on the Island. Other fishing families from Black Tickle moved to either Mussel Brook (primarily the Dyson family) or Porcupine Bay (mixed population with families from Black Tickle, Spotted Island and Batteau), approximately 22 km southwest of Black Tickle, for the winters. In the spring, before their ice corridor (“The Run”) thawed, families again packed up their belongings and headed out to Black Tickle to engage in the cod fishery.

Once out on the Island, families utilized the many resources of the coast to continue their subsistence way of life. According to elder’s reports, coastal life was difficult and people had few material things. However, families were able to sketch out a fairly independent existence through their respectful use of the coastal resources, as described by one Elder:

You'd go to the cove and get a feed of mussels, a feed of wrinkles, or a feed of ose' eggs; stuff like that. Quanyuk was a favorite food. You'd take the kelp off and eat the middle. It stopped the hunger. There was lots of berries, lots of bakeapples and partridge berries ... we had lots of ole fish, and lots of ole seals to cook. Anybody who wanted it cooked could cook it, and if you wanted it froze up, you'd get a froze up piece and go right to it. (George Keefe, as cited in Black Tickle/Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 16)

Also, because Black Tickle juts directly out into the Atlantic Ocean, various species of birds and geese must fly past the community on their northward journey in the spring and again in the fall as they head south. Literally hundreds of “companies” fill the skies, making it easy for families to access a valuable source of food and nutrition:

There was thousands of ducks, thousands, thousands, thousands. You'd get up anytime at all in the morning, and if you wanted 'em for dinner, you'd take your gun on your back and walk down in under the bank where the stage is now, and kill what you wanted. That'd be it. You wouldn't kill more than what you was able to eat. We never had no fridges or nothin' to put 'em into. You get a tortrey of birds, hang em up in the stage and let Jack Frost freeze em up for ya. It used to save em'. (George Keefe, as cited in Black Tickle/ Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 16)

Thus, the resources of the interior bays combined with the resources of the coast to provide a delicately-balanced, fairly independent lifestyle that was, for the most part, more dependent upon nature and what she provided than upon a cash economy. However, the forces of modernity would change all of that, further integrating the people into a cash economy and substantially altering their traditional way of life in the bays and headlands. This eventually led to the year-round settlement of Black Tickle:

Living here started about 40 years ago. We never thought to live here (year round) til the school got built here. Children didn't get (regular) schooling before that. They got a bit in the summer. A teacher used to come to Porcupine Bay. The teacher used to teach in someone's house, and in Uncle Mick's house in Black Tickle. Everyone settled here year-round. The youngsters had to go to school. We never had no choice. (Black Tickle Elder, as cited in Hanrahan, 2000, p. 9)

The statement "*We never had no choice*" implies coercion, manipulation, and the usurpation of personal freedom. The decision to settle permanently on the Island as opposed to continuing their independent nomadic lifestyle was strongly influenced by outside forces -- the most important one being the church and its ideas about the need for formal education. As one middle-aged community resident explained to me, the then Roman Catholic priest, Father Tessier, gave the people an ultimatum that left them with little choice: either they settle permanently in Black Tickle so that a school could be built for the children to receive formal education or the children would have to move to another community with an existing school.

Naturally, parents were frightened by the thought of sending their young children away to school, and so many agreed to settle in Black Tickle year-round. The school, then called Centennial School, was built in 1966 and officially opened in 1967. Although a few families continued to move back into the bay after the school had opened, this persisted only for a few years and soon everyone stayed permanently.

You might wonder how one man could impose such an ultimatum upon a people? His power stemmed from the Holy Roman Catholic Church which, at that time, exerted tremendous control over people's lives, as illustrated by an Elder of Black Tickle:

If you didn't go to confession, they would drive you out of the village, no question about that one. Any unwed mother would rather crawl into a rat's hole, poor little buggers, then face the priest. Now they would have to face him sometime, but they'd be frightened to death. The priest would be just as bad to the unwed father. He'd get them in and even threaten the law on them. They'd be forced into marriage no matter if they were 15 or 50. (Elder, as cited in Black Tickle/Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 11)

Father Tessier's power may have been solidified by the people's lack of formal education and their fear of challenging the priest – an authority figure. Perhaps related to this was their willingness to believe the priest, “a man of God”, and to trust that he was speaking and acting in the best interest of the community.

According to Hanrahan's (2000) sources, Father Tessier promised the people other infrastructure if they settled in Black Tickle year-round. He made good on that promise. In 1970, the first International Grenfell Association (IGA) clinic was built and, to foster the Catholic identity, Good Shepherd Church was erected in 1979. Snowmobiles and telephones became available in the late 1960's and by 1972, electricity was connected to people's homes.

However, there would be a price for these new conveniences. For the people of Black Tickle, modernity in the form of snowmobiles, electricity, and appliances meant expenses

previously unknown (Hanrahan, 2000). These expenses would deepen their dependence upon a single resource, the codfish, which could produce the cash necessary to meet the demands of “civilization.” Although people in Black Tickle continue to make short trips (mostly daily) into the bay for wood and to hunt partridges and rabbits during the winter, their integration into a cash economy cannot be undone and, thus, their independence, as precarious as it was, cannot, I am afraid, ever be fully restored.

4.11 The Involvement of Women in the Early Cod Fishery and the Beginning of Plant Work in Black Tickle

Black Tickle indeed has a long and relatively prosperous history in the cod fishery: “*Black Tickle was a most flourishing fishing establishment around 1800*” (Them Days, 2000, on-line). However, according to local reports, the inshore fishery in the early twentieth century was extremely difficult and not all that productive, particularly for fishers who were limited by the small size of their boats and modest fishing technology. Today, elders often talk about how hard fishers worked during the short summer seasons but caught only a small number of quintals of fish per day:

We'd go out and have all day, and get a half a dozen quintals [each quintal was 112 pounds] of fish. Twas nothing to use then only the old lead jigger. If you got about a half a quintal of fish per man per boat, you'd have a catch for the year. (George Keefe, as cited in Black Tickle/Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 22)

Once home, the fish would be immediately headed, gutted, split, washed and salted in a corner of the stage in bulks or layers (head to tail) for about a week or two. Then, they would be washed in salt water and spread onto piles of rocks (or “bawns”) to dry, which, if the weather was good, would take only about three or four days. Finally, once dried, they would be placed into a pile on top of a rock until a boat came to collect it. However, the fish

could become damp if kept this way too long. If a schooner did not come in a day or so, or if the weather turned damp, often the fish would be spread out again to keep them dry until they could be collected. Much of this shore work was performed by women and young children. At that time, fishers had no choice but to sell their catch to the collectors who were often foreigners. They gave the people "receipts" for their fish, and whether these slips of paper honestly reflected the true value of the catch, is questionable; however, many fishers probably had no way of knowing this considering their low levels of formal education. This system was once described by a fisherman from Domino who has since passed away:

We sold our fish - the ol' foreign schooners use to come and they'd buy the fish. Then they'd bring it across. We'd bring it right to the schooner and they'd give receipts for it and one thing and anudder. These schooners would go right on across. Oh, they'd be big boats, take t'ousands, about t'irty or forty t'ousands quintals of fish. They was able to take a lot of fish them ol' foreign schooners. They'd collect from place to place, you know, and people would bring in from around different places whenever she was moored here ... (Max Clark, as cited in Them Days, 1990, p. 26)

In later years, the fish would be taken to the local merchant who would pay for the fish in supplies. According to one local resident, Albert Bartlett was the fish merchant operating at Black Tickle around the time of settlement on behalf of George Dawe and Sons from Port de Grave, Newfoundland. It is uncertain whether the largely (formally) uneducated fishing families of Black Tickle received the full value of their catch from Bartlett's operation; however, if the unscrupulous transactions of other merchants operating in Labrador at the time is any indication, then it is likely that there was some abuse of power in Black Tickle as well:

The (Labrador) fishermen sold their summer's catch at a uniform price of \$3.40 per quintal (112 pounds); the same goods were sold in St. John's at \$6.50 per quintal. But this was not all, for in many instances the dealers to whom the fishermen sold their 'catch' were also the dealers from whom they purchased their supplies. Thus a dealer would purchase flour at \$4.85 a barrel (in large quantities) in St. John's, sell it to the fishermen on the

Labrador for \$7.50 and debit his account for the full retail price while paying in exchange about half the actual wholesale price of fish in Newfoundland. That large fortunes are amassed by a score of firms in St. John's, who in turn control the island both commercially and politically, is not surprising. (Moody, 1906, as cited in Kennedy, 1995, p. 98)

Before the existence of cod processing plants, many women in Black Tickle equally participated in the cod fishery by working alongside their husbands in the stages and in the boats to increase their family's income. For example, I can barely remember Aileen Neville who used to live in the house next door to where I grew up but who passed away quite a number of years ago. Aileen

... was only around the age of 17 when her mother died leaving her in charge of helping raise the rest of her brothers and sisters, while tending to the house and helping in the stage. (Black Tickle/Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 23)

Similarly, Alicia Dyson, who has also passed on, helped her husband in the stage until medical problems prevented her from doing so. According to local reports, Alicia was a very religious and well respected woman in Black Tickle who often performed baptisms, burials and prayer services in the absence of a priest -- who often came to the community less than once a year.

Then there is Mary (Franco) Keefe, daughter of Alicia, who took over for her mother in the stage when she became ill. Mary recalls:

... when Eileen (youngest sister) was born, mom couldn't go in the stage, so I went in the stage and went fishing in the boat. There were times on Saturday you'd get up at 4:30 am and leave the house and be in the boat all day, and it would be Sunday morning before you'd get out of the stage. When it was all done, I'd have to put my feet in hot water, as hot as I could stand, to take out the swelling. Mommy would rub them with white liniment so I could get a few hours sleep. (As cited in Black Tickle/Domino Through the Years, 1998, p. 17)

Certainly, this passage illustrates quite vividly how hard women in Black Tickle worked to

help their families. What is the most amazing is that they did this arduous work while at the same time tending to their homes, cooking, and caring for children, the sick and the elderly.

Women rarely received any money for their shore work and most did it just to help their parents or husbands -- which they believed was to their own advantage. As one of the participants in this study described:

Well we used to help our parents spread fish and like pick 'em up and hash 'em or whatever you call it, dat 's put 'em in piles, and bring 'em and ship 'em and stuff like dat, I wasn 't very old, fifteen or sixteen years old, I s 'pose ... da women used to help deir men, deir mudder or fadder, all deir brudders or sisters, dey all be doin ' it ... We were doin ' it for all of our own benefit ... we never used to get no money eh.

Most, if not all, of the participants in this study had helped their parents on the bawns when they were still very young. One of these participants worked in the stage with her husband for about a year, heading and gutting the fish while he made another trip to the cod traps. However, change was on the horizon as the province sought to "modernize" the fishery to make it more "efficient." Modernity took the form of factory-like processing plants which drew women, attracted by the wages, from the bawns and the stages. Therefore, the plant would provide a new avenue through which women could contribute to the family income.

According to a participant in this study, the very first fish plant in Black Tickle opened in 1975. However, it was not a "proper" plant, but rather a stage where a half-a-dozen workers (all women) stuffed the bellies of salmon with ice and shipped them off to Newfoundland on collector boats. She told me that they also took in salt fish and stored them in bulk in Dawe's (merchant) old store until a collector boat came to take the fish to Newfoundland. In the next year or two, a proper plant was built and many women began wage employment for perhaps the first time in their lives.

Of the seven women who participated in this study, only three had worked on the machines (i.e., the header and splitter), and only one of these three had worked on the splitter. The remaining four women worked mostly at the washtub cleaning the fish, then laying it and salting it into bulks, as it would have been done in the stage except on a larger scale. Two of these four women also worked outside on the dock pushing the fish into the plant with a prong (while standing on a ladder) to be received by the header. In times of glut, however, the three women who worked on the machines joined their friends at the wash tubs and also laid and salted fish, as illustrated by one participant:

... now when da glut was on, well I had to be on da splitter all da time. But den when it go through, if da fish tub would pile up, well dey'd stop da splitters and den da women was on da splitters used to have to go and help da clean out da fish tub, and den when dey'd pile up down below with saltin' em, well you'd have to do dat too so, you'd always had always something to do like, hey.

Only two of the seven participants had packed fresh cod into boxes to be frozen and shipped out and only one had packed salmon. When I asked these women how they felt about working in the plant, I could see their faces light up as they responded "I loved it!" or "It was good, I enjoyed it!" It seemed to me that these women derived primarily two benefits from working in the plant - friendship:

... I found it really, really, you know, I really, really enjoyed it because what it was I was with other people and, you know, den you get to have dese little chit chats and make time go fast and everything ...

and much needed income for the family:

... when you were workin' with da cod, you found you liked, you enjoyed workin' at da plant ... when da see dier dollar comin' in, you wasn't gettin' a hell of a lot but what you was gettin' well you was makin' do with it. And den probably dere was one, probably two, probably three, cheques comin' in da one house ... It goes 'wards da phone bill, or da light bill, or it helps to pay somethin' for da children in school or, or it helps get a mouthful to eat or

drop of gas to go in da ski-doo ...

4.12 “We Were Quickly Overrun With the Swarm of Fishing Crews!”: The Invasion of Black Tickle and the End of the Cod Fishery

Near-shore (long-liner) and offshore fishing activities increased from about the 1960's onward and by the mid-to-late 1980's, fish stocks were in decline in many areas of the province -- that is, except for in Black Tickle. In 1989, the plant in Black Tickle that employed about 75 local residents was:

... overwhelmed by such an exceptional quantity of cod harvested in the area that the plant had a 'glut' or oversupply of fish which had to be rapidly transported by collector vessels to other processing plants on the Labrador coast, in Newfoundland and on the Quebec North Shore. Almost 5 million pounds of cod was processed at the Black Tickle plant and about 30 million pounds of cod was collected for processing elsewhere in 1989. (Brice-Bennett, 1992, pp. 3-4)

However, the vast majority of this fish was not taken by the local residents of Black Tickle who fished out of small open boats measuring under 35 feet in length, in fact, many under 25 feet. During that summer, 148 near-shore boats (measuring 35 to 65 feet in length) and 71 inshore boats from outside the 2J zone flooded into the Black Tickle area (Brice-Bennett, 1992). These outside fishers came from the fishing zones 3KL (northern and eastern Newfoundland), 4R (the Strait of Belle Isle), and 4S (the Quebec North Shore). An additional 3 near-shore and 190 inshore boats from other communities within the 2J zone also flocked to Black Tickle in 1989 (Brice-Bennett, 1992). Thus, for 1989 alone, there were 457 boats fishing in the area off of Black Tickle, only about 45 of which were from the community. These fishers were, no doubt, driven by scarcity in their home ports due sadly to their own overfishing.

The next year, South River Enterprises, the company operating the plant in Black Tickle on lease from the provincial government, expanded its space and facilities to increase the plant's processing capacity from 5 to 7 million pounds (Brice-Bennett, 1992). Again, large numbers of fishers from within and outside the zone swarmed into Black Tickle:

Within days following reports of major cod landings, the Black Tickle area was invaded by about 200 fishing boats under 35 feet, over 100 longliners and more than 20 collector vessels originating mainly from areas in Newfoundland and the Quebec North Shore, and also from the Labrador coast, where fish stocks were depleted. The 45 native Black Tickle fish harvesters, all operating in vessels under 35 feet, were quickly overrun by the swarm of fishing crews, small and large vessels, and thousands of nets operating in the area; approximately 1500 fish harvesters were concentrated in a 20 square mile radius of Black Tickle. While considerable volumes of cod were being harvested, the local plant operator was in a state of crisis by early August because most of the fish was being purchased by transient collectors, leaving the plant with only enough resources to operate at about 10% of its capacity. (Brice-Bennett, 1992, p. 4)

Eighty-five percent of the collector purchases made in Black Tickle in the summer of 1990 were by vessels originating from the Labrador Straits and the Quebec North Shore (Brice-Bennett, 1992). These boats took the fish caught off of Black Tickle back to their communities for processing, while the unemployed plant workers of Black Tickle watched in horror. Tensions mounted and fights erupted on the wharf throughout the summer as local fishers and plant workers attempted to prevent the outside boats from taking the fish away from the local plant that so desperately needed the fish to operate.

Although Harris' *Independent Review of the State of the Northern Cod Stock* (February, 1990), the *Groundfish Management Plan*, and E. B. Dunne's *Report of the Implementation Task Force on Northern Cod* (October, 1990) all supported the principle of adjacency and relative dependence, they:

... did not include recognition of any pre-eminent right of access to northern cod for specific communities or fishery interests, such as those in Labrador which were most adjacent to and dependent on the fishing industry. Rather, the approach referred to the entire 2J3KL sector encompassing the northern cod stock and so would not lead to any substantial alteration of the status quo regarding access to fish resources in the 2J area of the Labrador coast. (Brice-Bennett, 1992, p. 87)

Quebec fishermen could show “historical participation” if they fished in Labrador in two of the previous three years! For many native Labrador fishers and plant workers, this definition of “historical” was a slap in the face. Naturally Labrador fish harvesters and plant workers were opposed to this regulation because they felt that Quebec harvesters should not have any rights in Labrador. However, their protests fell upon deaf ears. Then, in December of 1990:

... the Maloney Commission concluded that none of the Quebec vessels present at Black Tickle from 1988 to 1990 were entitled to fishing rights ... The net economic loss caused by the removal of approximately 2,500 tonnes of groundfish from Black Tickle in 1990 for processing in Quebec was calculated at 57 person years of employment and \$1,481,000 in revenue. (Brice-Bennett, 1995, p. 90).

To decrease the potential for conflict between resident and non-resident fishers in Black Tickle in 1991, the Maloney Commission gave support to a plan developed by the Black Tickle Fisheries Committee and Labrador fisheries officers to reserve an area of fishing grounds for the exclusive use of Black Tickle fish harvesters (Brice-Bennett, 1992). The plan to reserve an area 6 miles by 13 miles for the exclusive use of vessels under 32 feet was to be implemented during the 1991 fishery (Brice-Bennett, 1992). However, two events outside of the control of local residents prevented the realization of this plan: 1) extraordinary expanses of arctic ice which obstructed the entire Labrador fishery until mid-August, and 2) reductions of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) from 197,000 tonnes to 185,000 tonnes in

1991 and to 120,000 tonnes in 1992, preventing the allocation of any quota to Labrador fishery interests (Brice-Bennett, 1995).

On July 2, 1992, the cod moratorium was announced and Black Tickle fishers and plant workers became totally dependent upon government transfer payments for daily survival, their heads still reeling from the events of the previous three years of abuse by outside fishers. The summer of 1990 will probably be remembered as the best, worst year in Black Tickle's long fishing history, nicely summarized by Brice-Bennett (1992):

The bitter irony of the situation at Black Tickle was that the abundance of fish rather than its absence was the cause of conflict and loss for the local plant operator, who subsequently went into receivership, and for community residents who had to rely on Emergency Response make-work projects to obtain an income through unemployment insurance benefits. Only two janitors at the plant had ten insurable weeks of employment when the plant closed down in early October. (p.49)

4.13 "We're Still Here!": A Snapshot of Black Tickle Today

Although the heart of Black Tickle was ripped out when the cod fishery closed down, it did not entirely break the hopeful spirits of the residents. Surprisingly, few people left and the population continued to grow. In 1986, Black Tickle had a population of 226 (Brice-Bennett, 1992); by 2000, its population had increased by approximately 19% for a total of 268 (Hanrahan, 2000). According to Hanrahan's research, over a quarter (26.5 % or 71 persons) of the population are under the age of 18, almost three-quarters (70.9% or 190 persons) are between the ages 19 and 64, and only 2.6 percent (or 7 persons) are 65 or older. Further, the average age of adults (defined as persons between the ages of 19 and 64) in Black Tickle is only 37.6, leading Hanrahan (2000) to conclude that:

In terms of community composition, Black Tickle more closely resembles Canada's Aboriginal population; its population is growing rather than declining. This contrasts to much of the rest of the province. (p. 11)

There are 57 households in Black Tickle and only 7 in the adjoining community of Domino. While the average household size is 3.9, there are many larger households in Black Tickle; for example, in one case, 13 people reside in a single 5 bedroom home. Thus, the average household in Black Tickle is not only larger than that of the province (at 2.9 persons per household), but also larger than that of Labrador (at 3.3 persons per household). Related to this is the common occurrence of multi-generational households in Black Tickle; in this same household, for example, ages range from infancy to 87 years old. Hanrahan (2000) concludes that ... *the tendency to reside in close proximity to relatives, indicates the continuing importance of kinship networks to the people of Black Tickle* (p. 12). However, I believe it is equally related to the desperate economic situation of many families in Black Tickle whose economic cooperation is crucial for their mutual survival.

4.13.1 "On the Fringes of Civilization!": Local Services

Residents buy their groceries at two local grocery stores where the prices are much higher than elsewhere in the province, especially in the winter when some food has to be flown in. For example, residents pay \$2.49 for one litre of fresh milk, \$1.29 for one tin (385 ml) of evaporated milk, \$4.49 for one bag (7 lb) of flour, \$3.69 for one bag (2 lb) of sugar and \$1.89 for one litre of orange juice. Furniture and certain other household and building supplies must, for the most part, be shipped in from other parts of Labrador, but mostly from Newfoundland. The cost of shipping even personal items and clothing through Canada Post is tremendous and steadily increasing. Clothing must be purchased through mail order catalogues (e.g., Sears) and other stores which distribute flyers in the mail.

The community has a small medical clinic staffed with one nurse on call 24 hours a day. Emergencies are flown out (weather permitting) on a Medivac to the hospital in either

Goose Bay, Labrador or St. Anthony, Newfoundland. Pregnant women are flown out usually two to three weeks before their delivery date. The Public Health Nurse for Black Tickle is stationed in Cartwright and she usually visits once every month or month-and-a-half. Doctors make an appearance maybe three or four times a year while dentists and eye teams come even less often.

The school, the name of which was changed to St. Peter's School on January 1, 1982, has approximately 50 students. Currently, there are seven full-time teachers, two student assistants (one part-time, one full-time), one part-time secretary and one full-time janitor on staff. All grades are either doubled or tripled up and high school courses are limited; for example, if one wished to take chemistry, physics or advanced math, he or she would have to do so over "telemedicine" and this only became available in 1998. Courses are generally selected by teachers whose goal is to ensure that the minimum number of credits are earned in the appropriate areas to allow for graduation. The school, in fact the community, lacks a gym of standard size and the room that is currently used by the students as a gym is really a multi-purpose room.

The church, which, ironically, had a lot to do with the settlement of the community, is led by a nun, as there has not been a priest stationed in the community for quite a number of years. Now, a priest will usually make a visit to celebrate Christmas and Easter, staying only for a few days before heading back to Goose Bay or even further afield. The Bishop makes a visit perhaps once a year to celebrate a sacrament (e.g., Confirmation) and, again, stays for only a few days before returning to Labrador City.

There is also a local platoon of Canadian Rangers operating out of Black Tickle/Domino that aids national security and protects local people (e.g., they are often called

upon for wildlife control). There is also a platoon of junior Rangers trained by the local senior platoon and both groups derive a great deal of satisfaction and pride from their involvement with the Canadian Rangers. While they have no building to operate out of, they receive valuable and useful training otherwise not possible at the local level.

Black Tickle has recently been blessed with a Family Resource Centre which provides programming for children aged 0 to 12. While the building is very small, the Centre is very comfortable and has a respectable selection of educational toys and books suitable for children and their parents. From my estimation, the Centre provides many wonderful opportunities for parents and children to come together for quality educational and creative activities. The Centre is run by a lady from Black Tickle and there is a solid volunteer base – which is absolutely necessary, especially during the winter months when resources are so limited that water must be hauled from a nearby brook for the bathroom.

4.13.2 “Dying for a Drink of Water!”: The Lack of the Most Essential Service

The community lacks a proper water and sewer system. This is a serious health risk and barrier to development. During the summer and fall, the people of Black Tickle must fetch their water in five gallon beef buckets from shallow dug-out wells, brooks and still ponds and then carry it home either by hand, wheelbarrow, car, truck, or All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV). During the short summer season, a few residents use a garden hose to bring water to their homes from an elevated pond on a hill. Many of these ponds have no drainage and so the likelihood of the water being contaminated by human or animal wastes is great. In fact, all of the water sources tested during the summer of 2001 (four communal wells and the proposed water site) contained very high levels of coliforms and, in some cases, more bacteria than could be counted. More alarming, however, is the fact that one frequently used

communal well and the proposed water site also contained the dangerous E.coli bacteria. Thus, every day people put their health at risk by drinking this water – but they have no choice. During the winter, regardless of how cold it is or even if there is a blinding blizzard, people must load up their komatik with buckets and jump onto their cold ski-doo's, with no shelter from the wind and snow, and fetch their poisonous potion.

A lack of water implies a lack of sewer. During the summer months, those few families “lucky enough” to have a hose running directly from a pond or brook can hook up their sewer line until either the pond dries up or the pipes freeze up (either way, they lose this luxury by about mid November). During the winter months, then, even fewer people would have functioning toilets. Instead, five gallon beef buckets are used, which are either dumped directly onto the harbour ice or in garbage bags, either way they are an eyesore and a serious health hazard. Many people use buckets year-round.

In June 2001, myself and four other women and one gentleman formed a Concerned Citizen's Committee to address this serious problem. Since that time, we collected 221 names on a community petition which was sent to our Zonal Board in Cartwright, along with a five page letter outlining the severity of our problem and urging their support. Copies of these items were sent to various government officials at both the provincial and federal levels. When we received no reply from government representatives, we sent a second letter asking specific questions and requesting a response to our petition. This time, we received a limited response, notably an acknowledgement letter from our MHA, Yvonne Jones and federal Industry Minister, Brian Tobin. We also wrote various organizations and asked for letters of support. We were shocked to learn that many groups and organizations simply did not want to get involved. However, the Labrador Metis Nation and the church diocese were strong

supporters. The Zonal Board also wrote letters to various government officials regarding the water and sewer needs of the entire zone, in which they used Black Tickle as an example.

Finally, we sought to educate the local residents, as well as the broader public, about Black Tickle's water crisis. Once the water testing had been completed, and we had educated ourselves regarding the meaning of those results, we held a community meeting and informed local residents of the dangers of consuming the untreated and highly contaminated water. We also wrote letters to the editor in major newspapers across the province and conducted radio interviews. In our interactions with the media, we appealed to the general public for support. We are only now getting the attention of our elected government officials.

On October 9th, 2001, three women from the Concerned Citizen's Committee (including myself) sat down with three men from the Local Service District to participate in a teleconference with our MHA, Yvonne Jones, and the Provincial Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, Hon. Oliver Langdon, to discuss emergency measures for the fall of 2001. It was decided that the water pump house, presently located about 2 kilometres away from Black Tickle, would be reconnected to the diesel generating plant and refitted with a proper filtration and chlorination system -- at no cost to residents. Thankfully, this system continues to operate, but for how long is uncertain. Although the Hon. Oliver Langdon and the Hon. Ernest McLean, Minister of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, both made commitments to come into the community to discuss long-term options, almost a year later neither have made any move to follow through on their promises.

4.13.3 "Crab Mania": Still a Struggling Community

Regarding employment and income, the residents of Black Tickle continue to be largely dependent upon government-funded make-work projects, which bring them out on a

snowbank in the dead of winter for \$5.50 per hour and minimum employment insurance benefits. Many women, for example, earned less than \$100 per week in E.I. benefits last year and face the same reality again this year. Although the plant has recently re-opened as a crab plant, it does not receive an adequate amount of the quota to provide steady employment to all those who need it in Black Tickle. The result is that:

Once thriving coastal communities are now on the brink of collapse and the saddest problem is there's a whole new generation growing up with only government make-work programs to look forward to. The terms UI, STAMPS, WELFARE and MAKE-WORK PROGRAMS are part of everyday vocabulary. (Howgate, 1995, p. 75)

It is also apparent that the senior women plant workers are among the last to be called for work and receive the fewest hours – resulting in the need for more insurable hours during the cold winter months on demeaning make-work projects funded by the provincial government.

4.14 Summary/Conclusion

No Labrador land was traded or purchased, none won in battle, none transferred by treaty. Labrador and its resources were simply appropriated, and the legitimacy of this process is only now being contested by her aboriginal people. (Fitzhugh, 1999, p. 33)

Fitzhugh's (1999) succinct statement illuminates a central component in Labrador's troubled history since the arrival of Europeans – that her abundant marine resources have been mercilessly exploited by foreigners unconcerned about the inviolable rights of her original peoples. The original inhabitants were never meaningfully consulted about the appropriation of large quantities of cod and, unfortunately, this has remained the legacy of present day Métis -- descendants of the original people and their European aggressors -- and non-Aboriginal Labradorians:

There is a very real pain in Labrador. Maybe that's what humbles. Whether it's the physical pain of a good hard day's work, the constant battle with

nature, or its isolation, it's not for me to judge. (Howgate, 1995, p. 179)

As this chapter illustrates, I think, the pain in Black Tickle stems from historical and ongoing exploitation and neglect. First, they were “encouraged” to abandon their “uncivilized” way of life and settle permanently onto the Island, where their dependence upon a cash economy deepened and their independence (precarious as it might have been) compromised. Then, their fishery, which was their only source of cash necessary to support their new way of life, was raped and pillaged by outsiders. Although a new fishery has recently begun, the tools (e.g., quotas and boats) are not available to make it widely successful. Basic infrastructure and services in the community are practically non-existent, evidenced by the lack of even a clean, safe water supply and humane sewer system. However, it is evident that the people of Black Tickle have attempted to take steps to influence the decisions affecting their futures. For example, when Black Tickle was being invaded by numerous outside fishing interests, local people united and protested the loss of their resource and, ultimately, their only form of employment. There are also a number of fishermen in the community who have secured crab licences and are making a living from that precarious industry.

Chapter Five: “What I Want, Den, He’d Have to Go Out and Get It for Me!”: The Impacts of the Cod Moratorium Upon The Women Who Worked in the Fish Plant and their Families

Well, what I want, den, he’d have to go out and get it for me ... when I could have me own money to do what I like with it ...

5.0 Introduction and Chapter Outline

In this chapter, the findings pertaining to the first two objectives outlined in Chapter Three will be presented; that is, how the cod moratorium, and the subsequent closure of the local fish plant, may have affected the personal lives of the displaced women plant workers as well as their families. As you may recall, there were several key areas of interest regarding personal impacts, including personal income, health, and personal coping strategies (PCS). Since these women naturally live within a broad family network, it is likely that their personal circumstances could have some impact upon their families as well. Thus, the findings pertaining to the impacts upon family income, family dynamics, and family coping strategies (FCS) will be also be presented in this chapter.

5.1 Personal and Family Income

Income is one important determinant of health and, thus, I was interested to know whether, and to what extent, personal and family income have been affected by the closure of the cod fishery. With few exceptions, plant workers’ incomes have been drastically impacted by the cod moratorium. While modest decreases were reported during the NCARP and TAGS years, substantial declines were reported since the premature end of those programs in 1998. For example, two of the women have no personal income at all and four women receive employment insurance benefits as low as \$94 per week (\$376 per month). With such a minuscule income, these women are literally living from cheque to cheque:

... [If] I went out dere [to the store] and took all me cheque up [charged the worth of the cheque], say, and, and I goes out pay [the storekeeper] and if I had all me cheque took up [owed the full amount of the cheque] well I go da work and pay for me bill and if I didn't have no money back well dat's all I could do. I'd have to pay fer me bill.

This lowered or, in the worst case, lack of income has caused these once independent women to become unwillingly dependent upon their husbands for money to buy the things they need for themselves, their children, or their grandchildren:

When you was makin' your own money you didn't have to go eh, eh wonderin' if you was goin', where you was goin' to get da next dollar and you didn't have to depend on anyone to be givin' ya money.

It was very clear from talking with these women that they did not wish to be financially dependent. For example, they often talked with great pride about when they worked in the fish plant and earned their own money -- which they spent however way they pleased. These women clearly preferred to be financially independent -- one to the point of doing without rather than taking money from her husband:

... I sooner be out on da snowbank [a pile of drift snow ranging in height from about 5 to 20 feet], you know and takin' from, from my husband. I'd sooner do without it and take it from my husband dere and he's tryin' to help, help, everyone else out hey, help me out hey bye? With fire, wood and stuff, and, and gas and ski-doo, you knows I'm not gonna take dat. Sometimes I be's wishin' for a dollar but I couldn't get en, I could have it yes, could have da money, but I, if I mind to take it, offered me a dozen times, but I wouldn't take it dat's all.

With these women's low incomes, it is not surprising that family incomes have also been negatively impacted. In fact, nearly all of the women reported a decrease in their family income since the cod moratorium -- resulting in them having to budget the family expenses carefully. These women have had to juggle the bills and to adjust personal and family priorities according to the greatest need:

Oh, it's a bit difficult, but ah, when it comes right down to it, you know, you put yourself down on an allowance, like and den, you know, you pull your way through, but dere's times, you know, your bills just bill up and den you'll have to drop back on what you're gettin' on otherwise to try to get dis paid off and let your head come above water again ... it's a struggle every day, every single day.

However, despite careful and creative money management practices, there is always something that must be sacrificed in order to remain afloat:

Dat means dat you wouldn't be able to buy da things dat you really wanted at all time and when you got children, you know, if you got to clothe and feed children, and yourself long beside, well I mean to say, dere's some things you just got to do without.

... you couldn't give da family nothin', you couldn't give da youngsters no money, couldn't buy nothin' for em ... we didn't have nothin' to get no, nothin' fer da grandchildren, not fer da little youngsters or nothin', no money.

All too often, and to the sorrow of these women, the children are the ones who lose out in this battle over the dollar. As anywhere, children will sometimes ask their parents and grandparents for things – be it clothes, toys, CD's, or school materials; however, today these things are often expensive and cannot always be afforded by a family on a fixed income:

... your children will come to you and say, "mom, you know, could I have dis, other children got it," and you gotta say, "no, I can't, I just can't afford it, I don't have da money to buy it." Even if it comes down to, you know, a bit of clothes dey wanted, or a pair boots, or something, and its times, you know, children just come to you and say, "mom, I'd like to have dese boots," you know, same as other children or whatever, and den you gotta look at 'em with a broken heart and say, "no I can't, I can't afford it, I don't have da money, if I did I would."

For the two plant workers without an income, their families must function on even less again. Although meagre, \$94 a week would have been better than nothing. As one of the women explained, it could have went:

... 'wards da phone bill, or da light bill, or it helps to pay somethin' for da children in school or, or helps get a mouth full to eat or drop of gas to go in

da ski-doo, but when dis only one cheque comin' in, you got to stretch it ...

Thus, the second income, as low as it might be, is easily missed within the family as every dollar counts. Another woman in this predicament explained that she and her retired husband currently receive:

Jus' get's enough, jus' to live on s'pose, to keep, keep ourselves warm dat's what she does. Dat's what [we] gets.

Again, the children and grandchildren are impacted by their mother's and grandmother's lack of income. Now, they must go to their father for the things they want or need, as one woman described:

... like if da youngsters wanted somein' and if I had da money I'd go and get it. But now I can't do dat, dey haves to go to deir fadder. I say "go to ya fadder, I haven't got no money."

However, the moratorium has also drastically affected the income of fishermen. Although NCARP and TAGS were both stable sources of income, they did not provide as much money as fishing. As one woman explained, her husband's income:

... went down big, big time, probably about \$1,500 less, you know, so with dat much, dat'll take you down a long ways. I could remember he used to bring home \$2,000 weekly, now he was gettin' \$500 for two weeks so you know dat's a big drop in your income ...

Today, many displaced fishermen work alongside women plant workers (in some cases, their own wives) on low-paying make-work projects in order to obtain adequate hours to qualify for EI for the winter. Thus, fishermen's incomes have been slashed along with those of their wives and other fish plant workers, resulting in even less money in the home for the families.

The husbands of two of the women plant workers in this study are presently receiving a fixed pension. As one of them describes, her husband's pension provides only enough money to pay for the barest of necessities, with none left over to buy anything extra:

When he gets all he's bills paid out 'ere in da shop, gets he's, gets all of he's bills paid, he's loan and he's eh, and he's eh light bill, phone bill and stuff and gets it all done, he won't have a, he won't have a copper back when it's all gone. And da next cheque, next cheque comes, jus' da same ting. All took up ...

The second participant with a husband on a pension commented that, "*We not no da bare rocks, dat's one thing, but almost.*" This simple quotation says so much about the financial situation of many families in Black Tickle since the cod moratorium – that they are living essentially hand-to-mouth, receiving barely enough money to buy food and keep a roof overhead.

Although some of these women have no children at home, they and their husbands must still support themselves and maintain their houses -- all on less income. In general, the majority of the plant workers maintained that their families (nuclear or extended) now subsist on much less money than before the cod moratorium.

5.2 Health and Personal Coping Strategies (PCS)

With such meagre personal and family incomes, I was interested to learn what impact, if any, this might have on the physical health and well-being of the plant workers. Surprisingly, they did not generally mention any changes (negative or positive) in their physical health, and when illnesses were discussed, they did not blame the cod moratorium for them. The health key informant agreed and argued that the women plant workers in their 50's have, for the most part, fared better than younger women in their 30's and 40's:

I wouldn't have said they're the ones puttin' on the weight, or havin' medical problems so much as the slightly younger group.

Similarly, few plant workers reported any change in mental health -- defined as general well-being and happiness; in fact, the majority reported being as happy today as they

always were:

... I don't let things like dat really bother me dat much dat I gets down really, really sad and I can't get up because if I do, sometimes I do, like you know, probably you startin' to feel like you're down, but dat's when I gets up, den I says I can't let meself get down, I can't let myself get down over something like dis, I cannot put myself in da grave because, you know, dere's money-wise and stuff like dat, I still gotta live, or try to live, so I just get up, no, I won't let meself get dat bad, but probably dere's a day coming I might, who knows, but right now, no.

'Tis no good now sit down and chew your fingers sure, you'd have your fingers chewed off to da bones, hey?

... we're still, main thing is we're still livin', we're still healthy as we can be, what's to be sad over, no good to be sad, it ain't gonna make it any bit different for ya.

... you can't let yourself, fall apart I s'pose or lie down and die 'cause da plant is closed down, you gotta keep on goin' at something, keep ya spirit goin', keep yaself up ...

This self-perception of good mental health was again supported by the health informant who felt that these more senior women were psychologically healthier than the younger displaced plant workers:

... in some ways when I compare 'em to the younger ones I'm thinkin' that maybe they're a bit more stable and whether that's something that's age, just because you're older and got more coping mechanisms anyway 'cause you've been through more in your life, perhaps more mentally stable than the younger ones ... they tend to be grandparents and the ones supporting the younger ones...

She attributed, in part, the relatively good health of these senior plant workers to their strong identity or sense of self. This is in agreement with the information obtained through personal interviews with the senior women -- few of them had reported changes to their self-image or identity since the closure of the fishery. In fact, several of the senior women felt that their identity as a "worker" remains firmly intact because the daily activity of housework keeps

them very busy and occupied:

Still feels, still feels meself as a worker, dere 's lots around I s 'pose eh, around to do like housework and stuff like dat, lot around to do, dat 's to keep ya from, one thing I s 'pose keep ya goin ' all da time.

I don 't know if any one else see any different. But if I had, if someone give me a days work to do, I think I 'd do it.

Interestingly, one plant worker argued that the only difference between housework and plant work is that the latter is paid while the former is not -- other than that, they are both legitimate forms of work. Her identity as a worker, then, has not changed because she is currently unemployed; rather, she continues to "work" just as hard at home to support her family:

I 'm all da time at it, so eh, maybe dat 's da reason why I don 't see any difference into it ... I 'm be 's all time work all time, busy all time ... at home and stuff, it 's only same thing if you were out and done work outside ... Well, I 'd like to have work, but I mean, I don 't see any difference in da work, only ting with it, only difference is you 're getting money for it, what you 're not going to get at home.

The self-reports of good health by the majority of former plant workers contrasts with that of one participant who reported not feeling as good about herself since becoming financially dependent on her husband. For her, feeling good about herself depends, at least in part, upon having her own money.

I was surprised to learn of the resiliency of these senior women. I wondered "how is this possible in the face of considerable financial stress?," and "what were their coping mechanisms?" It was interesting that although the plant workers genuinely felt unable to change their situations, they were not apparently depressed by this:

... dat 's all you can do well, you got to put up with it, hey? Dey was gonna close it down and dat was all, dat 's all you can do hey? Dat 's all.

Well dat 's all you could do, you couldn 't help it, it wasn 't our fault, fishin ' was gone, so dey closed da plant, dey closed da fishery da government, so

dat's all we could do about it, we couldn't fight da government.

The health informant observed that these senior women have not generally attempted to change their situations, but rather have tried to mold their circumstances to their advantage:

I think with the older age group they didn't see anything else they could do ... I think the older ones sort of felt like "What else can I do, there's nothing, I don't want to move, this is where I live" ... "I can't do anything about this but make the best of it, the best of it for me" ...

This attitude of "dat's all you can do" seems to have been an important coping mechanism for the former plant workers. The health informant agreed and argued that this attitude of acceptance makes sense considering that many of these women have very little formal education (if any), and some may not have ever been outside of the community before:

... I think it is a coping mechanism, in what they're doing is. And they have you know for these people they have got a point you know in that they haven't got a lot of education to go out and compete with people on the Island and leave their homes, they're not gonna be any further ahead, and to go to Ontario or somewhere, Alberta, is to these people I think just impossible. They can't visualize that at all because they have so very little experience of a bigger place...

Related to this, it was evident throughout my interviews with the plant workers that they maintained a very positive attitude despite their worsening financial situations:

... don't bodder me I don't know how you explain it but, hard to explain I s'pose hey? Way you takes things s'pose or looks at things, however way you put it. No, don't bodder. Dey call me now to go da work, I'd go to work, if dey don't well same to me, don't bodder me like dat.

A second coping mechanism which may have ensured the health of these women was their lasting friendship networks. When the cod fishery was still strong, the women worked closely together at the plant -- sometimes literally shoulder to shoulder at the wash tubs. During my interviews with them, they talked fondly about the many close friendships they had at the fish plant. They recalled having fun while they worked over the wash tubs, during

breaks, and as they walked together to and from the plant. The plant, then, was not only a place of employment, but also an important place for socializing and having fun:

...when you're working in da fish plant with your friends well you're workin' and you're also havin' fun along with it, talkin', and chattin' all it is ... [this was] good because da day used to go fast.

Despite the closure of the plant, most of the women actively maintain their friendships -- especially during the summer months when the community and airstrip gravel roads are clear (of snow) and they can walk together. In a community with few social outlets, walking together (in pairs or in larger groups) is a highly social activity:

Almost every evenin' we walk down to da airstrip and back hey ... Two or three me old friends we used to work with, chattin', laughin' and goin', I loved it, can't wait for da spring to come back again.

... I used to go fer a walk, walk around with me buddies, friends I, buddies I call 'em, but friends hey, walk around with 'em ...

The almost daily activity of walking to and from the airstrip (approximately 3 km) may help to explain the good physical health of these women. According to Canada's Physical Activity Guide, walking is an excellent form of exercise and just 60 minutes of light walking per day can help to maintain and improve one's health.

In addition to walking, these women also fill their time during the summer months by picking wild berries such as bakeapples (or cloudberry), blackberries, and partridge (or red) berries:

Oh summer time, when ya wouldn't be workin' in da plant, like I said you'd go to work in your own work and most often you go off and look for berries ... Dat's what I used to do ...

... feels nice to get away and pick berries.

Berry picking not only provides healthy physical activity (as it requires walking, and sometimes hiking, over large distances, bending and stretching), but berries are a valuable source of nutrients as well. For example, bakeapples (which are abundant in Black Tickle) provide as much vitamin C as oranges! The physical activity of berry picking combined with the health promoting nutrients of wild berries may help to explain the good health of these women. Native berries are also an important food supplement for many low-income families and provide cash income for those who sell them to a buyer who brings them back to Newfoundland.

Throughout the year, however, housework seems to be the main activity which keeps these women active and occupied:

Well eh, when da plant closed down, I couldn't get at it, well den I never eh, dat's all I could do den, you know, scrubbin' and washin' and stuff like dat. And cookin' in da, in da house, dat's all. Keepin' meself busy in da house, luggin' a few turn of water, stuff like dat. Dat's da way I used to be.

... I got da scrub da, mops up da house twice a day.

Again, mopping the floor, and other housework, is another excellent form of health promoting physical activity. Yet, the organization of housework has changed as some of the women now space their chores over a longer period of time to ensure that they stay active and busy throughout the day:

You jus' went from one day to da next, you wasn't always in a rear or tear. You was, if you done your work you was able to take your time. I do dis da s'morning and den I'll wait 'til after dinner do da rest of it. But before you'd have to try and get it all done da one time, you know. But now you can take ya time and do it ... But one time you'd try da, used da have to do it all d'gedder like, hey?

Some women also spend their spare time caring for grandchildren or working on various craft projects:

... goin' with da youngsters, goin' around with da grandchildren, chasin' dem around, dat's it ... dat's all ya could do.

Jus' fiddling around at little ol' tings around da house, like knittin' or sewing or someting like dat, well I never used to do dat much at dat time 'cause I'd be workin' and busy and everyt'ing, now I fill in dat time with dat ... dere's nothing much really you can do around here in da summer, you know, it's only like, you know, you do a bit of knitting, a bit of sewing, or go for a walk or, you know, take time probably with your children ...

... Jus' sit down and go nettin', sewin', stuff like dat.

Caring for children requires creativity and energy, thereby possibly providing physical and mental stimulation. Also, engaging in craft projects is an excellent way to channel unused energy as it requires considerable time and patience, as well as provides a challenge and personal satisfaction. These activities may help to ensure the “mental fitness” of participants.

Finally, an unshaken faith in God also helped many of these women through difficult times during the cod moratorium. Rather than blaming God for “allowing” the cod fishery to die, as one might suspect in trying times, many participants reported attending church as regularly today as they did before the fishery collapse and some actually reported attending more:

I attend church da same, I believe in church, I believe in goin' to church, I don't go to church for da priest, I don't go dere for anybody like dat, I go dere because I wanna go dere, you know, no, I never give up church any more ...

For one plant worker, the suggestion that one's faith in God could change because of the closure of the fishery was ridiculous because, as she put it, “*God didn't do it!*” A second participant felt that faith in God was necessary to find the strength to carry on:

No, if you're goin' to go to church, if you believes in God enough you'll go to church, it don't make no difference if no fish or lots of fish, you know, you can't, dat's one ting you can't throw down maid is your belief, you got to believe in somet'ing cause if you don't believe, if you don't believe in God or in da Church you're nothing. And dat's what gives you da strength and da

will power to go on.

It was surprising that nearly all of the senior women required prompting for the question pertaining to personal coping strategies (PCS). For example, when I asked them to tell me about some of the things they did on a daily basis to help them deal with the cod moratorium, they casually responded: "... *I wouldn't have a clue*", "...*I don't know if I done anything*", and "... *No [I didn't do anything], not dat I know of.*" For one woman, the answer was simple, "*Lots of t'ings we done, we used to keep goin'.*" Yet, all of the women had discussed a number of things they did during the summer months when they were not working. When I asked them about these activities, they agreed that they had helped them to deal with the lack of work in the community. This is significant because it suggests that these women are not accustomed to thinking of their actions as "coping strategies" – that these life sustaining activities and routines come as natural to them as breathing.

Although all of these women described coping mechanisms, one participant nonetheless reported being less happy and more worried today than in the past -- something she attributed directly to a lack of work and money, stemming from the cod moratorium:

It means you wasn't livin' cause ya had no money, ya had nothin' to live fer, ya never had no money of ya own, couldn't get nothin'. Oh we lived cause [spouse] had money, we had lots of groceries and everything like dat, but I couldn't get nothin'.

It is interesting that the community key informant believes that many of these senior women are faring much worse since the moratorium. In fact, she believes that they are "suffering in silence" and that without good nurses and medication, there would probably be more suicides in Black Tickle:

No, I don't think they've done okay, I think they've learned to exist, I think they've learned to quietly worry ... I can think of at least six women in this community I think who are probably close to nervous break-downs or have had them.

One of the things contributing to their stress, she argued, is their financial dependency upon their husbands:

... in the day when the fishery was workin' well, there was a sense here that women earned their own income ... When the moratorium funding package was ending, I saw many of them really worrying a lot about how they were gonna make their own money matters meet, like and that's a hard concern, that's a hard concern for somebody's who's had their own money since they settled down with their families ... and if they don't have this money, if you've lost this money and you can't get back to work [then] the woman has to go to the man, imagine what it would be like to go to your husband and ask, "can I have five dollars to go and buy sanitary napkins?" and how degrading that'd be to you ... That's the kinda thing I saw, witnessed with a lot of people here. You know when they had to grobble to a husband for some money to go buy lady products or to buy a gift for a family member or to buy the children or grandchildren cans of drink, now that was pretty demeaning ...

The observation by the community informant that the senior women are faring worse since the cod moratorium contrasts with those of the health informant and the self-perceptions of the plant workers themselves. While it is difficult to explain this contradiction, at least two explanations can be posited. First, it may be that the community informant is aware of at least one family struggling with anxiety and periodic depression, which she may have generalized to all the senior women displaced by the cod moratorium. Second, perhaps this informant is projecting somewhat about how she would feel if she suddenly became financially dependent upon her husband, as many women fish plant workers had. Alternatively, it could be that the more senior women, many of whom had worked in the fishery for years without receiving any income of their own, have built up important life skills or coping mechanisms which may protect them now that the fishery has been closed. The experience of financial poverty may

be different for younger women who do not have the same life experiences and skills as the senior women and, thus, we might expect a different, more negative reaction from younger displaced fish plant workers. The community informant, then, may be surmising about possible impacts from the perspective of young, less adapted, plant workers. This will be discussed again in Chapter Seven.

5.3 Family Dynamics and Family Coping Strategies (FCS)

I was also interested to learn whether the cod moratorium, and the subsequent declining incomes, affected family dynamics, or how family members get along with each other. Despite increasing financial stress, few senior plant workers reported any significant change in how family members interacted with each other since the cod moratorium:

Our family didn't make no difference, we're only da same now as we always was. Didn't make no difference, if I, if I had a thousand dollars, if I had a million dollars, it never made no difference den if I never had a cent. We're only da same now as we was all da time, cause money, money is not everything.

This is significant because the health informant felt that those women with family around them seemed to cope better with the cod moratorium than those without this important source of support.

Although several of the participants had children at home, only one reported increased tension in the house; however, she was adamant that there was no arguing or fighting. According to this participant, the tension stemmed from having little money with which to buy things for the children:

Oh dere was some tension but here in dis house was some tension, I guess some tension is in any household, you know, when you're losin' and you're droppin' down and everything like dat but da tension was, it all had to do with children, it had to do with children, well da first thing you say "well, you know, dat's shockin' something shockin'", I can't have dis for dis child dis year

for Christmas, I can't have dat, I can't buy what she really need," sometimes you know grocery bill we jus' can't, we jus' got to amount ourselves to a lower, to a lower grocery list, like you know, den what you would normally have. So you know apart from dat everything else went okay, I mean to say we're still get along okay and everything, but no fightin', no arguing like dat, you know, or mom would say, "no strife breedin'", but none of dat. Oh no we get along pretty good.

As mentioned earlier, the community informant believes that the senior plant workers are "suffering in silence." This, she argued, is having a detrimental impact upon their families as their grown children must now care for them. This informant explained that the emotional state of these women:

Has affected some families, I can think of several different families that must be stretched to the max as care givers. I can think of, I can think of one or two very good, very caring adult daughters and sons who I think have been very good to their parents and it's just amazing that they have not fallen themselves. And they still manage to get up and go on and meet a new day, raise families, be wives, be husbands, go to work, must be hard, must be hard.

In addition to this stress the community informant also talked about how the insufficient numbers of jobs on winter make-work projects have been causing division within the families of some of these senior women. As not everyone in the community can obtain work on these projects because of the limited government funding, it is not uncommon for there to be stress or tension within some households pertaining to who will receive the limited positions. In multi-generational homes, which are common in Black Tickle, choosing one person over another can create tension as everyone equally requires the hours to qualify for EI for the winter.

Another part of family dynamics is the issue of family roles -- in particular, I was curious as to whether the plant workers had engaged in any new activities after the cod moratorium in order to fill time or provide a challenge. Although few senior women adopted

new roles, it was interesting to learn that many of them reported that their spouses had become more supportive in the home! For example, one of the women talked about how her displaced husband became more involved with child care:

... well time we get [the children] in bed and everything, it'll be probably eight, I'd go 'til about nine-thirty den he'll go from dat den 'til about ten-thirty or eleven, and den, but we'll be all home for da night ... [But] when he was fishin', well he never used to have dat much time, he'd be up and gone by four o'clock in da morning, he wouldn't get home, not to stay around da house 'til one in da, in da morning ...

and with cooking:

Oh he used to, he didn't mind cooking up some times ... but da most thing he used to like cookin' is like in da evening, like you know, cook evening lunches ... He didn't like much in da daytime, he like to be on da go like in da daytime, but den in da evening time he wouldn't bother a 'tall he jus' cook up ...

Similarly, other women told me that their husbands are now helping them with the dishes and with cooking:

... he never used to did, never did help me in da house but he 'cause he was busy all time fishin'. But since now dat's all closed down, he, yeah he's changed, he helps me more ... Around da house ... Like doin' dishes ... Cook sometimes ... S'pose he was busy, fishin' all da time, perhaps dat's what it was, "left da dishes, why couldn't you have da dishes done, not da man's place, dat's da woman's place", "bye", I said, "one dose days you'd see if it'd be a man's place or no", well he'd change after awhile, he does dishes, sweeps up, he even cooks.

The question relating to family coping strategies (FCS) sparked a similar reaction as the one pertaining to PCS; that is, the women were unsure of what I was asking and how to respond. A majority of the senior plant workers felt that their families did not do anything different after the cod moratorium -- that things remained largely the same. However, for one woman, the sharing of child care responsibilities was beneficial to everyone:

... well dat really helped, like you know, sharing da evenings off, like you know, you share half and half because it'd give me a bit of time to be by

meself like you know away from [the children] and dat ... but den it give him da time I guess to bond with [the children] ...

Other women talked about how simply living together, sharing things with each other, and helping each other with work, helped the family as a whole to cope with the financial difficulties resulting from the moratorium:

... [we] worked togeter I guess, dat's all and lived togeter, dat's all I know ... share tings togeter and give one 'nudder everyting ...

He helps me out in da house and I helps he sometimes I goes out and get water, helps 'en get da oil ...

5.4 Summary/Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined how the personal lives of the senior women fish plant workers and their families have been impacted by the cod moratorium, as perceived by the women themselves as well as by two key informants. According to the senior women, the cod moratorium has had a definite negative impact upon their personal income -- which has steadily decreased with both government compensation (i.e., NCARP and TAGS) and make-work programs -- leaving them increasingly dependent upon their husbands for financial support.

However, these women have protected their health and identities through effective coping strategies which have kept them active and by adopting an attitude of acceptance towards their situation. A health key informant supported the self-perceptions of these women and attributed their attitude of acceptance to their limited formal education and experience of the outside world. However, in my interview with a community leader, an entirely different picture was painted of these women -- she saw them as suffering in silence because of their inescapable financial dependence upon their husbands.

Family income also steadily declined along with the personal income of the senior women. Many fishermen have seen their incomes drastically reduced by the cod moratorium as well. The result is that, overall, there is much less money circulating within the family and, thus, parents are having to budget very carefully just to make ends meet. These senior women are very concerned that their children and grandchildren are often doing without because of the lowered family incomes.

Despite these financial difficulties, the women report that their family members are getting along as well today as they always did. However, the community informant felt that the grown children in these families are being negatively impacted by having to care for their worried and, in some cases, depressed mothers. In the next chapter, I will discuss how the community of Black Tickle has been affected by the cod moratorium and present the plant workers' dream for the future.

Chapter Six: “I Never Seen So Much Drinkin’ in Me Life Goin’ On Until Now”: The Impact of the Cod Moratorium Upon the Community of Black Tickle and Visions for the Future

... I tink in dat, dey, like drinkin’ and stuff, I tink dey’re doin’ more now den dey ever did in deir lives ... I don’t know why but, you might say every night and every day dey’re on dat, drinkin’ problem ... I never seen so much drinkin’ in me life goin’ on until now.

6.0 Introduction and Chapter Outline

In this chapter, the findings relating to how the closure of the cod fishery may have affected the community of Black Tickle, the third research objective outlined in Chapter Two, will be presented. Specifically, I was interested in whether the cod moratorium has affected such aspects of community life as community spirit, social issues, leadership, and services. However, I did not wish to merely document the impacts; I also wanted to incorporate action into my research. To this end, I sought to engage the women plant workers in a group meeting to discuss (1) their dream, or vision, for the future of Black Tickle, (2) their ideas for alternative forms of employment and a list of local resources and strengths, and (3) the barriers impeding the dream and what is needed to make it happen. Thus, in this chapter, I will present some of the many creative ideas expressed by the women in a focus group that was attended by five of the seven women and that lasted about two-and-a-half hours. Finally, I will discuss what became of the second research goal outlined in Chapter Two -- to create a women’s self-help group.

6.1 Community Dynamics and Social Issues

To gain a sense of the community dynamics since the cod moratorium, plant workers were asked to comment upon the strength of community spirit and the occurrence of certain social issues. “Community spirit” was defined as people’s willingness to initiate or

participate in communal activities or events which draws everyone together in friendship. Most of the plant workers felt that there are definitely fewer social activities (e.g. cards, darts, dances) in Black Tickle today than there were just a few years ago when the lounge was still open. This lounge opened in 1994, just two years after the closure of the fishery, and only survived until about 1998. The women attributed its closure to the end of the TAGS program -- which meant that people had less money, not only to buy beer or liquor, but also to participate in social activities:

... no money, you had to close it down ... dere was no money comin' dere, people had no money to go dere, you couldn't have no card game, couldn't have no dance, no nothin', people had no money to go to nothin', dey only had enough money to survive, dat was it, dat was it.

... everybody's alike hey bye, only a small scale of money.

According to the plant workers, the local lounge offered many social activities and events which provided, at least for some, a diversion from everyday life and an opportunity for friends to gather together again:

Well dat, dat was good when dat was goin' ahead 'cause you used to go out dere to card game once a week, twice a week and den darts, women league and da men league once or twice a week. We was enjoyin' all dat see ...

Now that the club is closed, these activities happen very infrequently and when they do, some people are still unable to afford them:

In card games, dances stuff like dat, a lot of change, cause dey never has none dat 'ere not now, dey might have a card game now maybe once a month, not likely ... Cause when dey had da card games, you was havin' a game, you was havin' fun, you was goin' out enjoyin' yourself, like a dance. None of dat now. You can't get to a card game 'cause dere's none to go to and any, any time, any card game go to, you still can't get to 'en you haven't got the means to go hey? ... cause you got to put [your money] in something else, hey?

According to one senior woman, when the lounge closed, social activities dropped -- as did activity in general:

When all dat closed down, activity went down. Dat's how I finds it. 'Cause no, no sports is for nobody. Like cards or bingo or darts nothing like dat not now ... Everything dropped over and one thing drop out all, like seemed like all dropped one time. Dat's what it seemed like.

Related to this, some women felt that fundraising activities in Black Tickle have also decreased in recent years:

... every now again you [used to] hear tell of someone raisin' money for dis little one to go away or, or rasin' money for, for someone da dey needs something or whatever right, but, you never hears talk of dat now ...

Before now see bye dey used to have handmade stuff up on auctions, get people to make stuff, put on auction, make, raise money for school or for some 'in like dat, but dey don't have none of dat now, seem like see no money in it, not much money on it see bye.

Again, this relates to the fact that many people in Black Tickle no longer have the extra money to either make and donate or buy things at auctions, bake sales and other fundraising activities:

And people don't, don't, I don't know, can't go to everything ... Is no work and lot of people only jus' livin' hand to mouth dat's what I calls it. Perhaps dat's da reason dey don't have nothin' on da go.

To determine whether the cod moratorium has led to changes in the social fabric of Black Tickle, participants were asked to comment upon the occurrence and nature of certain social issues, including alcohol use/abuse, family break-ups and violence, and crime.

Nearly all of the plant workers reported an increase in the amount of drinking in the community since the cod moratorium:

... dere's a lot more people you see em goin' around all day long drunks staggering around and you know sometimes dey're ready probably for a fight or anything around anywhere ...

Most often this increase was attributed to the lack of work in the community and to people having too much idle time on their hands:

... dere's no work, dere's nothing to do, dat's what got da people made like dey are, dey had nothin' to do, dey only jus' drink for pass time, dey had nothin' to do, dey had nowhere to go, dey had no fish to go at, dey had nothin' to work at, so dey had to drink fer a bit of pass time, dey had nothin' to, dat's what got da people like dey is 'ere now.

However, the rise in drinking was also attributed to the increased accessibility of alcohol since the cod moratorium. Prior to the opening of the lounge in 1994, people had to travel on ski-doo or in boat to neighbouring communities such as Cartwright (100 kilometres to the north) or Norman's Bay (75 kilometres to the south) in order to purchase beer and liquor. Although alcohol became more accessible with the lounge, drinking was still, to some extent, controlled because it was restricted to the lounge, which only operated from about 7 pm to midnight:

... dere used to be alcohol 'ere yes, but used to be in da club, now be only in dis club for a certain time of da day, like never used to open 'til seven I tink it was, from seven to twelve, or one you know and be closed so you can't get no more today ...

Since the closure of the lounge in 1998 -- which was attributed to the lack of money to keep it open (as TAGS also ended that same year) -- beer has become available in the two general stores and can be purchased any time during store hours (and sometimes after hours) and taken home:

But now where it's in stores you can go and buy it any hour of da day or any hour of da night 'til probably twelve, one o'clock so 'tis more freely to get and dere's more alcohol, dere is more people drinkin' in dis community den what it used to be.

... now see dey haven't got to leave da harbour only jus' go to da store and get it like if dey was gettin' a can of drink ...

Of the few women reporting no change in the amount of drinking in the community, one nonetheless felt that drinking is a problem because it causes trouble in public places, such as on the roads:

A lot of trouble goin' around you know makin' trouble, strife breedin', stuff like dat hey, dat's what makes trouble. If dey mind to have da liquor stay in deir own carner, well nothin' to it hey? Dat's what's makin' trouble. Gettin' drunk and goin' out on da road. On da ski-dooos, beatin' em up and stuff ...

The health informant also noticed a lot more drinking in the community today than when the fishery was still strong:

... my impression was there wasn't hardly any drinking here 10 years ago, so, and certainly if you go to a dance you wouldn't see people drinking.

She felt that the increased drinking was compounded by the establishment of the local lounge/bar, which increased the accessibility of alcohol to a wider range of people:

I noticed a lot more drinking, once the club came and certainly um I think that kinda continued on ... when I first come here there hardly seemed to be any women that ever drank, and, and not that many men. But I think after the club opened, there was a definite increase um drinking by men and more women drinking, and I don't think even after the club closed that didn't stop 'cause you can buy beer at the store.

The plant workers generally agreed that there was more drinking in the community after the closure of the cod fishery. However, some saw the lounge as a means of controlling the drinking because the alcohol was only available during certain hours of the day or night and could not be brought home. As bad as the lounge was in making alcohol more available in the community, drinking seems to be worse now because it can be purchased at a local store anytime during the day or night and brought home for consumption.

The health informant also noticed that men have been more psychologically distressed by the cod moratorium than the women – evidenced by their increased use of the clinic:

... when I, when I look at the changes that I noticed after da cod moratorium I saw a lot more anxiety in men ... and not so much in women, I don't feel like there was such a big change in women ... men were more worried ... and there was men comin' in very anxious and um probably a bit depressed and that kinda thing ...

Although poverty likely contributed to the anxiety and depression in men, she attributed the change primarily to the loss of role:

But men, I mean they still hunt and fish, but it's not, they're not the provider anymore because they're not bringing in money ...

Whereas women enjoyed attending school -- the ABE program that was offered in the early years of the moratorium and kept busy in their traditional roles:

... I think women still had their traditional role as mothers and looking after the house and doin' all those things that still made them feel very much an important person.

The community informant also observed that men with a lot of idle time on their hands are now drinking more than ever. Before the moratorium they:

... wouldda had your, you know, your weekend bender or you wouldda had your, you know, your time in Christmas and in January and you'd have your toot in February and whatever but like once March came in you knew you had to be getting ready and if you were gonna spend all your time on the bottle you wouldn't be ready and you would be left behind ... And so, you know, it wasn't good for the men to see that much time on their hands ...

In some cases, she argued, the men are drinking away all of the money, leaving little, if any, to the women to buy food and other things needed for the family:

... it's just nothing to hear a different mother say, "well I can't get this or this for my son or my daughter because um Harry went and took it all and drank it last night, sold it all, I don't have anything now" ...

The community informant had also noticed that since the cod moratorium, Black Tickle has had its first provable suicide -- which she attributes directly to the closure of the cod fishery:

... I would tend to think and I may be wrong but I tend to think that if we never had to have the fishery collapse that that man may be alive and happy today.

It is interesting that this suicide victim was a male and, thus, she agrees with the health informant that men are being negatively affected by the cod moratorium, and that this is due to the loss of their traditional “breadwinner” role:

... when somebody has, especially a male, has a way of life and has an identity as a breadwinner, as the man who brings home all the bacon and someone says, “well you can’t bring home any more bacon now,” you know it makes, it makes for some awful changes ...

A second social issue discussed was family violence; recall from the review provided in Chapter Two that, early in the moratorium, there were concerns about possible increases in family violence. However, less than half of the senior plant workers in this study reported a change in the amount of family violence in Black Tickle since the closure of the fishery:

Oh, it’s some, I never ever heard family violence in dis community before but in da past couple three years dere is some, now not no big pile like you know not like in some places but den again dis community is only a small community, and den probably some of dis family violence is done is done inside closed doors and nobody knows nothing about it, you know, but it’s still going on ...

Well you hear more talk of it. Every now and a’gin you hear tell of someone flared up or, someone hit someone or, dey had to scrabble to take da youngsters out of da house or, you know, you had to jump in more less help because da children is always da ones dat gets da worse end of dat.

When family violence was discussed, stress over money (stemming from the closure of the fishery) was partially blamed for the problem:

I guess dat’s a lot of it like you don’t have, you know, lot of stress because if you don’t have da money and dat you, you stressed out, you know, over things and den more time on your hands nothing to fill it, so you know den one will get dis ... crossed over to another and all of a sudden is into dis argument and you knows what an argument comes to, it comes to nothing but abuse, dat’s how I see it.

However, the increased drinking in the community family violence was most often linked with the increased family violence:

... dat's only because too much, too much alcohol around 'ere, flies to da people, and dey gets, overcomes 'em and dey gets upset and dey jus' can't control deirself ..

... da violence comes out when da alcohol is involved. But when, when dey got no alcohol, eh dey're a different people altogether, you know and, and not only me sees dat, because even da younger ones is sayin', "well only for da alcohol you wouldn't be like it", you know or dey says, "dat's da bottle talkin'", you know ...

The health informant also described how the increased drinking in Black Tickle has led to other social ills, notably violence, taking place at the club and also in people's homes between spouses:

And with that, with that drinking came an increase in violence. And not only just um, um spouse abuse, I, I think there has, there was some before and I did see some before, but there seems to have been an increase in spouse abuse and but also just violence in the form of, there for a while when the club was open, seemed like there'd be a fight every Saturday night. Things were gettin' a little out of hand, whereas before I never saw that, not amongst the Black Tickle people ...

Whereas:

... when I first come there was fights about things like who went first in the line-up at the fish plant, and whether they were local people or whether they were people from the Straits. So it might be Black Tickle tryin' to stand their ground.

According to this informant, women between the ages of about 20 and 35 have been most affected by the increased spousal abuse; although she has observed a greater psychological impact upon men, women are, nonetheless, indirectly affected because:

... they're the ones that have to handle the spouse abuse ... So that's kinda comin' back on 'em, in that way. And they're the ones that have had to handle the alcoholism and they're also the ones that have to take charge and feed the children. And you know of, there's been cases where um, the husband's

drinking away all the welfare money, and then they've got to come up with food, and so, while there was the TAGS money around, things I think were doing a bit better ... And so the women could still function while they were gettin', you know, like they could look after their family, so.

This is evident by the fact that the women she has seen suffering from anxiety and depression were often the victims of spousal abuse:

Well those sort of things are more often were related to spouse abuse and, and with the men, I think you could directly attribute that to the cod moratorium.

The increased drinking and family violence, she argued, both stem from the poverty arising from the cod moratorium:

... I think probably both are related to the frustration of living in poverty and the pressure that puts upon people and certainly drinking sort of um lessens ya inhibitions I guess.

The health informant noted important negative health consequences stemming from this poverty. Prior to the cod moratorium, she saw people at the clinic mainly during the winter months and treated them primarily for general maintenance type ailments:

... when I first come to Black Tickle I found everybody very busy in the summer, hardly ever used to see anybody in the clinic, local people and um I was, there was a bit more of in the winter time, winter months, flues, colds um just general maintenance ...

However, she has since observed a number of changes in the physical health of women who are presently in their 40's. For example, she has noticed that some of them have developed weight problems and this has led to other, more serious and enduring, health issues such as diabetes:

... I guess physically quite a few of em have weight problems. And the problems we've had, like gall bladder problems, um, starting to see a few 'em gettin' diabetes, you know high blood pressure.

This informant blames the weight gain on two evils – inactivity, because Black Tickle has no suitable facility in which to exercise, and diet, which is being negatively affected by poverty:

... because some people they very much ... don't have money to buy food, they're usin', and those people might use a lot of wild meat, which is fine 'cause that's nutritious and low fat generally speaking, but they might be usin' other cheap things like bologna and um, and bread and, and like a [chocolate] bar costs a dollar and its got 400 calories which is like a small meal, using those sort of things, fill ya up so.

She also noticed that things really began to deteriorate after TAGS ended in 1998 -- and it was at this time that the lounge closed and beer became available in local stores.

Many of the women plant workers also reported an increase in the number of family break-ups in the community:

...is more break-ups den used to be, I have never hardly heard, you know, probably da odd one break up before, but eh I'm tellin' ya dat's gettin' to be a ting too.

While this increase was attributed to stress over money, it was mostly attributed to the increase in drinking:

Lot more den when I was growin', when I was married first ... dat's only because too much, too much alcohol around 'ere ... alcohol do's dat, separates deir families and gives 'em lot of problems, too much alcohol.

The health informant agreed and argued that with alcohol and spousal abuse came an increase in family break-ups. She explained that when she first came to Black Tickle prior to the moratorium, she hardly ever witnessed families breaking up or heard of partners having affairs:

... relationships were sort of fairly traditional at least. And people were very faithful ... first couple of years, three years I was in Black Tickle I never heard of anyone breaking up or havin' a different partner or seein' you know that kinda thing, when I first come here.

However, since the cod moratorium:

... there's been more disruption in the family, more um, changing of partners and that kinda thing ... and there's more family break-up ...

With an increase in the changing of partners, there has been a parallel increase in the number of sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) -- which were rarely seen in Black Tickle when the cod fishery was still strong. She sees this as being related to a change in the community's moral code:

... [It] seemed to me that there used to be a stronger moral code ... there definitely seemed to be a tighter family structure in that I never used to hear of anybody havin' affairs or that kind a thing.

It is interesting that the community informant observed that families in general grew in strength and supported each other after the collapse of the cod fishery. While this contradicts reports of increased family break-ups and disruption, it is important to keep to mind that the increases may be as small as one or two families.

With regards to crimes other than family violence, fewer than half of the women felt that there has been an increase since the moratorium. However, when it was mentioned, drinking was the only explanation provided:

... Dey got nothin' to do only jus', only jus' drink all day long ... dat's what it is, drinkin' too much with families around 'ere now.

This participant felt that the type of crime had mostly to do with hunting and

... killin' birds and stuff like dat with no license and all dat kind of stuff, birds and rabbits and partridges, and caribou and all dat kind of stuff ... and don't care if dey got a license or not. People jus' jumps up and goes on I guess jus' for somethin' to do.

It is important to note that this illegal hunting may be necessary for some low-income families for survival. It may also be men's attempt to regain their breadwinner role in the family and

to assert their native rights.

6.2 Community Structure and Community Coping Strategies (CCS)

To examine community structure, participants were asked to comment upon community leadership and services. Whereas many communities and towns in the province are governed by Town Councils, the community of Black Tickle is led by a Local Service District (LSD) -- which essentially means less government funding and political power. The only services, then, are those deemed necessary -- health, education, general grocery stores, an airport, a marine service, a local dump, and gravel roads.

The majority of the women felt that the members of the Local Service District (LSD) are working harder and having more to say to try to get things for the community since the moratorium. For example, prior to the reopening of the plant during the summer of 2000, LSD members and other leaders had to work hard for many years to find an operator:

... [There is] more goin' on now to try and help da people in Black Tickle den 'tis before ... Dey're tryin' to help da people out hey, tryin' to get da plant opened, dat's what dey're tryin' to do I s'pose, hey, tryin' to help da people out in Black Tickle, tryin' get da plant open and stuff. Tryin' to make, get work out dere for all da women and men fer out dere in da plant to get deir unemployment.

However, some women expressed grave concerns regarding the tendency of the present LSD members to keep information arising from their dealings with the government to themselves:

... dey never did da ones who's on da committee, dey go out and have a meeting, I thought when dey goes out fer a meeting whoever dey is, how many dey is, come back and have a meeting fer da community back 'ere, let da people know but never did ... Dey go out and have deir talk and say whatever dey're gonna say, come back, tink dey call a meeting den fer da community around 'ere to know what's goin' ahead, pass on and go on and never know what's goin' ahead no more den if you never heard tell of it. I don't call dat

right.

Even when there are community meetings, they tend to be geared towards fishermen rather than women:

I knows dey used to go out and have meetin 's, dey never had no meetin 's not 'ere not for people around here ... goes out and haves meetin 's comes in and we don 't know nothin ' about it, don 't know what happened. Keeps deir meetin 's to deirselves I s 'pose dey must. Knows dey haves a scatterin ' meetin ' 'ere jus ' only fer da fisherman, and I guess fer deirselves. (Bold added)

However, these women are interested in the future of the fishery and they want to be kept informed of any news concerning the fish plant:

I 'd be some interested about dat, about da plant, fishin '. I knows I wouldn 't keep clear not of a meetin ', not fer work, no way I 'd be dere ... But I can 't understand what dey 're sayin ' but, but I 'd be dere ... you want 's learnin ' fer dat, I haven 't got none see.

Another woman was concerned that Black Tickle does not have a deep well from which to draw new leaders:

... when it comes to writtin ' letters or makin ' long distance phone calls or even gettin ' on da plane and goin ' such a place, no dey 're not willing to do it. Dey 're not, dey backs out.

She believes that the reason for this lack of leadership lies in the community's past relationship with the government; many people are discouraged by past negative experiences with certain government officials and, thus, they are reluctant to join a fight that they feel they cannot win:

When dey comes to fightin ' da government I mean you gotta fight like da devil bye to try and get somethin ' from dem, and I don 't tink dere 's, dere 's a lot of people 'ere dat won 't do dat, dey 'd ratter do without ... because dey 've been said no to so often I guess. Probably, I knows I don 't think I 'd be able da keep it up eider. if you goes and asks da government so many times and dey keeps sayin ' 'no ' why go back and get 'no ' again?

This observation alludes to the ongoing patriarchal attitude of the provincial government to the people of Black Tickle, and may help to explain the “dat’s all you can do” attitude of several of the plant workers. When community lobbying efforts constantly fail, it is not difficult to imagine that an attitude of acceptance will develop.

Regarding whether these women see themselves as capable of holding leadership positions, one plant worker downplayed her vast informal experience and discounted herself because she felt that she did not have the formal education she thought was necessary:

I knows I can't because I don't, I don't know how da go ahead, go at it, I haven't got enough brains for dat kinda stuff... I'd do anything anybody ask me to do but, like I said, I haven't got much experience to do much, do much hey bye?

Another plant worker rejected the idea of becoming personally involved in community leadership because of the criticism that often goes along with it from the general public:

... for me eh I, I wouldn't take it on, I wouldn't, I wouldn't take on da community, not da try to run or look after, I wouldn't be able to do it. But you don't know what, what you're sticking your neck into when you sticks your neck into something like dat ... always someone got a fault with ya ...

Few senior women reported a noticeable change in the level of community services since the cod moratorium, and when it was mentioned, participants did not generally agree on them. For example, whereas one participant talked about a decline in the level of service of a local grocery store, another participant felt that the establishment of a second grocery/general store has increased people’s independence and choice:

Well da services in da stores I mean is a bit better I s'pose because we got two stores now and a few years ago we only had da one. But now we got two and eh every week or every odder day dey haves stuff come, eh you don't have to depend on one store no more, you can go to da odder one, so dat makes a difference.

However, this same participant was concerned by the fact that priests rarely visit the community anymore and when they do come to celebrate special occasions, they do not stay long:

... da only time you do get a lot of people in da church is when da priest come ... [which is] Not very often if we had one Christmas, I don 't think we had 'ere one 'ere since. We might get one for Easter, we might, and he jus ' might jus ' come in overnight and go again, because dey 're short on priest now.

While there was little agreement amongst the women about the level of community services, almost everyone agreed that few people have left Black Tickle since the cod moratorium:

... dere 's not very many people is after leavin ' da community. And if dey did dey came back, dere 's not, dere 's not very many gone at all, only a scattered student gone away to go to school, but dat 's all.

The senior plant workers were able to come up with several reasons to explain why families remained in Black Tickle after the fishery closed. These reasons served as important community coping strategies which helped to keep many families strong and generally strengthened the community. According to one plant worker, people held fast to their belief that the fishery would one day return:

... s 'pose dey, dey got hopes, I s 'pose dey have hey, dey got too. For da hold on, da people da hold on ... I s 'pose dat 's da reason, if dey never had no hopes fer 'em to be hopin ' I s 'pose all hands leave hey, dey got to.

Another woman was confused by the question pertaining to families leaving the community; she rationalized that it did not make much sense to leave your house, which you own, to move somewhere where there is no home waiting for you on the other end:

Dat don 't make sense ... because you moves away you got no house, you got no place to live, government not gonna give ya no house, now you gotta, gotta, gotta apartment, where 's da money comin ' pay for ya apartment. You can 't get no work.

A third woman felt that it is better to be poor with family and friends around you than to be poor alone with no support:

If you moved out of 'ere, government still only gonna look after ya da same, at least 'ere you're in familiar surroundings, you got family and friends around ya and you can steal [from the wildlife officers] a scatterin' bird, salmon, trout, and fish. Out dere you can't do dat, you're jus' wastin' away ... 'Ere I can go and ask my neighbour for a trout or salmon or bird, if he has 'em and I know he's not gonna say "no". He's gonna give 'en to me and I can come home and make da biggest kind of meal on 'en.

A fourth woman summed it up nicely, I think, when she explained that people stayed despite the lack of work and growing poverty because of their love and loyalty to their home, Black Tickle:

Jus' like da place I guess, all I know, jus' like ol' Black Tickle ... Well like da old people say, "no place like home", well dat's our home, Black Tickle.

In general, the plant workers agreed that people seem to be carrying on with life the best they know how:

... dey're doin' da best way dey can, it's a struggle, you know, I guess it's a struggle for everyone, no matter where ya go, not only in Black Tickle but everywhere else, but anyway dey're makin' da best of it, dey're keepin' deir heads above water ... dey could be doin' better, I'm sure, but I guess dey could be doin' a lot worst too.

6.3 Healthy Community Changes

The community informant was able to discern several positive changes resulting from the closure of the fishery. For example, in the early years of the cod moratorium, she noticed that several families renovated their homes despite the fact that they had less disposable income:

You would think that in times of economic decline that those things would go down or that people would pack up and leave, but no it seemed like people dug in further and honed to it more. And it was then that like I saw people like build pieces on houses, I saw people renovate houses to improve and yet

they were doin' it with less, and I think that said a lot about people's spirit I think.

It also seemed that people came to value cod fish more after the moratorium, as well as a formal education. In the years of the fishery, children, especially boys, were not encouraged to continue formal education beyond what could be obtained in Black Tickle (i.e., Grade 9 until 1989). This was fostered, in part, by the parents who did not wish to send their children of about 15 years of age hundreds of miles away to attend high school in another community. There was also a general belief among parents that a formal education was not necessary; some parents were of the opinion that if they could make it in this world without a formal education, then so could their children:

... the average parent if they had grade 3, 4, and 5 they really did well. And so therefore they succeeded without it and why can't their children succeed just as well without it and then people in the fishery in the '80's made a good income and they were successful, they had everything ...

This was exacerbated by the Catholic nuns running the school at the time – for they did not wish the children to attend non-Catholic schools in the nearby communities of Cartwright and Charlottetown. However, since the collapse of the cod fishery, public opinion seems to have changed, and there is now a general sense that you need to complete at least high school:

... when the fishery collapsed, their way of life as they knew it, their future as they knew it, was going to be changing and people began to see that "well if I don't have some kind of an education I have nothing."

Nearly all of the women in this study participated in the Adult Basic Education (ABE) upgrading offered in the community as part of the federal government's response to the fishery closure. Despite the desirable social interaction it provided and the opportunity to learn basic concepts, few reported benefiting academically from the upgrading they received:

... I got a little bit out of it I s'pose, wasn't dat much but I mean you was outta da house anyways so ... Dat's one of da tings dat made it good ...

... I don't, I don't think I pick-up anything from it d'ough, but I jus' love goin' dere, jus' enjoyin' it ... All da women was dere ...

Oh I loved it, good ... I could count a little bit ... I can count up da, little bit but not very much but I can spell me own name ... loved it, loved to go to school. ... loved [it] to be longer ...

It seems that part of the problem for these senior women was that the language and text books were inappropriate for their grade level:

...[It] didn't make much difference to us I don't t'ink ... Didn't know what dey was tryin' to put thru 'em ... I never seen no sense to what dey was doin' over dere, couldn't get into it, dey had too high eh, high eh books over dere for us, dey had, dey had ten eleven, eleven twelve grades over dere, dey tryin' teach us, we was only six, five six grades.

A related obstacle for many was the large number of years they had been out of school:

I been outta school for so long up to den, it didn't seem not, you know, I really could get it, in, you know, I would take a longer amount of time and, I really, I think I really need one-on-one for a while, you know, to get right into it.

... didn't go to school for a long time, dat's all it t'was s'pose hey, never had me mind fer it ... [worked] right hard at it, like couldn't, I never got nothin' comin' out like, I don't know how it goes tell da God's truth. Couldn't done more, I give up ...

6.4 A Dream for Black Tickle

In an effort to engage the senior women in creative visioning for Black Tickle, a focus group meeting was held in which seven pre-planned questions were discussed. In their dream for Black Tickle, the plant workers envisioned the community “*back on its feet again, nice, bright and shiny!*” Since there are relatively few natural resources in Black Tickle outside of the fisheries, it is not surprising that their dream remained tied to the sea. Now that the groundfish plant has been converted into a shellfish plant and has been reopened to process

crab (with hopes of expanding into shrimp) the women were satisfied as long as the plant provides jobs: *"Shrimp or crab, anything at all as long as da plant is open."* The main objective was work, *"Lots of work. All day long and night long - 24 hours around da clock!"*, which they felt should be equally accessible to everyone in the community: *"When da plant is opened everyone should get on, get their share."* However, a tinge of nostalgia was painfully evident when one woman piped up and said that, in her dream, there would be *"lots of codfish like it was before"*, and another concluded that *"without da codfish, dere isn't much of anything else."*

Participants dreamt of new infrastructure that would promote individual and community health. Firstly, they envisioned a proper, and humane, water and sewer system. As outlined in Chapter Four, residents currently carry their water, which is highly contaminated with coliform and e-coli bacteria, to their homes in five gallon beef buckets and use an archaic system of honey buckets to discard their human wastes. In their dream, drinking water would be free of life-threatening bacteria and everyone would have functioning toilets. With a proper water supply, bathing after work would no longer be another chore: *"When you get off da plant, you should be able to come home and turn on da tap and get a shower or a bath."*

Secondly, the women imagined a cleaner and healthier community with a fenced-in dump site. Currently, the local dump lacks the proper fencing to hold the garbage inside. Thus, on windy days (of which there are nearly 365 of them!), there is nothing to prevent the garbage from blowing over the hill and back into the community, polluting it and the nearby berry picking grounds. Thus, participants felt that the pollution is having a definite impact upon residents' health, *"Dis is where all the sicknesses are coming from."* According to the

President of the Local Service District, the community has the necessary material, but there are two obstacles currently impeding the realization of this goal: there is no money for labour and another suitable dump site has not been identified.

In their dream, they also pictured an access road connecting Black Tickle with other coastal communities in southern Labrador via the newly constructed Trans Labrador Highway (TLH). For them, a road connection would not only bring important economic spin-offs, but it would also improve medical care, possibly save lives! Participants argued that, with road access, medical emergencies could be transported to neighbouring hospitals during bad weather when the emergency plane, the Medivac, is unable to fly. They envisioned more nurses and equipment at their clinic. While Black Tickle currently has only one nurse on call 24 hours a day, the clinic is supposed to have two. It was also surprising to learn from the women that x-rays were available on the freight boats that sailed the coast of Labrador back in the 1970's, but today residents must fly out to Goose Bay in order to receive this same service. Concerning the economic benefits, the group felt that a road connection would bring lowered food and fuel prices, made feasible because those things could then be trucked as opposed to being boated or flown in. This is a crucial point considering the low incomes of these women and their families.

Related to this, group participants also wished for a co-op store (something that the government talked about supporting years ago but was never acted upon). They felt that a co-op could deliver a greater variety of food at lower prices, "*half da time dere 's no fruits and no suitable food for diabetics*", as well as more household items and furniture.

Finally, participants imagined that a recreational centre would be a tremendous asset for the youth, as well as the general public, and promote the health of the community. You

may recall from Chapter Four that Black Tickle lacks a standard-sized gymnasium. Thus, in fine weather, school aged children often prefer to play sports outside while adults are restricted to walking the roads regardless of the weather. However, walking becomes practically impossible during the winter as there are few snow clearing services within the community and the weather is often too cold and harsh. Consequently, people's ability to exercise year-round is hindered, and this can have a detrimental impact upon health.

6.5 Alternatives for Employment and Local Human Resources

I was interested in the women's ideas for alternative forms of employment; specifically, what resources (physical or human) are available in Black Tickle outside of the fishery that could be utilized to create work. The immediate response was, "*We can do handicrafts!*" This was not surprising since many of these plant workers are known to be very skilled, traditional craftswomen, experienced in making everything from woolen mitts and socks to parkas and skin boots. Some of them have been making clothes for their families all of their lives. Further many have expanded into making quilts, doilies, table cloths, window toppers, sweaters, and plastic canvas. As one woman commented, "*If one person knows den dey can show others. Dat's how it works. Dat's all we're used to!*" Others in the community could be taught in a similar fashion and a craft association or enterprise could potentially create a lot of work, not to mention income, as quality craft products often fetch excellent prices.

The second idea enthusiastically discussed was an elder's home. These women envisioned a small building with three bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen and a living room. As one woman commented, "*Dis is a lot better den sending your people away!*" Such a project could create permanent employment for possibly five people (two shifts of two

caregivers and a maintenance worker). Although Black Tickle's population is relatively young, there are still a number of seniors who could benefit from such a development for several reasons: (1) currently, there are no apartments and few Labrador Housing units available, (2) seniors cannot be expected to carry water and fuel, or cut wood 30 kilometres away, and (3) seniors on fixed incomes often cannot afford both fuel and food. The women's deep respect and concern for their elders was very evident from their discussion.

Finally, participants recognized the economic potential of a local land-based resource that grows in great abundance during the summer: berries. One woman ecstatically exclaimed, "*[We] could make a fortune in berries!*" In August, bakeapples (cloud berries) grow abundantly upon the sphagnum peat bogs and blackberries grow as thick as black flies until late fall. Partridge (or red) berries do not fully ripen until about mid-to-late September but then adorn the landscape like billions of precious rubies. These berries could be utilized to create high-quality beverages and bakery products. For example, black berries make an excellent wine and bakeapples and partridge berries make delicious jams, pies, buns, squares, etc., that could be sold locally, regionally, and provincially.

When I asked these women to tell me about some of the strengths of Black Tickle, the first response I received was, "*We all get along good with each other. We all try to help each other!*" The solidarity and spirit of co-operation that is suggested in that one comment is unmistakable and is a definite community strength. Certainly, an ability to get along with, and to care for, each other greatly improves people's ability to work together to achieve local solutions to the challenges facing their community. Related to this is the fierce generosity of the people in Black Tickle, as one woman commented, "*If I had one slice of bread in da house, I'd offer it to someone who comes to da house and do without myself!*"

These women identified one other strength - the youth who are becoming increasingly formally educated. More young people are completing high school today and going on to pursue post-secondary education and training -- their voice and language of the modern world can do much to revitalize the community by complementing the traditional wisdom and experience of the elders.

The senior women felt that their role in shaping the future of Black Tickle is one of working together. Towards their dream, they felt they could "*make little things and sell it*" and organize their own card games to help raise money for the things that are important to them. They could also "*help da old people - dat's da most important thing!*", and go to church for strength and guidance "*dat'll help you!*".

They each have an important and, complementary, part to play in the revitalization of Black Tickle, and by working together and building on their strengths, their community could perhaps, once again, be "*back on its feet again, nice, bright and shiny!*"

6.6 Barriers and Needs

However, it will not be an easy journey as there are almost always barriers to be removed before any dream or goal can be realized. The first barrier to be recognized by the plant workers was the lack of money to get things started. For example, in order to make a craft operation viable, money is needed to purchase the necessary materials and, in an ideal situation, to either rent or build a facility for the workers. Secondly, a proper water and sewer system for the community would cost several million dollars. Thus, residents are told by their government that there is just not enough money to go around. Thirdly, few people expect that Black Tickle will ever be connected to the TLH because of the tremendous cost; the highway passes approximately 100 kilometres west of the Island of Ponds and is, therefore, considered

“unfeasible.” Finally, a recreational centre was started a few years ago as part of a winter make-work project but remains unfinished because of the lack of money to purchase the necessary materials.

The second barrier identified was the government. As one woman put it, “[*The*] *government don't seem to be interested in helping us!*” This observation may stem from a history of neglect from the government concerning many of Black Tickle’s pressing issues. For example, in the past, the government has avoided providing funding for a permanent solution to Black Tickle’s water problems, despite the fact that the people drink highly contaminated water and use unsanitary honey buckets on a daily basis.

Finally, the lack of codfish is a barrier to their dream of having, once again, a sustainable cod fishery. Although they now have a crab plant, it receives only a relatively small share of the regional quota and many fishermen in Black Tickle simply do not have the financial resources to invest in bigger boats -- necessary to harvest the crab offshore. In addition, there are fears that the crab will be over-fished as the codfish were as more fishermen participate in this fishery and new and competing processing plants pop up. In order to have a viable crab/shrimp fishery in Black Tickle, these women believe that they need bigger boats, a larger quota for the local plant, and co-operation from government officials.

6.7 Women’s Self-Help Group?

You may recall from Chapter Two that one of the goals of this research project was to facilitate information sharing and support amongst the participants by forming a women’s self-help group. This goal was based upon an assumption that the displaced plant workers are suffering and in need of a self-help group in order to cope with the negative impacts of the

cod moratorium and the closure of their fish plant. However, with the exception of personal and family income, these senior women reported relatively few negative impacts upon them personally or upon their families. In fact, the majority of these women have several effective personal coping strategies that have protected their health, identity, social networks and their faith in God. For those women who actively maintained their friendship networks, they were, in essence, practising self-help by walking and talking together, by having a laugh and by being *"jus' like sisters!"*

When I put the question of forming a women's group to them, all who were interested opted for a craft group. They were excited by the idea of being able to get together to make crafts, by learning from each other, and by the possibility of being able to supplement their income through the sale of those items. However, money to purchase the necessary materials was identified as a barrier. Up to now, a lack of time on my part has prevented me from meeting with these women to brainstorm potential supporters or funders. However, one avenue that could be explored over the next several months is collaborating with the Zonal Board's Strategic Opportunities Officer to identify existing craft businesses in the region or in the province. If a business requiring skilled craftspeople could be found, and is willing to subcontract out work, then it might be possible for these women to gain access to materials, work out of their own homes, and make money at the same time. Perhaps craft shops in the touristy communities of Red Bay and Battle Harbour could be contacted about contracting craft projects to the women in Black Tickle.

6.8 Summary/Conclusion

It would seem, then, that the community of Black Tickle has been severely impacted by the closure of its only industry -- the cod fishery. Women plant workers in this study reported a decline in community spirit and also argued that certain social problems have increased since the cod moratorium. A health care provider felt that the impacts have been especially potent amongst the younger generations (i.e., from about 20 to 35) where the constant stress and frustration of living in poverty has led to an increase in male drinking, spousal abuse and family break-ups within the community. Inactivity and consumption of unhealthy foods, stemming from poverty resulting from the moratorium, have led to weight gain and a number of consequent health issues such as diabetes, especially amongst some women who are in their 40's. She also found men to be more affected psychologically than women due to the loss of their role as the breadwinner. A community leader similarly reported increased drinking among men and argued that this, in turn, has negatively impacted dependent women and children.

In this chapter, I also documented the dream that these women have for their community -- their vision for the future, if you will. I have outlined their creative ideas about how Black Tickle could be revitalized; these ideas and goals, not surprisingly, stem from their unique cultural experiences and are, perhaps, realistic and reachable ones, given the appropriate community and governmental support. The strength of these women appears to derive from, in part, their relationships with each other, their ability to work with and care for each other. With the help of formally educated youth, Black Tickle's agenda for life-giving and sustaining economic and social infrastructure may become a reality. In the meantime,

perhaps a women's craft group could increase these women's economic independence, the primary area impacted by the closure of the cod fishery and the fish plant.

Chapter Seven: “Coming Full Circle!”: Emergent Themes and Interpretations of Findings

In our days, housework was women's work; we was reared up dis way. Dis is what we're used to! (Steering Committee Member)

7.0 Introduction and Chapter Outline

This chapter presents a formidable challenge for it is here that all the dangling ends must be pulled together to create a whole, moving picture of the lives of senior women fish plant workers in Black Tickle. In these final pages of this year-and-a-half long research project, I must organize the findings presented in Chapters Five and Six into a few, short descriptive themes; at the same time, I must reflect upon the previous literature discussed in Chapter Two and revisit the underlying theories outlined in Chapter Three. I must also offer my interpretations of the data and suggest future areas of study. Hopefully, these themes will make sense as you recall Chapter Four, a history of Labrador's Cod Fishery and a history of Black Tickle, respectively.

7.1 “Coming Full Circle!”

You may recall from Chapter Three that one of my beginning research assumptions was that the women plant workers have been negatively impacted by the closure of the cod fishery and the local processing plant. I derived this assumption from several points of reasoning. Firstly, my review of the literature (originating mainly from Newfoundland), which painted a largely negative picture of Newfoundland women's responses to the cod moratorium, suggested that the impacts would be greater considering the barriers of women in Labrador. Recall that in Robinson's (1994) study, the women were preoccupied with the decision to move away and expressed feelings of boredom and frustration; similarly in CMHA's (1994)

study, most of the participants, including women, reported negative changes to their self-image and self-esteem. Secondly, I reasoned that the ability of the senior women in this study to gain alternative employment is constrained by their geographical isolation in a single resource-based community, their age, their relatively low levels of formal education and their likely attachment to the cod fishery. Thirdly, I assumed that any negative impacts would surely be more intense in the year 2001 than, for example, in 1994 when the governments provided stable compensation packages; today, unfortunately, there are no such “safety nets” with which to “catch” the displaced fishery workers.

I was astounded to learn from the senior women that, with respect to their personal lives, income was the only key area negatively impacted by the cod moratorium. Recall from Chapter Five that the majority of these women did not report negative impacts to their health, identity, social networks/interactions, or faith in God. As one participant described, faith in God or a sense of spirituality is all-important for survival; this may explain why these participants were able to cope so well in spite of their worsening financial situations:

... dat's one ting you can't throw down maid is your belief, you got to believe in somet'ing cause if you don't believe, if you don't believe in God or in da Church you're nothing. And dat's what gives you da strength and da will power to go on.

Their self-perceptions relating to health were supported by the health informant. The contradictory comments provided by the community informant may be related to possible negative stereotypes surrounding mental illness common in many rural communities:

... what's wrong with us as a people, if you have cancer, "oh poor [maid], la cancer, she only got six months to live, isn't that awful," somebody else got a heart attack, "oh awful," somebody else got bad nerves, "we'll laugh at 'em."

This may explain why some of the women, who may or may not have actually had emotional instabilities, did not seek treatment or counselling at the clinic and why they did not report them, if any, to me. However, nearly all of the women were adamant that they are just as happy today as they were in the past. This contradictory finding may stem from this informant's personal knowledge of one or two families, from which she may have generalized to all the senior women in the community, or she may have been projecting about how she would feel if placed in the same situation.

I was intrigued by these relatively positive findings as they conflicted with those reported in many Newfoundland studies. For example, women in the CMHA study were the most likely to report isolation; however, in the Black Tickle study women did not mention isolation and, in fact, many maintained healthy friendship networks. This too may relate to spirituality; in their faith, they have found strength, dignity and integrity, and it is with these qualities that they have created lasting, supportive friendships.

I was equally fascinated with the finding that the activity of housework helped these women to cope on a daily basis with the cod moratorium. I took this confusion to my local Steering Committee and asked them if these findings made sense to them. One of the two senior plant workers helped to put things into perspective:

Housework was women's work in our days - we were reared up dis way. Den, we had to cook, clean and change youngsters. Dis is what we're used to.

It was then that I realized that I had been incorrectly assessing the situation; I was looking at the picture through a different set of glasses, from a different set of experiences. This was one of the ethical considerations discussed in Chapter Three; there I conscientiously acknowledged the difference in our ages and, thus, our experiences. As common-sense as

the acknowledgement might seem, it was a crucial one, and one which I had forgotten until I met with my Steering Committee. They reminded me that I needed to step back from my experiences and place myself in the shoes of the women who are 20 to 30 years my senior. Indeed, they grew up in a different era, with different expectations, different resources and supports, and different challenges.

Finally, I realized that many, if not all, of the participants were likely in their early 30's before entering the *paid* workforce (recall that the first fish plant in Black Tickle was not built until around 1975/1976). Until then, these women worked hard nurturing children, caring for elders and the sick, maintaining homes, tending to gardens, and, as described in Chapter Four, assisting their husbands in the fishery – all for no pay and, often, little recognition. They have, then, “come full circle” in their lives, which may help to explain the relatively positive findings of this study. Because they had known material poverty before, they have a rich storehouse of “life experiences” to draw upon which helps them remain healthy in the face of this current hurdle. In their youth and young adulthood, they were dependent upon the land for subsistence, and money had relatively little value. For example, in their time, seals, birds, fish, and rabbits were the staples of life and they were thankful for them. They lived without many modern conveniences such as electricity, roads, television, and snowmobiles. They had, and many continue to have, a different set of priorities; in their time, being healthy was considered more important than being wealthy. Recall that one participant put this nicely when she said:

... if I had a thousand dollars, if I had a million dollars, it never made no difference den if I never had a cent. We're only da same now as we was all da time, cause money, money is not everything.

However, for the younger plant workers, being without an income is, perhaps, a newer experience and, thus, poses a greater challenge as they do not have similar “life skills” on which to draw. On the other hand, the senior women are accustomed to making do on much less, as illuminated by a senior Steering Committee member: “*Da younger generations wants everything!*” Similarly, a youth on the Steering Committee added that “*Da younger people sees things on TV and wants this!*” They likely have a different set of priorities, adopted largely from the dominant Western culture as portrayed on television, which often come at a very high price. Yet, often they do not have the money to buy the things that they see on their screen. This may create some discontent among those age groups and could explain some of the observations made by the health informant -- that many of the negative impacts resulting from the cod moratorium seem to be felt in the younger age groups.

The obvious implication of this, then, is that *with a very young population, as is the case with Black Tickle, the community may be at risk of losing many important adaptations and life skills necessary for survival if remaining elders pass on without handing down their traditional knowledge to the next generation.* Thus, there needs to be opportunities created for the youth to learn from their elders; perhaps a traditional Metis life skills program involving elders as the teachers, as delivered in other coastal communities, would be advantageous to the future generation at Black Tickle.

7.2 “Dat’s All I Can Do!”

“*Dat’s all you can do about it!*” was a prevalent theme throughout my individual interviews with the women plant workers. In my formal analysis of the data, I compiled a list of ten statements which illustrated this theme. For example, I noted comments such as, “*We*

couldn't fight da government!", *"You jus' got to sit and bear it!"*, *"You got to put up with it!"* and *"It's not 'ere so you had to do without it!"* At first glance, these statements might imply a pessimistic attitude – an apathetic and unquestioning acceptance of the situation. Some people might even consider this attitude loathsome and use it to justify the community's desperate economic and social situation.

However, I would like to suggest two other plausible explanations or origins for this theme. Firstly, it is important to understand and acknowledge the important role of history in shaping a people's identity. Recall Chapter Four which dealt with the historical and contemporary exploitation and oppression of Labradorians and, in particular, the people of Black Tickle. Also, reconsider the theory of "institutional patriarchy" presented in Chapter Three which provides an analogy for a built-in form of cultural oppression. Perhaps this attitude of stoic acceptance stems from a legacy of oppression and an inability to exert control over important issues such as the fishery. Certainly, one participant discussed in great detail how a history of negligence from the government has discouraged residents from becoming involved in local affairs: *"... if you goes and asks da government so many times and dey keeps sayin' 'no' why go back and get 'no' again?"* Eventually, people may come to feel that there really is little they can do to affect change -- thus, *"dat's all you can do!"*

Secondly, this attitude may have developed as a coping mechanism. The powerlessness implied by *"dat's all I can do"* does not seem to correspond with Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld's (1938) fatalistic stage of a "broken attitude" summarized in Chapter Three. Rather, the senior women in this study were generally optimistic and "unbroken" in their attitude. This also contrasts with the powerlessness expressed in the CMHA (1994) study

where feelings of uselessness and powerlessness stemmed from an inability to provide for one's family, which lowered self-esteem. The women in this study, however, seemed to use the statement "dat's all I can do!" as a point of fact – that they really did not have any more control over the management of cod fishery prior to the cod moratorium as they do now over nature in rebuilding the fish stocks. Thus, "... *what's to be sad over, no good to be sad, it ain't gonna make it any bit different for ya.*"

This led me to conclude that the attitude of "dat's all I can do" was likely the result, at least in part, of cognitive processing, or internal meaning-making and interpretation (recall Fryer's Agency Model), which served an important survival function. You may recall from Chapter Five that the health informant agreed that this attitude was a coping mechanism. In a very real sense, these women were unlikely to influence the political management of the cod fishery. They were, and continue to be, at a position of no power because of their lack of formal education and, just as importantly, their exclusion from local and regional politics. Thus, I reasoned that their chances of survival would be improved by adapting to the situation rather than by attempting to change it, as supported by the health key informant:

I think the older ones sort of felt like "What else can I do, there's nothing, I don't want to move, this is where I live" ... "I can't do anything about this but make the best of it, the best of it for me" ...

Therefore, the attitude of "dat's all I can do!" likely served as an effective coping mechanism based in reality and grounded in history. Although these senior women may have been unable to exert tangible control over the (mis)management of the cod fishery and the eventual closure by the government, they were able to control their attitude or outlook towards it, which, I believe, helped to ensure their survival.

7.3 Family Cohesiveness

Recall from Chapter Five that the families of the women plant workers in this study remained strong and very much intact. Despite worsening financial matters, these women strove to carry on a normal existence and held their families together by sharing resources and helping each other with household and childcare responsibilities. As in Robinson's (1994) study, the women in this study have had to budget carefully and, consequently, sometimes had to deny children and grandchildren certain material things. Despite this, family relations generally remained unchanged from pre-moratorium times. Similarly, researchers in the CMHA (1994) study found that participants did not report dramatic increases in conflict in the home and, in fact, 76% of the families said that they had actually drawn closer together since the cod moratorium.

An important finding of this study, which contrasts with the CMHA study, is that **over half of the husbands of the participants took on new/additional roles in the home, including childcare, after the cod moratorium.** In the CMHA study, which was carried out on the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, **only three men in 46 families reported caring for children or doing housework.** This may help to explain the relatively more positive findings of the present study as the help of a partner likely provides an important source of support.

A second notable finding of this study is that plant workers' health fared better than women on the island. In the CMHA (1994) study, for example, **63% of the families reported health problems (e.g., stress, worry, and anxiety) which they attributed directly to the cod moratorium.** This was despite the fact that half of the women and over half of the

men were employed and earned additional income to their NCARP packages. However, in the present study **only one of the seven participants reported a decline in health and attributed it to the moratorium**, despite the fact that very few of the plant workers in Black Tickle have other permanent employment alternatives and that income compensation programs have long ended.

This also contrasts with the literature originating largely from the United Kingdom pertaining to how unemployment affects health. In Chapter Three, I referred to a study by Dew, Penkower, and Bromet (1991) which found that blue-collar couples are more likely to report lower marital adjustment and communication following the husband's job loss. This impact was attributed to the greater financial constraints of working class citizens. However, in the present study, despite the fact that both partners became unemployed as a result of the fishery closure, adjustment and communication problems were not reported.

I believe that the strength and wisdom of these senior women kept families together. These women are the "anchors" keeping the families grounded in the midst of tremendous hardships and challenges. Today these women are using the life skills and experiences that moulded and shaped them in the past to protect both themselves and their families today, as eluded to by a key informant:

... they tend to be grandparents and the ones supporting the younger ones ...

Hopefully, the descendants of the senior women in this study will recognize and embrace their mother's and grandmother's courage so that they may learn to better face their own challenges in the future.

7.4 Poverty - “The Root of All Evil”

Poverty stemming from the closure of the cod fishery was the primary underlying theme of most of the observed changes in the community. For example, the lack of work and the resulting poverty was reported to be the cause of the decline in community spirit and the increases in many social ills, including drinking, family break-ups and violence, and criminal behaviour. Both plant workers and key informants talked about the rampant poverty in the community and described the ways it has been impacting the families.

Whereas 37% of the families in the CMHA study reported a decrease in community spirit, 86% of the participants in the current study reported a decline in the same. The CMHA study reported that the cause of the decline was division over residents’ eligibility for compensation and fewer opportunities to socialize. However, in Black Tickle the decline was attributed indirectly to poverty in that when the local lounge closed, opportunities for social activities (i.e., dances) decreased and fund raising dropped.

Though the lounge closed, drinking in the community did not decrease because beer then became readily available in the local general stores. Most (71%) of the plant workers reported increased drinking in Black Tickle since the cod moratorium, stemming mainly from the lack of work. Similarly, the health informant reported an increase in drinking and attributed it to the poverty resulting from the moratorium. The community informant took it a step further and acknowledged that in some cases the men are drinking away the family income, leaving women and children in a desperate state of poverty and stress. This contrasts with the CMHA study where most (42%) of the families did not report any major increase in drinking.

An additional 43% of the plant workers reported an increase in family violence -- again, attributing it to stress over money and increased drinking. The health informant agreed and argued that the alcohol abuse and family violence “...*were related to the frustration of living in poverty and the pressure that puts upon people...*” In contrast, participants in the CMHA study did not tend to mention family violence, although their local leaders identified it as a problem.

An additional symptom of poverty relating to alcohol abuse is family break-ups and disruptions. In a study by Robinson (1994), several women feared that marriages would break up as family members moved away to pursue training. In the present study, many (57%) of the plant workers felt that there has been a definite increase in family break-ups in Black Tickle, which they attributed to stress over money and drinking. It is important to keep in mind that the increase in drinking was largely attributed to the lack of work in the community and the resulting poverty.

Regarding crime, participants in the CMHA study did not feel that rates had increased, but when they did mention crime, vandalism was the most commonly reported offense. This conflicts with the findings of the current study where just less than half of the plant workers reported an increase. Interestingly, the crimes that were reported evidenced the poverty in the community. For example, one of the plant workers described how some crimes were related to hunting violations. Thus, some families may be hunting illegally to supplement their incomes to survive.

The health informant reported that the poverty resulting from the cod moratorium is having a detrimental impact upon the physical health of some residents, in particular women

who are presently in their 40's. Because some women must purchase lower priced, unhealthy, groceries in order to make ends meet, this is leading, in some cases, to serious weight-related health problems (e.g., diabetes).

Perhaps the most interesting finding under this theme emerges from both key informant interviews -- that men have been equally, or more, devastated by the cod moratorium. For instance, there were reports of men becoming anxious and depressed, and both key informants attributed this suffering to the loss of their "breadwinner" role. Apparently, the experience of not being able to provide for their families has had, according to these informants, a devastating impact upon their emotional and psychological well-being. This compliments the literature in the United Kingdom; the resulting poverty and discontentment amongst the men in Black Tickle has led to increased drinking, family violence and break-ups.

Recall from Chapter Two that Davis (1991) found a similar response in her study on Grey Rock Harbour families; specifically, she found that men are spending more time watching television and drinking at local bars than before the fishery crisis. These changes created resentment and conflict between partners. As suggested by the health informant in my study, Davis (1991) also explains the growing antagonism between the sexes as relating to men's loss of role on the sea and as the provider or "breadwinner" of the family:

"With the fishing crisis there is still continuity in women's lives. Women have their families to tend to and they pride themselves in still being hard workers with important things to do. The situation for men is very different." (p. 11)

While men's responses to the fishery crisis in Grey Rock Harbour are similar to those found in my study, Davis (1991) does not report increased crime or spousal abuse.

7.5 Community Cohesiveness

Despite the tremendous economic and social changes outlined above, it was clear that the community is holding together. This community cohesiveness is evidenced by the finding that few people have left Black Tickle since the closure of the cod fishery. Families also support each other financially and work together for their mutual benefit. This was highlighted by the members of my local Steering Committee as well. For example, both senior plant workers on the Committee described how family members split household bills -- thereby ensuring their mutual survival on low incomes. This support extends beyond the family and into neighbourhoods; recall the participant who dismissed resettling because in Black Tickle she could always get ducks and fish from her neighbour whenever she wanted it.

The loyalty expressed by the plant workers to their community, as one participant commented, "*Well like da old people say, 'no place like home', well dat's our home, Black Tickle*", is also indicative of community cohesiveness. Several Steering Committee members echoed similar sentiments, as voiced by one of the senior plant workers, "*I'd go to the last minute before leaving Black Tickle; everything would have to go before I move.*" It was interesting to note that one of the youth on the Committee felt the same, "*I'd go back to eating ducks and berries before I'd leave.*" These are the voices of a people deeply committed to their community and each other. Remember that the first strength to be mentioned during the focus group interview was, "*We all get along good with each other. We all try to help each other!*" Also, the women felt that their role in shaping the future of Black Tickle was one of *working together* and "*helping the da old people.*" Their generosity

and kindness towards others is unmistakable and saintly, *"If I had one slice of bread in da house, I'd offer it to someone who comes to da house and do without myself!"*, again evidencing their deep spirituality.

You may be wondering how these women and their families manage to stick together in the midst of escalating poverty and, as a result, increasing social ills? They likely inherited this spirit of sharing and mutual support from both their Aboriginal and Labrador ancestors. The physical hardships of life on the Labrador coast have always, to some extent, necessitated intra dependence and co-operation. For example, the repair and hauling of nets, the launching and storage of boats, and the delivery and rearing of children often necessitated the help of family members (nuclear and extended) and others. People blindly trusted that there would always be a helping hand. Community cohesiveness ensured survival in the past and it will be needed to secure a bright future for the coming generations.

Community cohesiveness may also be related to several variables identified in the literature on unemployment and health. For example, Harding and Sewel (1992) reported that the unemployed in rural areas cope better because of higher levels of social support, sense of community and opportunities for informal economic activities. As I explained earlier, the people of Black Tickle share and support one another and supplement their incomes with food and money gained through such informal economic activities as hunting, fishing, and gathering. Similarly, there is some empirical support for the hypothesis that the unemployed in high unemployment areas experience less psychological distress because it is easier for them to make external attributions and to develop resilience in the face of a common threat (Harding and Sewel, 1992). In Black Tickle, the seasonal unemployment rate is probably as

high as 95%; thus, residents are likely able to make external attributions that protect their self-esteem and identity.

In none of the Newfoundland studies was the community cohesiveness so evident as in the present study. Despite the lack of organized activities and, thus, opportunities for socialization, most of the women in this study maintained their friendship networks and provided invaluable support to each other. This may be serving as an important model for others in the community and support community cohesiveness.

7.6 Future Areas of Study

One of the comments made by a youth on my Steering Committee in Black Tickle suggested cable television as one area worthy of future investigation. She made the important observation that the younger generation "*sees things on TV and wants dis.*" As suggested by the health informant, this may help to explain the relatively more negative findings amongst the younger age group. The younger plant workers see many things on television which they, like others, want because it portrays the ideals of the dominant Western culture. However, because poverty generally increased after the cod moratorium, oftentimes the things that are desired simply cannot be afforded. In fact, there are many cases where people are fortunate to have their basic needs met. This can create psychological or emotional conflicts that can be expressed in various forms. Sometimes the conflict between what is wanted and what can be afforded is resolved by the youth pursuing post-secondary education in order to secure brighter futures. Other times, unfortunately, the conflict leads to unhealthy ways of coping with the discrepancy.

The senior women, however, lived long before the introduction of cable in Black Tickle and, although they desired material things, they were used to being without and living on a lower income. Thus, a future study might look at the role the introduction of cable television has played in the response of local residents, young and old, to the cod moratorium and the resulting growing poverty.

Secondly, it is important to note that both key informants highlighted the devastating impact the cod moratorium has had on men. The health informant talked about anxious and depressed men coming into the clinic for help and the community informant talked about men driven to drink and, in some case, well beyond what the family can support on a reduced income. The health informant also spoke of increased spousal abuse stemming from the increased drinking -- an indirect consequence of the cod moratorium. The observation that men in Black Tickle are more, or equally, impacted by the moratorium deserves further study and the increase in drinking and spousal abuse may be taken to indicate a need for professional and/or informal support services.

A third study that could be initiated by government in partnership with the Local Service District, the Fishermen's Committee, and other development organizations is a review of the operations of the present plant owners. After eight long years of being held hostage by an owner (HB Dawe Ltd) who refused to sell the plant at a reasonable price, the plant was finally re-opened in the summer of 2000 by a consortium of major newfoundland fish companies. However, the primary owner is Pat Quinlan of Quinlan Group of Companies from Old Perlican in partnership with HB Dawe Ltd of Cupids. Today, plant workers boil and brine freeze crab legs at Black Tickle's new shellfish plant and then ship it to newfoundland.

Despite the promise of a revitalized economy, Labrador Sea Products has failed to deliver the level of employment expected by the residents of the community. The plant provides only enough employment for about 35 to 40 people (in comparison with 75 people at the height of the cod fishery) and not all of these receive enough insurable hours to qualify for E.I. Thus, many employees still require make-work projects to secure the minimum number of hours. Then, there are other residents who are called sporadically for a few hours here and there.

One group that has been painfully affected by the lack of work at their new plant are the senior women plant workers who, from my observations over the past two summers, are among the last to be called and receive the fewest number of hours. Despite their seniority, today there is a clear preference for a young workforce. I have also heard concerns from some workers that they are “worked to death” when a load of crab arrives; this practice of advanced production speed not only negatively affects their health but also reduces the number of hours they might obtain. Finally, there are reports that the plant has turned away whelk for processing (which would have provided additional employment at the plant) even though the Manager, Mr. Phillip Hillyard, clearly stated at a meeting I attended this year that they would take this species.

Thus, the operations of Labrador Sea Products are questionable and should be investigated by a formal review process to ensure that the licence that was issued for the good of the people of Black Tickle is being not being abused by the owners of the plant.

Fourthly, a study investigating the feasibility of the employment alternatives suggested by the participants during the focus group interview might prove profitable. Crafts, an elders’ home and berries could create much needed employment and help diversify the community’s

economic base beyond the fishery. One other economic alternative, which I would like to suggest, is the harnessing of gale force winds (reaching regular wind speeds of 100 km/hour) to create electricity. Such a development would not only provide employment, but also lower the cost of electricity in Black Tickle and, possibly, surrounding communities. This technology has been refined by Canadian scientists and applied successfully in Alaska.

Fifthly, it is important to keep in mind that this study documents the experiences of a small number of women in Black Tickle -- perhaps a unique community from many others on the southeast coast -- and thus, it makes sense to exercise caution in generalizing from this community to other communities in Labrador. Therefore, it would be useful to examine the impacts of the cod moratorium on other communities in Labrador that were also dependent upon the cod fishery. I believe that this research would be best carried out by Labradorians who have a special insight into the issues of the region, know the people, and care about how the research is conducted. While there may be few Labradorians in a position to carry out such independent research, every effort should be made by those with the research funding to involve local people in the collection and analysis of data and to ensure that the results gets back to the communities. Recent efforts by the Coasts Under Stress research team to involve local people in a research project on Gilbert's Bay Cod was a step in the right direction. A fellowship provided to me by this same research team is another indication that research on Labrador by Labradorians is being supported.

Finally, there is a need for a comprehensive review, carried out by Labradorians, of important provincial and federal policies which impact upon Labrador. In Chapter Four, I provided some examples of policies which negatively impacted Labradorians. Thus,

governments have, I believe, a moral responsibility to consult with Labradorians and to make every effort to make their policies relevant and useful for the people of Labrador. The Newfoundland government must stop using itself as the measuring stick for Labrador and Labradorians must be recognized as having different needs and concerns which need to be reflected equally in provincial and federal policies. Hopefully, the new provincial department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs will make some headway in this tremendous task. The development of this new department is definitely a step in the right direction, as one participant enthusiastically commented in her interview, “*Tis startin’ to look up.*”

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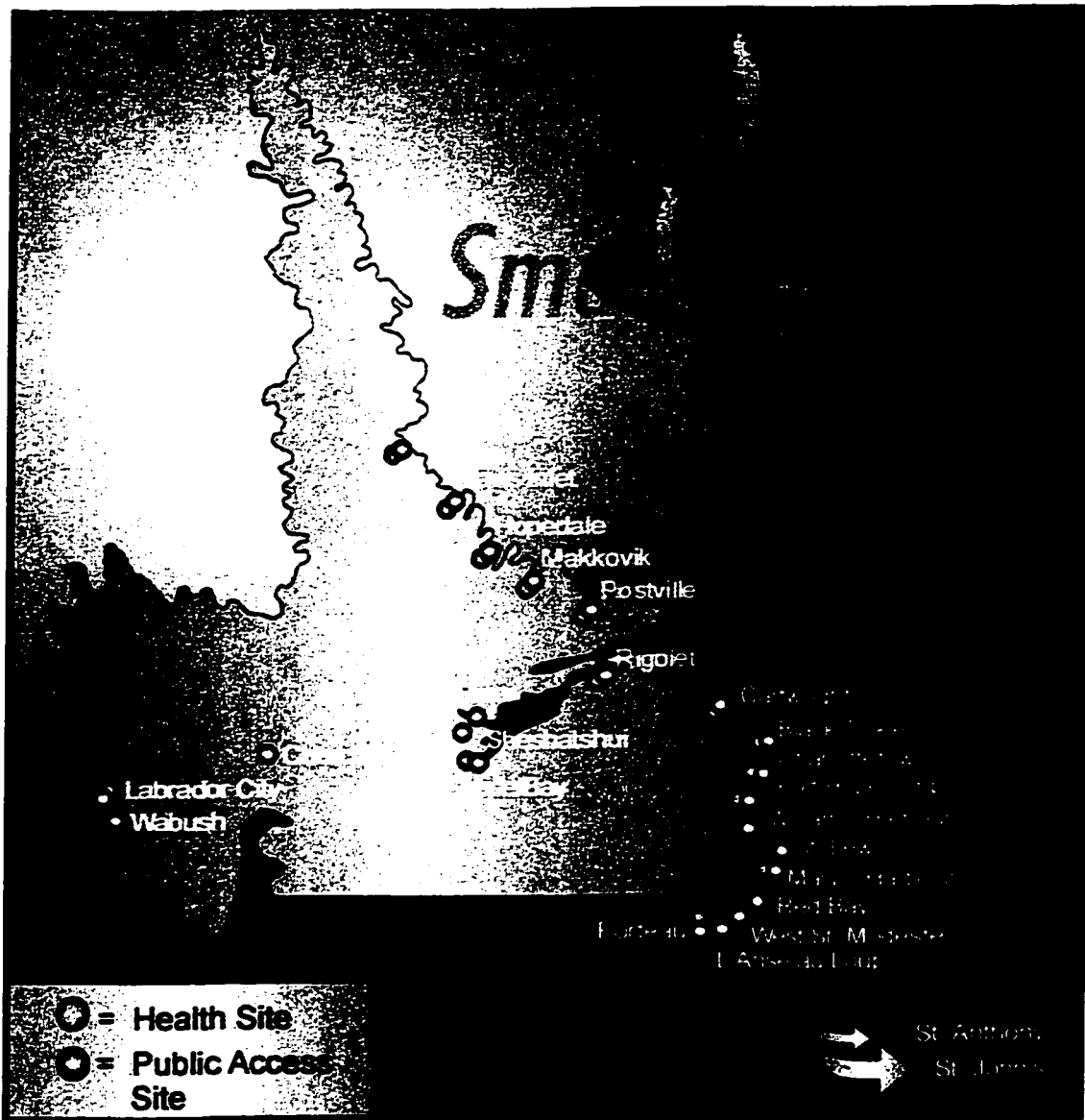
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Appendix A
Black Tickle's Location on the Map



Source: <http://www.smartlabrador.ca/>

Appendix B
Interview Protocol - Women Fish Plant Workers

Personal Impacts:

1. Can you tell me about any changes you have experienced in personal income since the cod moratorium (i.e., do you earn more, less, about the same?) If applicable, how has this change affected you personally?
2. What changes have you noticed in your physical health since the cod moratorium?
3. Please tell me about any changes you have noticed in your overall sense of personal well-being and happiness since the cod moratorium (i.e., have you noticed any changes in your levels of anxiety, stress, and worry?)
4. In what ways has the cod moratorium affected how you think about or see yourself? (e.g., has your identity as a worker changed?)
5. Can you tell me about any changes you have noticed in the amount of time you spend with friends compared to before the cod moratorium (i.e., do you spend more, less, or about the same amount of time with friends?) If you are spending less time with friends, how do you make up for the lost company?
6. How do you pass your time during the summer months when you would otherwise be working in the fish plant?
7. If applicable, how did you feel about the education/training you received as part of the NCARP and TAGS programs? In what ways did you benefit, if you did?
8. Please tell me about any changes in your faith in God since the cod moratorium (e.g., do you attend church more, less, about the same?)
9. What are some of the things you do to help you cope with the changes brought about by the cod moratorium?

Family Impacts:

10. In what way has your household income changed since the cod moratorium (i.e., more, less, about the same household income)? If applicable, how has this change affected your family?
11. Can you tell me about any changes you have noticed in the way people in you family get along with one another since the cod moratorium? (e.g., does there seem to be more, less, about the same amount of tension/conflict between family members? are

family members “pulling together” more?)

12. What changes, if any, in family roles have you noticed since the cod moratorium? (e.g., are husbands and children helping out more, less, about the same with household chores and child care, if applicable)
13. What are some of the things your family does to cope with the cod moratorium?

Community Impacts:

14. Please tell me about any changes you have noticed in community spirit and level of participation in social events and community politics since the cod moratorium?
15. I am interested in whether the cod moratorium has led to changes in the number and severity of social problems in the community. What changes, if any, have you noticed in terms of alcohol/drug use/abuse, family violence and break-ups, crime?
16. What changes have you noticed in community leadership since the cod moratorium?
17. What changes in community services have you noticed since the cod moratorium?
18. How many people, if any, moved away in search of employment after the cod moratorium?
19. In what other ways is the community better or worse off since the cod moratorium?
20. Are there ways that the community as a whole are coping with the cod moratorium?
21. What do you think caused the cod fishery to collapse?

Appendix C
Focus Group Protocol

1. **Where would you like for Black Tickle to be in say 5 years time? If you could dream a dream for Black Tickle, what would it be like?**
2. **What other jobs outside the fishery could people get in Black Tickle? i.e., What resources do we have outside the fishery that could be used to create work for the people of Black Tickle?**
3. **What things do we need in Black Tickle that would improve the health and happiness of the people living here?**
4. **What, if any, barriers do you see as keeping us from making our hopes and dreams for Black Tickle come true?**
5. **What resources or strengths do we have in our community that can help us to bring Black Tickle to where we want it to be in the future?**
6. **What resources do we still need from outside that can help us to make our dreams for Black Tickle come true?**
7. **What part would you (as a group) like to play in shaping the future of Black Tickle? i.e., What are some of the things that we can do to steer our community in the direction we want it to go?**

Appendix D
Key Informant Interview Protocol - Health

1. **In what capacity(ies) have you served the citizens of Black Tickle over the years?**
2. **(a) Please tell me about any changes you have noticed in the general population of Black Tickle with respect to the demand for your services since the cod moratorium was announced (i.e., an increase, decrease, no change). If you have noticed a change, what has been the nature of that change (e.g., by gender, age, type of service)? Would you attribute these changes, if any, to the cod moratorium? Why/why not?**

(b) Discuss any changes you may have noticed specific to displaced women fish plant workers in their 40's and especially 50's? If applicable, how does these changes compare with those of younger displaced women fish plant workers (i.e., younger than about 40 years old)? Would you attribute these changes to the cod moratorium? Why/why not?
3. **If applicable, how do you think these changes, in your area of speciality, have/are continuing to affect these senior women, as well as their families and the community?**
4. **What, if any, steps or actions were taken by you or your colleagues after the cod moratorium to prevent illness (of both a physical and mental nature) and promote wellness among displaced women fish plant workers? If applicable, to what extent did senior women fish plant workers participate in these programs? In your opinion, how successful were these initiatives?**
5. **From your formal and informal experience with senior women fish plant workers over the years, what strategies or strengths, if any, do you think they already have that helps them to cope with the changes brought about by the cod moratorium?**
6. **Please tell me about any future impacts to senior women fish plant workers you foresee as a result of the cod moratorium? What future demand, if any, do you anticipate for your services? If applicable, how do you propose to meet the anticipated demand?**
7. **In your opinion, what other measures should be taken to help these women deal with the cod moratorium in the future?**
8. **Your additional comments or insights are welcome at this time.**

Appendix E
Key Informant Interview Protocol - Community Leader

1. **In what capacity(ies) have you served the citizens of Black Tickle over the years? How have you come to know the people and their issues?**
2. **(a) Please tell me about any changes (e.g., economic, social, spiritual) you have noticed in the general population of Black Tickle since the cod moratorium was announced. If applicable, please comment upon whether these changes were more prominent among one gender or age group than others. Would you attribute these changes to the cod moratorium? Why/why not?**

(b) Discuss any changes you may have noticed specific to displaced women fish plant workers in their 40's and especially 50's? If applicable, how does these changes compare with those of younger displaced women fish plant workers (i.e., younger than about 40 years old)? Finally, would you attribute these changes to the cod moratorium? Why/why not?
3. **If applicable, how do you think these changes have/are continuing to affect these senior women, as well as their families and the community?**
4. **What, if any, steps or actions were taken by you and/or your fellow community leaders after the cod moratorium to help the people of Black Tickle, and especially the women fish plant workers, cope with any changes brought about by the closure of the cod fishery? If applicable, to what extent did senior women fish plant workers participate in or benefit from these steps or actions? In your opinion, how successful were these initiatives?**
5. **From your experience with senior women fish plant workers over the years, what, if any, strategies or strengths do you think they possess that helps them to cope with the changes brought about by the cod moratorium?**
6. **Please tell me about any future impacts to senior women fish plant workers you foresee as a result of the cod moratorium? How do you and other community leaders propose to deal with these future impacts to senior women fish plant workers?**
7. **In your opinion, what other measures should be taken to help these women deal with the cod moratorium in the future?**
8. **Your additional comments or insights are welcome at this time.**

Appendix F
Wilfrid Laurier University
STUDY INFORMATION LETTER - PLANT WORKERS

**“Skippers of the Shore Crew”:
Women and a Fish Plant Closure**

Principal Investigator: Sheila M. Keefe
Advisor: Dr. Susan James

You are invited to take part in a research study. There are two (2) purposes to this study:

(1) to learn how the northern cod moratorium has affected women who are presently in their late 40's to late 50's and who worked in the fish plant in Black Tickle for at least ten (10) years before the cod moratorium was called. In addition, this study will look at the impacts upon these women's families and the community in general; and

(2) to help these women deal with the changes brought about by the cod moratorium by encouraging and assisting them to come together in a group to share information and provide support.

INFORMATION

Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary; that is, you may take part only if you want to. If you decide that you would like to be in this study, you will be invited to take part in several events over this winter, spring, and summer. Firstly, you will be asked to answer a number of questions for me in an individual interview. These questions will concern how the cod moratorium has affected you, your family, and the community. This interview is expected to last from one to one-and-a-half hours and will take place at a time and place of your choosing (however, it should occur between mid January and mid February, 2001). Although tape recording would allow the interview to move ahead more quickly and smoothly, your interview will be tape recorded only if you agree to having it recorded. Otherwise, notes will be taken.

Secondly, you will be invited to take part in a one to one-and-a-half hour focus group meeting, expected to take place in late February or early-March, 2001. A focus group is one where a small number of people come together to answer questions put forth by a group leader(s). The purpose of this group meeting will be twofold: (1) to give you feedback regarding the results of all the individual interviews taken together; and (2) to discuss your ideas about the desired future of your community, its strengths and needs. A woman of similar age and experience in the fish plant will help me run this focus group. Again, tape recording will occur only if all the women agree. Otherwise, notes will be made.

Thirdly, you will be invited to join a women's group to be formed and kept going by the women in this study. However, please note that you are not required to join this group in order to take part in either the individual or focus group interviews. The purpose of this group will be to share information and provide informal support and may take one of many forms. For example, the women might decide to form a crafts group, the products of which could be sold. The principal investigator would be happy to assist in the start-up of such a group.

Finally, once all information has been organized, you will be invited to a community forum, or meeting, expected to occur on June 30, 2001. The purpose of this meeting will be to share the information gained through this study with all members of the community. Information will be given in both spoken and written form, and an assistant will help run this meeting. Again, your attendance would be appreciated, but will not be required to take part in other parts of this study.

In addition to the time spent in interviews (individual and group), you will also be asked to review transcripts, notes, and reports for correctness and completeness. So, once your individual interview has been carried out and the transcript or notes written, you will be invited to go over them with the principal investigator to make sure there are no mistakes. Similarly, after a draft report has been written, you will be invited to review it with the principal investigator to make sure your views are described correctly.

You should note that eight (8) to ten (10) women fish plant workers will be interviewed altogether. In addition to the time you may spend in the women's group, this study asks you to commit a total of seven (7) hours of your time (taking part in the individual interview, review of transcript or notes, focus group, review of draft report, and community forum) over this winter, spring, and summer.

RISKS

Before you make the decision to take part in this study, you must be informed of the risks you may be taking and how you will be protected against them as much as possible:

1. There is a possibility that you may become upset by having to remember and talk with me about how the cod moratorium has affected you, your family, and the community. To minimize this potential risk to you, you may refuse to answer any question(s) and you are free to quit this study at any time without it affecting you or your family in any way. You will have the same rights with the focus group meeting. Also, you will be given a list of resource people and their contact information at the end of your interview in case you wish to talk with someone afterwards about concerns or distresses brought on by this study.
2. You may feel uncomfortable speaking with a younger and more educated woman about very personal issues and feelings. However, your ideas and feelings will be treated with utmost respect and confidentiality (that is, the principal investigator will

not talk about your interview(s) with others without your permission). Also, your interview(s) will be carried out in an informal “conversational” style, intended to increase your comfort level.

3. There is a risk that other women in the focus group will try to dominate (or take the meeting over) by talking more than their share, thereby leaving you with less (or no) time to voice your ideas. To protect you against this risk, strict ground rules will be put in place before the meeting begins and the principal investigator will ensure that everyone has time to speak.
4. Perhaps the greatest risk to you is the possibility of others in the community finding out about your involvement in this study. Since Black Tickle is a small community where there are many close family ties and informal friendship networks, it may be very difficult to keep your participation in this study entirely a secret. Thus, the principal investigator cannot promise you total anonymity. However, the transcripts or notes resulting from your interviews will be kept strictly confidential. So, although others in the community may become aware of your involvement in this study, they will not know what you have said. Also, your name will never appear in any report and you will be able to screen all quotations of yours before they are placed into any report. That way, identifying information about you can be left out.

However, by taking part in the focus group, you will be letting other women know of your involvement in this study. To protect you as much as possible, focus group participants will be given a choice at the beginning of the session of whether to (collectively) form a verbal or written agreement to keep confidential all information provided during the meeting. This way, your contributions to the meeting can be kept from the rest of the community and you may feel more secure in sharing your ideas openly without worry of gossip outside the session.

5. There may be other unforeseen risks to you.

BENEFITS

There are many benefits to carrying out this study.

- Firstly, while there have been several studies carried out on the Island of Newfoundland about laid-off women fish plant workers, stories of women fish plant workers in Labrador have been ignored and thought to be the same as those of Newfoundlanders. However, Labrador people have a special history and culture and their stories deserve to be told for future generations. Thus, this research will expand the present knowledge base.
- Secondly, the creation of a women’s group will not only benefit the women participants themselves through the sharing of resources and the lending of emotional support, but also the community as a whole through setting an example of

participation and action.

- Thirdly, you may gain new skills and self-confidence as you take part in each phase of the research project and provide crucial feedback to the principal investigator.
- Finally, the final thesis document resulting from this study might be used for political and lobbying purposes on behalf of the people of Black Tickle. This study may be used to bring outside attention to the situation in Black Tickle and highlight the need for more partnerships between people and governments.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In searching out women to take part in this study, a list was put together by members of the community who are serving on a Steering Committee to help guide the research process. Your name was put forward by this Committee, along with a number of other women fish plant workers in their late 40's to late 50's who worked in the plant for a minimum of ten (10) years before the cod moratorium. *However, the selection of participants from this list will be done entirely by the principal investigator. So, while others may know that your name was put forward, only the principle investigator will know of your involvement with this study (i.e., whether you agreed to take part).*

Any tape recording or written notes taken during your interview will be safely stored at the principal investigator's home and will be available only to her. The tape will then be destroyed immediately after it has been transcribed or written out word for word. To further ensure your confidentiality, your name will not appear on the transcript or written notes, but a code number will be attached until your changes have been made. Once changes have been added, the code numbers will also be removed, thereby ensuring total anonymity.

Finally, your name will not appear in any written report nor will any personal information that could reveal your identity to others. You will have an opportunity to ensure your own confidentiality through your feedback on the draft report.

COMPENSATION

For taking part in this study you will receive refreshments midway through the individual interview and at the end of the focus group. In addition, you will receive a small gift valued between \$15.00 and \$20.00 at the end of the study, regardless of whether you finish it or drop out before its completion.

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or if you experience negative effects as a result of participating in this study) you may contact the researcher, Sheila Keefe, at PO Box 55, Black Tickle, Labrador, A0K 1N0, or at (709) 471-8894. You

may also contact the principle investigator's advisor, Dr. Susan James, at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University, 75 University Ave. West, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3C5, or at (519) 884-1970, extension 3233. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Dr. Bruce Arai, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, 884-0710, extension 3753.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may refuse to take part without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

Appendix G
Wilfrid Laurier University
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT - PLANT WORKERS

**“Skippers of the Shore Crew”:
Women and a Fish Plant Closure**

**Principal Investigator: Sheila M. Keefe
Advisor: Dr. Susan James**

You are invited to take part in a research study. There are two (2) purposes to this study:

(1) to learn how the northern cod moratorium has affected women who are presently in their late 40's to late 50's and who worked in the fish plant in Black Tickle for at least ten (10) years before the cod moratorium was called. In addition, this study will look at the impacts upon these women's families and the community in general; and

(2) to help these women deal with the changes brought about by the cod moratorium by encouraging and assisting them to come together in a group to share information and provide support.

INFORMATION

Your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary; that is, you may take part only if you want to. If you decide that you would like to be in this study, you will be invited to take part in several events over this winter, spring, and summer. Firstly, you will be asked to answer a number of questions for me in an individual interview. These questions will concern how the cod moratorium has affected you, your family, and the community. This interview is expected to last from one to one-and-a-half hours and will take place at a time and place of your choosing (however, it should occur between mid January and mid February, 2001). Although tape recording would allow the interview to move ahead more quickly and smoothly, your interview will be tape recorded only if you agree to having it recorded. Otherwise, notes will be taken.

Secondly, you will be invited to take part in a one to one-and-a-half hour focus group meeting, expected to take place in late February or early-March, 2001. A focus group is one where a small number of people come together to answer questions put forth by a group leader(s). The purpose of this group meeting will be twofold: (1) to give you feedback regarding the results of all the individual interviews taken together; and (2) to discuss your ideas about the desired future of your community, its strengths and needs. A woman of similar age and experience in the fish plant will help me run this focus group. Again, tape recording will occur only if all the women agree. Otherwise, notes will be made.

Participant's Initials

Thirdly, you will be invited to join a women's group to be formed and kept going by the women in this study. However, please note that you are not required to join this group in order to take part in either the individual or focus group interviews. The purpose of this group will be to share information and provide informal support and may take one of many forms. For example, the women might decide to form a crafts group, the products of which could be sold. The principal investigator would be happy to assist in the start-up of such a group.

Finally, once all information has been organized, you will be invited to a community forum, or meeting, expected to occur on June 30, 2001. The purpose of this meeting will be to share the information gained through this study with all members of the community. Information will be given in both spoken and written form, and an assistant will help run this meeting. Again, your attendance would be appreciated, but will not be required to take part in other parts of this study.

In addition to the time spent in interviews (individual and group), you will also be asked to review transcripts, notes, and reports for correctness and completeness. So, once your individual interview has been carried out and the transcript or notes written, you will be invited to go over them with the principal investigator to make sure there are no mistakes. Similarly, after a draft report has been written, you will be invited to review it with the principal investigator to make sure your views are described correctly.

You should note that eight (8) to ten (10) women fish plant workers will be interviewed altogether. In addition to the time you may spend in the women's group, this study asks you to commit a total of seven (7) hours of your time (taking part in the individual interview, review of transcript or notes, focus group, review of draft report, and community forum) over this winter, spring, and summer.

RISKS

Before you make the decision to take part in this study, you must be informed of the risks you may be taking and how you will be protected against them as much as possible:

1. There is a possibility that you may become upset by having to remember and talk with me about how the cod moratorium has affected you, your family, and the community. To minimize this potential risk to you, you may refuse to answer any question(s) and you are free to quit this study at any time without it affecting you or your family in any way. You will have the same rights with the focus group meeting. Also, you will be given a list of resource people and their contact information at the end of your interview in case you wish to talk with someone afterwards about concerns or distresses brought on by this study.

Participant's Initials

2. You may feel uncomfortable speaking with a younger and more educated woman about very personal issues and feelings. However, your ideas and feelings will be treated with utmost respect and confidentiality (that is, the principal investigator will not talk about your interview(s) with others without your permission). Also, your interview(s) will be carried out in an informal “conversational” style, intended to increase your comfort level.
3. There is a risk that other women in the focus group will try to dominate (or take the meeting over) by talking more than their share, thereby leaving you with less (or no) time to voice your ideas. To protect you against this risk, strict ground rules will be put in place before the meeting begins and the principal investigator will ensure that everyone has time to speak.
4. Perhaps the greatest risk to you is the possibility of others in the community finding out about your involvement in this study. Since Black Tickle is a small community where there are many close family ties and informal friendship networks, it may be very difficult to keep your participation in this study entirely a secret. Thus, the principal investigator cannot promise you total anonymity. However, the transcripts or notes resulting from your interviews will be kept strictly confidential. So, although others in the community may become aware of your involvement in this study, they will not know what you have said. Also, your name will never appear in any report and you will be able to screen all quotations of yours before they are placed into any report. That way, identifying information about you can be left out.

However, by taking part in the focus group, you will be letting other women know of your involvement in this study. To protect you as much as possible, focus group participants will be given a choice at the beginning of the session of whether to (collectively) form a verbal or written agreement to keep confidential all information provided during the meeting. This way, your contributions to the meeting can be kept from the rest of the community and you may feel more secure in sharing your ideas openly without worry of gossip outside the session.

5. There may be other unforeseen risks to you.

BENEFITS

There are many benefits to carrying out this study.

- Firstly, while there have been several studies carried out on the Island of Newfoundland about laid-off women fish plant workers, stories of women fish plant workers in Labrador have been ignored and thought to be the same as those of Newfoundlanders. However, Labrador people have a special history and culture and their stories deserve to be told for future generations. Thus, this research will expand the present knowledge base.

Participant's Initials

- Secondly, the creation of a women's group will not only benefit the women participants themselves through the sharing of resources and the lending of emotional support, but also the community as a whole through setting an example of participation and action.
- Thirdly, you may gain new skills and self-confidence as you take part in each phase of the research project and provide crucial feedback to the principal investigator.
- Finally, the final thesis document resulting from this study might be used for political and lobbying purposes on behalf of the people of Black Tickle. This study may be used to bring outside attention to the situation in Black Tickle and highlight the need for more partnerships between people and governments.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In searching out women to take part in this study, a list was put together by members of the community who are serving on a Steering Committee to help guide the research process. Your name was put forward by this Committee, along with a number of other women fish plant workers in their late 40's to late 50's who worked in the plant for a minimum of ten (10) years before the cod moratorium. *However, the selection of participants from this list will be done entirely by the principal investigator. So, while others may know that your name was put forward, only the principle investigator will know of your involvement with this study (i.e., whether you agreed to take part).*

Any tape recording or written notes taken during your interview will be safely stored at the principal investigator's home and will be available only to her. The tape will then be destroyed immediately after it has been transcribed or written out word for word. To further ensure your confidentiality, your name will not appear on the transcript or written notes, but a code number will be attached until your changes have been made. Once changes have been added, the code numbers will also be removed, thereby ensuring total anonymity.

Finally, your name will not appear in any written report nor will any personal information that could reveal your identity to others. You will have an opportunity to ensure your own confidentiality through your feedback on the draft report.

COMPENSATION

For taking part in this study you will receive refreshments midway through the individual interview and at the end of the focus group. In addition, you will receive a small gift valued between \$15.00 and \$20.00 at the end of the study, regardless of whether you finish it or drop out before its completion.

Participant's Initials

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or if you experience negative effects as a result of participating in this study) you may contact the researcher, Sheila Keefe, at PO Box 55, Black Tickle, Labrador, A0K 1N0, or at (709) 471-8894. You may also contact the principle investigator's advisor, Dr. Susan James, at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University, 75 University Ave. West, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3C5, or at (519) 884-1970, extension 3233. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Dr. Bruce Arai, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, 884-0710, extension 3753.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may refuse to take part without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read (or listened to the primary investigator reading) and understand the above information. I was given a copy of this form. I agree to take part in this study.

Participant's Signature _____ **Date** _____

Investigator's Signature _____ **Date** _____

Appendix H
Wilfrid Laurier University
STUDY INFORMATION LETTER - KEY INFORMANTS

**“Skippers of the Shore Crew”:
Women and a Fish Plant Closure**

Principal Investigator: Sheila M. Keefe

Advisor: Susan James

You are invited to take part in a research study. There are two purposes to this study: (1) to learn how the northern cod moratorium has affected women who worked in the fish plant for at least ten (10) years, their families, and the community in general; and (2) to help these women deal with the changes brought about by the cod moratorium by encouraging them to come together in a group to share information and provide support.

INFORMATION

This study asks for your help in elucidating how the cod moratorium may have affected women fish plant workers in the community of Black Tickle, Labrador. To this end, you will be invited to participate in several activities over this spring, summer and possibly the fall. Firstly, you will be invited to participate in a one hour interview to take place at a time and location of your choosing (however, sometime during the month of May, 2001 is preferable). The purpose of this interview will be to gain expert information relating to changes you've noticed as it pertains to women fish plant workers in their early to late 40's and 50's since the cod moratorium. Audio taping will occur only with your consent; otherwise, manual notes will be taken.

Secondly, once the transcript (if audio-taped) or notes have been written, you will be invited to review them for accuracy and completeness. Thus, you will have the opportunity to ensure that your opinions and ideas have been portrayed as you intended. This may require an additional half hour to one-hour of your time.

Thirdly, once all the key informant interviews have been carried out (of which there will be an additional three (3) or four (4) with informants in fields different from your own) and the information analyzed, you will be invited to review the emergent themes and to comment on their appropriateness. This may require one half hour to one hour of your time.

Similarly, once the full draft report has been written, you will be given an opportunity to review and comment on its accuracy and completeness. An additional one half to one hour of your time may be requested here.

Finally, once all information (from women fish plant workers and key informants) has been analyzed and organized into themes, you will be invited to a community forum expected to

occur on June 30, 2001. The purpose of this meeting will be to share the information gained through this study with all members of the community. Feedback will be provided in both oral and written form, and an assistant will help facilitate this meeting. Although your attendance would be appreciated, it is not a requirement for participation in other phases of this study.

This study asks you to commit approximately five (5) hours of your time to this study (including individual interview, review of transcript or notes, review of draft report, community forum) spread out over the course of this spring, summer, and possibly fall.

RISKS

Before you make the decision to participate in this study, you must be informed of the risks you may be taking and how you will be protected against those risks as much as possible.

1. Others may become aware of your involvement in this study. Because you may be the sole provider of a public service to the citizens of Black Tickle (e.g., nurse, police officer), any opinions and/or comments expressed by you in the interview, and published in the final thesis report, may be easily traced back to you. Therefore, the principal investigator cannot promise you total anonymity. However, I can assure you that the transcript or notes resulting from your interview will be kept strictly confidential and safely stored. In addition, your name will never appear in any report and you will be able to screen all quotations of yours before they are incorporated into my report. That way, you may have some control over the amount of identifying information included in my final report.
2. There may be other unforeseen risks to you.

BENEFITS

There are many benefits to carrying out this study.

- Firstly, while there have been several studies carried out on the Island of Newfoundland about laid-off women fish plant workers, stories of women fish plant workers in Labrador have been ignored and thought to be the same as those of Newfoundlanders. However, Labrador people have a special history and culture and their stories deserve to be told for future generations. Thus, this research will expand the present knowledge base.
- Secondly, the creation of a women's group will not only benefit the women participants themselves through the sharing of resources and the lending of emotional support, but also the community as a whole through the setting of an example of participation and action.

- Thirdly, you may gain new skills and self-confidence as you take part in each phase of the research project and provide crucial feedback to the principal investigator, Sheila Keefe.
- Finally, the final thesis document resulting from this study might be used for political and lobbying purposes on behalf of the people of Black Tickle. This study may be used to bring outside attention to the situation in Black Tickle and highlight the need for more partnerships between people and governments.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any tape recording or written notes taken during your interview will be safely stored at the principal investigator's home and will be available only to her. If you should consent to the audio taping of your interview, the resulting tape will be destroyed immediately after it has been transcribed. To further ensure your confidentiality, your name will not appear on the transcript or written notes, but a code number will be attached until your revisions have been made. Once changes have been added, the code numbers will also be removed, thereby ensuring total anonymity.

Finally, your name will not appear in any written report nor will any information about you that could possibly reveal your identity to others. You will have an opportunity to ensure your own anonymity through your feedback on draft and final reports.

COMPENSATION

If the interview is conducted in person, you will receive refreshments midway through or at the end. For participating in this study, you will also receive a small gift at the end of the study, valued between \$15.00 and \$20.00, regardless of whether you withdraw before the study has ended.

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or if you experience negative effects as a result of participating in this study) you may contact the researcher, Sheila Keefe, at PO Box 55, Black Tickle, Labrador, A0K 1N0, or at (709) 471-8894. You may also contact the principle investigator's advisor, Dr. Susan James, at Sir Wilfrid Laurier University, 75 University Ave. West, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3C5, or at (519) 884-1970, extension 3233. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Dr. Bruce Arai, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, 884-0710, extension 3753.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may refuse to take part without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

Appendix I
Wilfrid Laurier University
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT - KEY INFORMANTS

**“Skippers of the Shore Crew”:
Women and a Fish Plant Closure**

**Principal Investigator: Sheila M. Keefe
Advisor: Susan James**

You are invited to take part in a research study. There are two purposes to this study: (1) to learn how the northern cod moratorium has affected women who worked in the fish plant for at least ten (10) years, their families, and the community in general; and (2) to help these women deal with the changes brought about by the cod moratorium by encouraging them to come together in a group to share information and provide support.

INFORMATION

This study asks for your help in elucidating how the cod moratorium may have affected women fish plant workers in the community of Black Tickle, Labrador. To this end, you will be invited to participate in several activities over this spring, summer and possibly the fall. Firstly, you will be invited to participate in a one hour interview to take place at a time and location of your choosing (however, sometime during the month of May, 2001 is preferable). The purpose of this interview will be to gain expert information relating to changes you've noticed as it pertains to women fish plant workers in their early to late 40's and 50's since the cod moratorium. Audio taping will occur only with your consent; otherwise, manual notes will be taken.

Secondly, once the transcript (if audio-taped) or notes have been written, you will be invited to review them for accuracy and completeness. Thus, you will have the opportunity to ensure that your opinions and ideas have been portrayed as you intended. This may require an additional half hour to one-hour of your time.

Thirdly, once all the key informant interviews have been carried out (of which there will be an additional three (3) or four (4) with informants in fields different from your own) and the information analyzed, you will be invited to review the emergent themes and to comment on their appropriateness. This may require one half hour to one hour of your time.

Similarly, once the full draft report has been written, you will be given an opportunity to review and comment on its accuracy and completeness. An additional one half to one hour of your time may be requested here.

Participant's Initials

Finally, once all information (from women fish plant workers and key informants) has been analyzed and organized into themes, you will be invited to a community forum expected to occur on June 30, 2001. The purpose of this meeting will be to share the information gained through this study with all members of the community. Feedback will be provided in both oral and written form, and an assistant will help facilitate this meeting. Although your attendance would be appreciated, it is not a requirement for participation in other phases of this study.

This study asks you to commit approximately five (5) hours of your time to this study (including individual interview, review of transcript or notes, review of draft report, community forum) spread out over the course of this spring, summer, and possibly fall.

RISKS

Before you make the decision to participate in this study, you must be informed of the risks you may be taking and how you will be protected against those risks as much as possible.

1. Others may become aware of your involvement in this study. Because you may be the sole provider of a public service (e.g., nurse, police officer) or in a leadership position within the community of Black Tickle, any opinions and/or comments expressed by you during the interview, and later published in my thesis report, may be easily traced back to you. Therefore, the principal investigator cannot promise you total anonymity. However, I can assure you that the transcript or notes resulting from your interview will be kept strictly confidential and safely stored. In addition, your name will never appear in any report and you will be able to screen all quotations taken from your transcript before they are incorporated into my report. That way, you may have some control over the amount of identifying information included in my final report.
2. There may be other unforeseen risks to you.

BENEFITS

There are many benefits to carrying out this study.

- Firstly, while there have been several studies carried out on the Island of Newfoundland about laid-off women fish plant workers, stories of women fish plant workers in Labrador have been ignored and thought to be the same as those of Newfoundlanders. However, Labrador people have a special history and culture and their stories deserve to be told for future generations. Thus, this research will expand the present knowledge base.

Participant's Initials

- Secondly, the creation of a women's group will not only benefit the women participants themselves through the sharing of resources and the lending of emotional support, but also the community as a whole through the setting of an example of participation and action.
- Thirdly, you may gain new skills and self-confidence as you take part in each phase of the research project and provide crucial feedback to the principal investigator, Sheila Keefe.
- Finally, the final thesis document resulting from this study might be used for political and lobbying purposes on behalf of the people of Black Tickle. This study may be used to bring outside attention to the situation in Black Tickle and highlight the need for more partnerships between people and governments.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any tape recording or written notes taken during your interview will be safely stored at the principal investigator's home and will be available only to her. If you should consent to the audio taping of your interview, the resulting tape will be destroyed immediately after it has been transcribed. To further ensure your confidentiality, your name will not appear on the transcript or written notes, but a code number will be attached until your revisions have been made. Once changes have been added, the code numbers will also be removed, thereby ensuring total anonymity.

Finally, your name will not appear in any written report nor will any information about you that could possibly reveal your identity to others. You will have an opportunity to ensure your own anonymity through your feedback on draft and final reports.

COMPENSATION

If the interview is conducted in person, you will receive refreshments midway through or at the end. For participating in this study, you will also receive a small gift at the end of the study, valued between \$15.00 and \$20.00, regardless of whether you withdraw before the study has ended.

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or if you experience negative effects as a result of participating in this study) you may contact the researcher, Sheila Keefe, at PO Box 55, Black Tickle, Labrador, A0K 1N0, or at (709) 471-8894. You may also contact the principle investigator's advisor, Dr. Susan James, at Sir Wilfrid Laurier

Participant's Initials

University, 75 University Ave. West, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3C5, or at (519) 884-1970, extension 3233. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Dr. Bruce Arai, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, 884-0710, extension 3753.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may refuse to take part without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

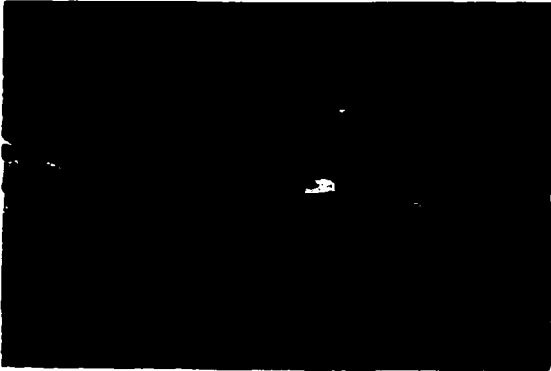
CONSENT

I have read and understand the above information. I received a copy of this form and I agree to take part in this study.

Participant's Signature _____ **Date** _____

Investigator's Signature _____ **Date** _____

Appendix J
Pictures Of Black Tickle



The Tickle and part of Salmon Bight



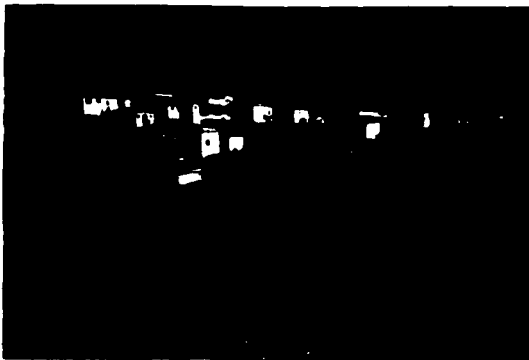
The rest of Salmon Bight and The Point



Air Labrador -- a twin otter plane, seating 19 people, provides year-round access, weather permitting, of course!



MV Northern Ranger provides a cheaper mode of transportation from July 1st to October 24th and brings in many tourists!



Wood hauled from in "The Bay" approximately 29 km away



Nieces Stephanie & Jessica play in the snow on a beautiful Spring day



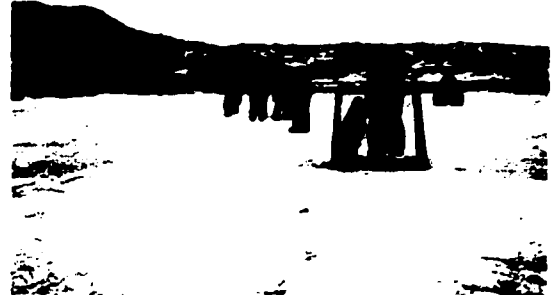
My dad retrieving water from a dug well up in "The Gulch"



Water Treatment Plant provided by the provincial government as a short-term solution to an ongoing water crisis in Black Tickle



My partner David and nephew Rodney out for a game of hockey



A game of hockey on an homemade rink on a frozen pond



*2 kindergarten and 3 high school graduates in 2001!
Way to go St. Peter's School!*



A breathtaking sunset after a rain shower in late July!