

**Bringing the B'ys (Back) to the Bay:
Mediating Rural Renewal in Codroy Valley, Newfoundland
Using a Critical Regionalist, Ecomuseological Praxis**

by

Roshni Caputo-Nimbark

A dissertation submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Folklore
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

October 2025

I dedicate this thesis to my father,
Ashakant “Kant” Nimbark,
who entertained no limits to laughter,
perseverance, and wonder.

I further dedicate it to Spud,
who with her assertive mewl and rattle purr,
at 23, taught me the value
of effective communication.

Acknowledgements

My gratitude runs deep as I reflect upon those who have helped me churn out this thesis. Five years with the Folklore Department at MUN have altered my approach to learning, speaking, thinking, and being in the world. Even the first two Covid years, on Webex and then in masks, were enriching, No departmental potlucks, but plenty of bright eyes and colourful masks.

My supervisor, Dr. Cory Thorne Gutiérrez, extended encouragement, friendship, and a brilliant mind to a supervisee in need, especially when we spent hours poring over mountains of scholarship applications. Thanks as well for being my entry point into the marriage of folklore and queer theory, especially the works of Muñoz and Reid & Taylor.

My supervisory committee, Dr. Jillian Gould and Dr. Sarah Gordon, have provided nothing but thoughtful and provoking feedback on all my work. Jillian was my saving grace at the finish line as we spent hours reviewing the minutiae of my thesis, and beyond that is always a pleasure to chat and laugh with. Sarah is an inspiration for always going above and beyond in her teaching and for just being a lovely human.

I am grateful to Dr. Kelley Totten for offering the museum seminar in winter 2021, which became my portal to the world of ecomuseology. Thank you also for giving me the opportunity to contribute to your work on the Folk School movement, which in many ways runs parallel to ecomuseology.

My fellow graduate students have been a pleasure to grow with and learn from. A special thanks goes out to Meaghan Collins for all the hearty laughs, and for the insanely positive and uplifting tarot reading right before my thesis submission and oral defense. Thanks also to Rose Samokovlija Baruh for all the long conversations, and for your insistence in always sharing food, especially ajvar!

Codroy Valley, thank you for inspiring me to write this thesis. Every person, place, and sensuous being I connected with in the Valley is a story in itself, and many more will doubtlessly emerge in the ecomuseum. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who agreed to be interviewed, for sharing your life stories with me honestly, graciously, and wittily. Thanks to Joan and Loyola for introducing us to the Valley back in 2015. Thanks to the b'ys who introduced me and Lana to the River Run, an endlessly magical ride. Thanks to all the lovely people at darts for all the hilarious times, for always entertaining my appeal for stories about growing up in the Valley, and for the farewell party. Thanks to our friends and neighbours for the pop-ins, gift exchanges, late-night parties, and for adopting us at holidays. A big thank you to Ron Laudadio for enthusiastically supporting and overseeing the ecomuseum at its early stages, and to all the volunteers who are committed to collecting stories, songs, artifacts, and memories.

My exploration of ecomuseums in the United Kingdom was rendered infinitely more manageable on the ground thanks to the help of Dr. Victoria McMillan. I am deeply grateful for your enthusiasm to take a fellow ecomuseum enthusiast under your wing, for your willingness to connect me with practitioners in the region and elsewhere in Europe, and for your hospitality in Nottingham.

I am eternally grateful to Dr. Glenn Sutter for connecting me with various nodes of the ecomuseum network in Saskatchewan, and for mentoring Codroy Valley folks in our early stages of building an ecomuseum there. Thank you to all the folks at Calling Lakes EcoMuseum, Prairie Wind & Silver Sage, Ecoamgueddfa, and Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum who took time out of your busy schedules to share your work with me, including the special places that are central to it. Thank you to everyone else who entertained my inquisitiveness while researching ecomuseums

in Saskatchewan, England, Wales, Spain, and Portugal. Your work has inspired me immensely and I look forward to catching up with your admirable community-building efforts in the future.

The actual writing of the thesis happened when I was catsitting in various homes in Europe. Thanks to Abhiroop and Susmita for the cozy and quiet flat in Berlin for a whole month, and to Momo and Mishti for being lovely and undemanding housemates. Thanks to Grizzie and Dave for entrusting your quirky and commodious home to us in Cheltenham, where I was able to pound out the vast majority of this thesis. Phlotus, you are a dreamboat of a cat and I love you. Tortellini, thank you for sharing your calming space and for letting me enter your tortoise temporality. I now believe tortoise time may hold the key to human edification.

To all my friends in St. John's, thank you for all the distractions from my work, in the form of camping trips, dance parties, potlucks, hikes, movie nights, park hangs, snowball fights, book clubs, festivals, and general tomfoolery. Thanks also for patiently prodding me to explain my work in laymen terms, something I always struggle with.

One certainty is that I would not have made it this far without Lana's infinite love and support. The endless cooked meals, dance parties, Jeopardy breaks, burpees, crafted gifts, words of encouragement, bike rides, frisbee tosses, and backyard adventures were the fuel that kept me afloat over the years. Thanks for sharing the stage with Spud as the sweetest woojies who ever lived. On that note, thanks also to Nori, Ruby, Boy, and Sini for being the best friends and family we could have asked for in the Valley. You guys rock.

Thanks to all the other creatures of this earth I didn't mention, who have shared their smiles, laughter, care, and camaraderie over the past five years, or who have given me pause to reflect on life's marvels and contradictions. Let's not give up trying to give this world back to earth. Let's nurture healthier, slower, more care-full systems. Let's keep this party going.

Abstract

This thesis considers how tradition, broadly construed, and narrative shift through time, place, and context, and might be mobilized in a community-building project that seeks to avert sociocultural, economic, and ecological crisis in Codroy Valley of southwest Newfoundland. It focuses on residual desires and grievances of a consistently forestalled utopia by sketching a palimpsest of structures of feeling across time and space. Guided by the malleable form of the ecomuseum, a community-led “museum without walls,” framed by critical regionalism, public folklore, and autoethnography, I underscore how custom and narrative may draw attention to commons, queerness, and posthumanism as antidotes to heteronormative, xenophobic, and ecophobic discourses and practices that devalue and endanger sense of place and belonging. I suggest that renewed attention to place in this framework may encourage a diversity of “b’ys,” from past residents to newcomers, to build a desirable life in rural Newfoundland, or “the bay.”

Where this work enhances previous studies of rural renewal in Newfoundland and Labrador is in its 1. critical regionalist approach, connecting local material and discursive processes to larger-than-local narratives and phenomena; 2. use of autoethnography with critical theory, providing a convenient vantage point from which to analyze discourse critically and affectively; and 3. application of findings in a multimodal, public folklore project that builds community as participants negotiate identity, heritage, and wellbeing. Desirable outcomes include the revival and strengthening of ecologically/economically mindful narratives, customs, and art. Caveats related to objectification of culture and identity in the ecomuseum are tempered through phenomenological practices surrounding *in situ* interpretation, third space dialogue, and collaborative ethnography.

My methodology lays interpretations out transparently to facilitate open dialogue that garners disparate and marginalized perspectives, builds grassroots praxis, encourages research, and, ultimately, decolonizes violent discourses. I urge ecomuseum practitioners to use this methodology in Codroy Valley and elsewhere. One year after I pitched the ecomuseum idea to residents in 2023, Codroy Valley Ecomuseum became a member of the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives. Today, it is managed by dozens of volunteers collecting, interpreting, and displaying their multifaceted heritage. This thesis is an addendum to their work.

Keywords: collaborative ethnography, commons, critical regionalism, diverse economies, ecomuseology, narrative, public folklore, queer theory, rural renewal, sense of place, third space

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Welcome to “The Valley”	1
1.2 A sense of place	7
1.3 Ecomuseum as cultural mediator	17
1.4 Trouble in Newfoundland & Labrador’s outports	20
1.5 Enclosure of Codroy Valley’s commons	29
1.6 Spaces of resistance	41
1.7 Timeline of research	46
1.8 Structure of thesis	49
Chapter 2: Framework and Methodologies	53
2.1 Critical regionalism	55
2.2 A glocal sense of place	67
2.3 Third space and narrative	74
2.4 Intersectionality and queerness	81
2.5 Unsettling the archive	86
2.6 Posthuman and decolonial spaces	93
2.7 Ethnographic advancements	101
2.8 Public folklore	112
Chapter 3: Narrative and Ethnography in Codroy Valley	119
3.1 Historical narratives	120
3.2 Geographical narratives	133
3.3 Eco- narratives and posthuman discourse	140
Chapter 4: Cruising Codroy Valley’s Commons	152
4.1 Commons and rural queerness	154
4.2 Reading for queerness in Codroy Valley’s foodways	162
4.3 Queering nostalgia	175
4.4 Vegan and queer in the Valley: an autoethnography	179
Chapter 5: Ecomuseums: An Overview	187
5.1 From cabinets of curiosities to the <i>nouvelle muséologie</i>	188
5.2 Ecomuseological praxis	197

Chapter 6: Posthumanism and Critical Regionalism in Saskatchewan	209
6.1 Calling Lakes EcoMuseum	210
6.2 Prairie Wind & Silver Sage	220
Chapter 7: Boundary Work in the United Kingdom	234
7.1 Ecoamgueddfa	235
7.2 Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum	249
Chapter 8: Caveats and Possibilities	262
8.1 Objectifying culture	263
8.2 Cultural tourism	271
8.3 Envisioning a Codroy Valley ecomuseum	273
Conclusion	290
Appendix A: Codroy Valley Ecomuseum information session	296
I. Context	296
II. Vision	297
III. Next Steps	298
IV. Suggested Themes	302
V. Miscellany	304
Appendix B: Codroy Valley Commons newspaper article	306
Bibliography	307

List of Figures

1.1. Welcome sign as one enters Codroy Valley from the south	2
1.2. The Bailey Bridge at Searston Beach	4
1.3. The geodesic dome with its plastic cover removed	5
1.4. Petites, a ghost town on Newfoundland’s south coast	23
1.5. View of the Grand Codroy River from Indian Hill	32
1.6. Maps showing division of lands along the Grand Codroy River	32
3.1. Afton Farmhouse Lodge	125
3.2. Zane Grey and his party during their visit to Codroy Valley, 1929	126
3.3. Maps of Codroy Valley and the greater southwest coastal area	134
4.1. Three commoners collecting garlic from a commoned plot	163
4.2. Commoners harvest garlic and plant cover crop on a CVC plot	164
4.3. A spinning bee in Codroy Valley, 1935	178
6.1. CLEM tree giveaway at Fort Qu’Appelle’s July 1 st celebration	218
6.2. “Little Brick Schoolhouse,” PWSS’s main hub	222
6.3. A community quilt featured at the ecomuseum in Val Marie	223
6.4. The Cloakroom Gallery, featuring the <i>Small Works from a Big Land</i> exhibit.....	224
6.5. The Val Marie grain elevator	227
6.6. Alex and a visitor during a uniquely Saskatchewan cartographic exchange	231
7.1. <i>Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw</i>	240
7.2. View from the Wales Coast Path above <i>Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw</i>	241
7.3. The café at <i>Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw</i> that resembles a sea urchin	242
7.4. Inside <i>Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw</i> ’s café	244

7.5. Old stone church in the Pen Llŷn countryside, inhabited by artists	248
7.6. Border tart and tea in Etal	251
7.7. Commemorative cross at Flodden Field	253
7.8. James Joicey in front of Barmoor Castle	255
7.9. Church of Branxton with the ecomuseum sign in front	255
7.10. Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum’s visitor centre, possibly the “world’s smallest”	256
7.11. Inside the world’s smallest visitor centre	257
8.1. A 2024 Come Home Year sand sculpture	282
8.2. The backside of the sand hippo	282
8.3. “North the owl” created for Winter Carnival 2025	283
8.4. “Stella” the Steller’s sea eagle in Codroy Valley	286

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Welcome to “The Valley”

My first encounter with Codroy Valley was in August 2015. My partner, Lana, and I were returning home to St. John’s, capital of Newfoundland and Labrador, after a seven-month bicycle trip. We had just taken the ferry from sunny North Sydney, Nova Scotia to Port aux Basques,¹ Newfoundland, and were welcomed back to “The Rock,” as Newfoundland is often referred to, with a bone-chilling, salty morning air covered by a thick blanket of fog. The fog on the TCH was so dense as to render it nearly impossible for us to see the road and the seemingly endless convoy of trucks thundering by. We tried hitchhiking to no avail. Onwards we sketchily pedaled on the invisible shoulder for around 30 kilometers, when suddenly, as if heeding our prayers, the clouds lifted. Dumbstruck by the beauty and tranquility of this place, we rode past a highway sign that greeted us: “Codroy Valley: A Warm Welcome from all 15 Communities” (Figure 1.1). Longing for a moment to rest and bask in the sunshine, we rolled off the road and perched on a patch of warm grass. All around us, the glorious sound of birdsong soothed our chilled ears as we drank in the majesty of the Table Mountains alongside the hot tea from our thermos.

We had just started munching on carrots when a truck pulled up and a kindly-looking, elderly man beckoned to us. “Put those store-bought vegetables away,” he said. “I’ll get you some real carrots.” After exchanging a few words with this seemingly trustworthy character, Loyola, we tossed our bikes in his truck and accompanied him to his home in South Branch, a

¹ Port aux Basques is one of the prime gateways to Newfoundland, an island in the North Atlantic that pairs with Labrador on the mainland of Canada to form the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. A ferry in Port aux Basques transports goods and passengers daily (weather dependent) to and from North Sydney, Nova Scotia. This ferry terminal, a much smaller ferry terminal in St. Barbe linking Newfoundland’s Great Northern Peninsula to Quebec and Labrador, and a small airport in Deer Lake comprise the three civilian gateways into western Newfoundland. Codroy Valley is a half-hour drive from the Port aux Basques ferry terminal along the TCH East, or a 3.5-hour drive from Deer Lake along the TCH West.

15-minute drive on the TCH East, at the northern edge of Codroy Valley. His wife, Joan, greeted us enthusiastically and took a break from her Pilates workout to cook us up a hearty breakfast of toast and fresh eggs from the Valley. On our way out, Loyola showed us around his garden and pulled up a handful of prizeworthy carrots for us to bring on the road. As we cycled away, we passed a very old man hobbling along the highway with his donkey, who was pulling a cart loaded with wood. This last image of Codroy Valley imprinted itself on our memories for a long time, during which we yearned to return.



Figure 1.1: Welcome sign as one enters Codroy Valley from the south. Photo by author.

The return occurred six months later, when we borrowed a friend's car to drive the nine hours from St. John's to check out a few pieces of land we were interested in purchasing in Western Newfoundland. We intended to grow our own food and build a small house, live simply, and possibly open a vegan café.² Joan and Loyola graciously offered to host us at their home, gave us

² We both converted from vegetarian to vegan in January 2016, when we decided veganism aligned with our environmental and animal ethics in a way that vegetarianism did not. Over time, as I describe in Chapter 4, we

a tour of the Valley, invited us to social events, and did a fantastic job of convincing us that we should move there. Driving with our hosts through the Valley's vast swaths of fertile farmland, we were impressed by its unique landscape spotted with log sheep barns, hay barracks, stretches of sandy beach, old cart paths, and a spectacular estuarine wetland sheltered by the ever-present Table Mountains. Rather than purchase one of the tracts we had bookmarked on the internet, we stumbled upon a sizeable, affordable house for sale next to a trestle bridge in St. Andrew's with well over an acre of land and surrounded on two sides by the Little Codroy River. Next day, Lana and I convened under the Bailey Bridge at Searston Beach (Figure 1.2) and made our decision. We would buy the property, build a garden, live in the two-story barn, and open an eco-hostel in the main house. We made the pragmatic decision that, rather than serve vegan food at a café, we would bake vegan breakfast muffins for guests each morning.

Over the next few summers, using shovels and sod cutters, we transformed a barren lawn into an expansive and productive garden. Year round, weather permitting, toiling from dawn until dusk, and with occasional help from friends visiting from St. John's, couchsurfers, touring cyclists, or volunteers we hosted via work-exchange websites, we first framed one side of the future garden with serpentine hügelkultur beds³ loaded with hardwood logs, twigs, leaves, earth, and manure from a neighbouring horse. Next, we dug a variety of meandering, centripetal, and straight beds with walking paths wide enough for a wheelbarrow. We planted trees, shrubs, and dozens of species of perennial and annual herbs, flowers, fruits, and vegetables. We built trellises and a cold frame from scrap wire and wood found on the side of the road. We built three

began incorporating small quantities of local game into our diet, primarily moose and cod, either gifted by or exchanged with friends and neighbours for vegetables or favours.

³ Literally "mound culture," hügelkultur is a permaculture technique in which a mound is constructed from wood debris and other organic material, which slowly decay and continuously feed nutrients to plants on its raised bed (Holzer 2011).

compost bins for food scraps and humanure⁴ from our out- and in-houses. Constantly taunted by the infamous Wreckhouse winds,⁵ we constructed an 18-foot geodesic dome greenhouse (Figure 1.3) so as to avoid pesky corners being snagged by merciless gusts. The dome became the most visible icon of our hostel and its microclimate reaped endless rewards year after year, including a warm sanctuary in the shoulder seasons, replete with hammock and sunbathing cats.



Figure 1.2: The Bailey Bridge at Searston Beach. Photo by author.

When Covid-19 surfaced in Codroy Valley, as with most hospitality businesses around the world, our hostel suffered considerably. Yet our diligence in growing and preserving food, saving seeds, and buying bulk paid off when we managed to avoid grocery stores for seven months in 2020. That year, we also put off a well-attended seed-saving workshop and continued

⁴ Humanure is literally human manure, or solid waste, that is used as fertilizer. Compost from humanure can be safely deployed in Codroy Valley after three years, when all harmful pathogens have decomposed.

⁵ The infamous “Wreckhouse” southeasterlies occur mostly in fall and winter with recorded speeds of up to 230 km per hour. They are known to blow trucks off the highway and, indeed, to wreck houses.

hosting “foreign film Friday” in the barn cinema, taking all social distancing precautions. The biggest drawback for us during the pandemic was that we no longer could host music events. Until that point, house concerts had been one of our most cherished community activities, and they were at their peak popularity when Covid hit. They had brought in musicians from far and wide, introduced residents to eclectic music traditions in an intimate setting, and sometimes were even preceded by a meal, such as when a Cajun musical duo adapted a traditional Cajun dish to local ingredients and prepared a cod étouffée for their audience before the show.⁶



Figure 1.3: The geodesic dome with its plastic cover removed. Photo by author.

In the following years, we continued to expand our garden, selectively resow garlic plants, which multiplied from 30 cloves in 2017 to 1,000 bulbs in 2024, and experiment with permaculture techniques as well as new hobbies like brewing beer from scratch and flavoured by our own

⁶ In 2019, we began hosting musicians through a regional network called Home Routes / Chemin Chez Nous. Artists from Canada and elsewhere who were touring in the Newfoundland circuit would pass through 11 locations, mostly houses and small businesses, across the island, ours being the final destination on the circuit. Due to Covid-19, Home Routes tragically ended mid-season following a phenomenal Rube & Rake show in March 2020.

hops. We rented out kayaks, which could be launched from our property, and discovered a vast network of hilly walking or snowshoeing paths right outside our door. We became friendly with our neighbours and played darts each week at the local community centre. We performed a choreographed dance at Winter Carnival and a few songs at Local Talent, hosted an exchange student from Brazil who attended the local K-12, took jobs at a local plant nursery, volunteered at river cleanups and bird counts, served on the board of the Codroy Valley Area Development Association (CVADA),⁷ and hosted dozens of free schools, movie nights, and workshops pertaining to permaculture, fermentation, repairing, and upcycling. Our home was a buzz of activity as we strove to do meaningful work, for ourselves and our adoptive community.

Yet, despite our best efforts to “fit in” while adhering to our ecological, economic, and social values, for complex reasons I examine throughout this thesis, we persisted in feeling like outsiders. Although in many ways we were living our dream, particularly in the realms of food and sustainability, the sense of belonging we had expected to settle in naturally never really came. The deep and trusting friendships we had cherished in St. John’s and elsewhere found few parallels in Codroy Valley; more often, we felt exoticized and othered. While we sensed tacit community approval for our diverse activities, and perhaps even bewildered amusement at our perceived unconventionality, the spirit of collaboration we required in order to thrive in common with our fellow community members was conspicuously absent. Uncertain of whether that sense of belonging and *communitas* would eventually take form, and enable us to do the urgent and transformative social and environmental work we had set out to do, in 2024, we made the difficult decision to move out of Codroy Valley.

⁷ Codroy Valley Area Development Association (CVADA) is a non-profit community advocacy corporation run by elected volunteers who reside in one of the 15 communities that officially make up the valley. As Codroy Valley is an unincorporated entity, the CVADA Chair is the closest figurehead the region has to a mayor. The current Chair, Ron Laudadio, has been instrumental in getting the ecomuseum off the ground.

This thesis is largely a reckoning with that decision and the factors leading up to it. It is equally an offering of hope that all the b'ys, from past residents to newcomers, be welcomed (back) to the Valley, and the bay more generally, and feel motivated and encouraged to build strong and healthy communities there. My optimism is grounded in evidence I have witnessed in Codroy Valley of historical and contemporary commons,⁸ queerness,⁹ posthuman ecologies,¹⁰ and perpetual interactions between spaces at multiple scales.¹¹ Interspersing research and theory with stories I collected over eight years, I make a case for rural renewal and sustainable futures in the Valley and allied places. While my dialogic technique sought to elicit emic interpretations as unambiguously as possible, interpretations herein are entirely my own, and I encourage feedback whether my readings are perceived as biased, misplaced, incomplete, spot on, or dead wrong. Hence, I respect reciprocal ethnographic tenets by which interpretations are laid out transparently to facilitate open dialogue that seeks to garner disparate and marginalized perspectives, encourage research, build grassroots methodologies, dispel myths, and, ultimately, decolonize discourses of violence and exclusion, some all but crystallized in dominant narratives.

1.2 A sense of place

One of my first impressions of Codroy Valley came from a sweatshirt. A couple of the Valley's shops—which sell everything from bananas to toilet bowls—proudly displayed hoodies listing

⁸ Commons, commoner, and commoning are related terms that appear throughout this thesis, most directly in section 1.4 below and in Chapter 4. In its most basic sense, commons refers to the material and discursive processes involved in the informal governance of resources, which may be natural, cultural, or intellectual. Commoners are participants in the commons, while the verb common refers to the act of recasting a resource for common use.

⁹ I define queerness as socially-constructed marginality. In this thesis, and most pointedly in Chapter 4, I connect this marginality to discourses and practices around 2SLGBTQIA+ identities and spaces.

¹⁰ The notion of posthuman ecologies challenges conventional binaries such as human/nature, self/other, and economy/ecology, which institutional knowledge has inculcated into our common sense at least since the ascent of rationalist ideologies during the Enlightenment.

¹¹ These myriad and abiding interactions between the local and more-than-local form the crux of critical regionalist theory, a concept I explicate in Chapter 2.

two dozen or so surnames familiar to the Valley's residents: AuCoin, Benoit, Cormier, Downey, Gale, Gallant, Farrell, Hillier, Hynes, Lomond, Luedee, MacArthur, MacDonald, MacIsaac, MacNeil, O'Quinn, Ryan, Samms, and so on. Truly, you would be hard pressed to find someone who has grown up in the Valley not linked to one of the names on the shirt.¹² You would likely feel an immense sense of belonging to see your name validated among the ranks of OG Codroy Valleyers. Of course, my cumbersome and foreign-sounding name would never fit in alongside the English-, French-, Scottish-, and Irish-derived ones. Would I ever belong in this place?

Although my surname belies no historical belonging to Codroy Valley, my sense of place, my emotional attachment to the Valley, did flourish over time. For human geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, place "is a center of meaning constructed by experience" (Tuan 1977, 152). He tells us that emotions in place are tied to long-term perceptions involving all the senses, and are "made up of experiences, mostly fleeting and undramatic, repeated day after day and over and over the span of years. [Sense of place] is a unique blend of sights, sounds, and smells, a unique harmony of natural and artificial rhythms such as the sunrise and sunset, of work and play" (Ibid., 183–184). Environmental psychologists Albert Mehrabian and James Russell (1974), likewise, attest to sensory stimuli, such as sounds, smells, and colours, as requisite for bringing about emotional reactions in places. Sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1991 [1974]) further adduces an individual's understanding of spaces as constructed through the movements of their sensorial body and their mental reactions.

Codroy Valley has a scent. The smell of roses is infectious in June, as is the smell of hay during haymaking week later in the summer. Certain spots in the Valley fill one's eardrums with

¹² Another line of shirts displayed community names. The insider/outsider status conveyed through the seemingly innocuous pronouncement of communities that "make the cut" is significant within a critical regionalist framework, and it is a provocation that I unpack in my discussion of geographical narratives in Chapter 3.

sounds of birdsong heard in few other places.¹³ Smells and sounds might combine amidst a Wreckhouse storm on the salty shore of Searston Beach to produce a sensation uniquely of Codroy Valley. For me and Lana, a tasty brassica that thrived in our garden each year over the entire growing season, and which was more or less concocted there through a singular process of kohlrabi and mustard cross-fertilization, will always bring me back in spirit to my home and garden, and to the adjacent river and mountains. The taste, or even a memory of tasting, those succulent leaves capture my emotional attachment, my sense of place, in Codroy Valley.

According to folklorist Kent Ryden (1993), sense of place is nurtured by four intersecting factors. The first is how physical geography informs and is interpreted through material culture and other folklore. The second is the histories of a place, whether official or unofficial, textbook or apocryphal. Any history is necessarily ongoing and performative. Indeed, Ryden (1993, 64) contends that “to see, listen, and talk about a place is to understand and perpetuate the history of a place.” The third factor is personal and group identity, which “becomes stronger the closer we get to the center of this ring of concentric places”¹⁴ (Ibid., 65). His fourth component of sense of place is topophilia, what Tuan (1974, 4) defines as “the affective bond between people and place or setting.” We project our feelings onto our physical surroundings, so that if something pleasant happens, we feel fondly toward that place, or if something unpleasant happens there, we feel repelled by it. Yet, Ryden’s characterization of sense of place, particularly his notion of “the center of this ring,” demands clarification as to what constitutes centre and margin. What are the

¹³ Codroy Valley’s unique geography attracts many species of birds year-round. The Grand Codroy Estuary was designated a Wetland of National Importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1987, and the delta and estuarine wetlands are considered to be “Newfoundland’s most productive and valuable wetland habitats” (Environment Canada 2006).

¹⁴ Writing in 1993, Ryden claimed that our everyday lives were more consumed with the local and experiential than the state or country. With 21st century advancements in increasingly pervasive media technologies, this may no longer be the case.

implications for newcomers' position in the ring? Marginal folk? Nonhumans? A growing numbers of seasonal residents? I return to these questions in later chapters.

Nonetheless, variable perspectives regarding history, geography, identity, or affect are without question meaningful for different folks, and may change over time, space, or context. Importantly, these elements are connected to one's ability to find a *flow* in a place. As is often the case in rural communities, finding that flow can prove challenging for newcomers not privy to local customs, legends, humour, dialect, foodways, or belief systems. For instance, the first time Joan and Loyola invited us for dinner, we assumed 3:00 pm was a reasonable hour to arrive, a full two hours before traditional mealtime. We were therefore surprised to encounter anxious faces and rumbling bellies at the door! That was when we learned that in Codroy Valley, dinner is synonymous with lunch, and occurs at noon, whereas supper unequivocally occurs at five. Needless to say, we never repeated that mistake.

I also recall a palpable sense of place that accompanied my slow and semi-conscious refinement of the local cadence, phonetics, and jargon. Even the simple word “b’y,” a ubiquitous Newfoundland term for a person, has a distinct pronunciation in the Valley that I finessed over the years. Acquisition of place-name fluency for wayfinding purposes, whether in reference to roads,¹⁵ waterways, or landmarks, was similarly gradual. The vast majority of Codroy Valley's roads possess unofficial names warranted even today by the use of PO boxes by most residents. Roads are mostly gravel and tortuous, in varying degrees of driveability, and typically unsigned. From an old wooden post, we identified our address as the last house on “Station Road.” Yet, the road remains unnamed on official maps, including Google Maps, for which travelers often had

¹⁵ I once referred to a “street” and was hastily corrected: “There are no streets in Codroy Valley!” I interpret this perspective as associating streets with traffic lights, rules, and universality, qualities antithetical to Codroy Valley's “roads,” and sense of place more generally, which may be characterized as unpretentious, unregulated, and familiar.

difficulty locating our inn. For those familiar with the Valley, we would direct them simply to go “down by the trestle” or, for the first couple years, to “Wayne Mushrow’s house,” in reference to its previous homeowner. Clarification was seldom needed.

As of 2025, Codroy Valley has not been subjected to any navigational regulatory system like the United States’ Rural Addressing System. Ostensibly implemented in rural areas for ease of locating properties and improving delivery of basic services and medical aid, according to folklorist Lisa Gabbert (2007), the Rural Addressing System is an example of the bureaucratic reorganization of space befitting globalizing and modernizing processes that invariably strive to maximize efficiency and control. Through fieldwork in rural Idaho, however, Gabbert reveals ethnographically how its actualization on the ground is anything but straightforward, as complex, hybrid processes combining residents’ identity, power, and resistance to dominant ideology prevent its wholesale adoption. “Constituted in wayfinding,” she explains, “space, place, and locality are not ‘out there’ as objects to be described in words but are context-dependent, relational, and ideological” (Gabbert 2007, 198). Her analysis speaks to the centrality of place-based knowledge and identity in simultaneously appropriating, complicating, and resisting efforts at universal standardization, as well as the futility of disentangling tradition from modernity. Indeed, based on my experiences in the Valley, it is impossible to imagine a scenario in which traditional place names would be replaced wholesale by official, “modern” ones, even if the latter were to be deployed contingently, such as when directing visitors.

Yet, I often wondered whether these conversational customs were in fact being passed down to younger generations, or to newcomers to the Valley. I took it upon myself to ask questions and listen to stories, but were there other curious folks asking questions? My friends in the Valley would often reminisce about storytelling as a once quotidian and creative mechanism

for transmitting knowledge. In their experiences, children used to listen to their elders muse about days gone by, just as elders had listened to theirs before them. My friends then would ruefully remark that this custom is being lost for the first time. Children do not listen, nor do they ask. Jobs are available, but young adults are choosing not to work. Many would rather text than work a till, not to mention fish, farm, hunt, or forage, routines my interlocutors recalled fondly from their earlier years. Kids would rather eat junk food than home-grown food. They play indoors, or, when they do play outside, it is for an arranged “play date” miles away.

But ephemeral nostalgia fades to tenuous indifference. Beer cans, chip bags, and plastic diapers are carelessly tossed onto the beach, left for elders to shake their heads and clean up the mess. Pop bottles, synthetic clothing, and candy wrappers are unscrupulously cremated in yards, swiftly breaking down into microplastics destined for our soils, waters, and bodily organs. Some elders are complicit in these unmarked acts of disposal. Tens of thousands of acres of arable land lay fallow, nearly all food is imported, and many young people are lured to the Alberta oil sands or elsewhere to find work and increase their material wealth and social capital. Bigger and more energy-consumptive houses are being built with expansive, manicured lawns and little care for their ecological footprint. A growing number of these estates are for seasonal residents.

Ambling through the woods near my home, I would encounter piles of boulders amid a dense row of alders—signs of an earlier farm. My friends tell me that not long ago, every home had a garden with chickens, sheep, pigs, and cows. Where are those dynamic spaces now? They tell me that kids used to play by the dozens on every corner. A neighbour, Wayne MacIsaac, described our block in the 1970s and 1980s: “When I was growing up here, there were five kids in this house, there were six or seven kids up here, there were twelve kids up there, there were eight kids down there, another like eleven kids down there, right?” When I interviewed Wayne in

2023, there was just one boy living on that same block. I would often see him playing outside with his father.

The entire K-12 school has 120 students. The Valley is visibly aging. Young people are opting to move away for work and raise their families elsewhere. They cite lack of employment, recreation, and basic services as their motivation to leave. The uncomfortable fissure resulting from their accelerating hiatus compelled me seriously to confront future challenges with friends and acquaintances in the Valley. In dialogues and group discussions, which I animate throughout this thesis, we articulated critical questions that were evidently in the minds and hearts of many elders, but nevertheless regarded by most of them as forlorn issues: What will happen when the older generation passes away? Who will tell the stories, pass down the knowledge, and care for the land? Who will fix the pipes, run the stores, teach the students, and build the houses? Is it possible that a revaluation of the place-based wisdom of the Valley could reignite a desire to stay or move back, to reignite industry and take pride in the abundance of the Valley's rich history and ecology? Or will its land and lore risk further enclosure by forces of globalization and modernity that erase place from space, dis-place humans and nonhumans, and re-place them with extractive industries governed by rationalist and linear narratives of economic development?

Folklore, the performance of tradition in everyday life, including the cultural texts that are conveyed, is inextricably tied to place and history, as it always occurs *someplace*¹⁶ and contains the echoes of prior folkloric texts and performances. Hence, the cessation of folkloric transmission forecloses the mobilization of place-based knowledge and custom, harkening social and environmental woes. Sense of place thence becomes threatened, a diminution that feeds the

¹⁶ Even when performed in seemingly placeless spaces such as the web, folklorists have shown how digital folklore is invariably connected to real places through the dialectic between on- and offline spaces (Blank 2012; Tolbert & Johnson 2019).

centripetal and destructive forces of enclosure. Witnessing the social and ecological destruction wreaked by extractive industries in Appalachia, folklorist Mary Hufford urges social scientists, activists, and concerned citizens to engage local knowledge to safeguard a robust sense of place for present and future generations. She tells us that “customary speech tends the sensibility that confers belonging on each new generation... The landscape and its memories depend on living speech and custom in much the same way that varieties of heritage beans depend on being planted, harvested and consumed for their continuation” (Hufford 2016, 643). How, then, to retrieve folkloric texts in a way that enables future generations to enhance their sense of place and desire to remain, strengthen relations with humans and nonhumans, steward the natural world, and welcome diverse newcomers with disparate ways of being and knowing?

One term I resort to throughout this thesis is *structure of feeling*, developed in the 1950s by cultural theorist Raymond Williams. It is a concept that questions how a particular confluence of spatial, temporal, and social elements both shape and reflect the spirit of an era. Williams probed the structure of feeling of a given place and time in order to connect present narratives to past imaginaries, his ultimate goal and challenge being an “articulation of *presence*” (1977, 135), whether contemporary or historical. According to sociologist Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi (2020, 104, 112), Williams believed that structure of feeling “encapsulated and valorized the felt sense of life shared by a community... [and] finds in art its most effective means of expression” due to the prevalence of art’s “affective elements and practical consciousness.” For Falasca-Zamponi, analysis of structure of feeling “is especially suited for examining periods of transition, when different forces compete for affirmation as dominant semantic figures” (Ibid., 113).

Undoubtedly, Codroy Valley is undergoing a period of transition, tossing and turning amid the dialectics of hegemony and resistance, another theme that runs throughout this thesis. Yet,

the art and literature heralded by Williams as keys to unlocking structures of feeling remain elusive here.¹⁷ Acutely, often nostalgically felt, structures of feeling tend to emerge fleetingly, inchoately, in dialogue. Throughout my fieldwork, I found dialogues to invoke a contingent folk ethic where survival was built on reciprocity and trust with each other and the nonhuman realms. My impression, moreover, was that Codroy Valleyers are not wont to romanticize the past. They are mostly pragmatic people who have witnessed drastic changes in technologies and consumption patterns in a relatively short period of time. Everyone I conversed with, when prompted to reflect on the past, acknowledged a certain emptiness today vis-à-vis the days when folks had a strong sense of purpose, and when boredom and idle time were virtually nonexistent.

Of course, one's position regarding the relative value of the alleged work or non-work behaviour of others is filtered through experiences and value systems that vary across age, social roles, and a host of other factors. And it is distinct from my own, the researcher's, positionality, shaped by a unique confluence of custom, narrative, and experience. In my present worldview, for instance, the relative felicity of statements regarding idle time is informed by my habitual critique of everyday practices that seek not to respect and nurture, but rather to exploit or neglect commons and the more-than-human¹⁸ worlds that comprise them, including the folkloric and institutional cultures that wish to empower those worlds. Furthermore, my worldview tends to bestow greater culpability not on individual perpetrators, but on the socioeconomic structures that enable and condone harmful discursive and behavioural patterns. Adding to the complexity, those structures are upheld by perpetual exchanges with the more-than-local, an iterative cycle

¹⁷ Art is undeniably a subjective term. The ecomuseum will build on local aesthetics to create variable works of art, a loose term whose nuances I adopt from folklorist Gerald Pocius (2003).

¹⁸ Environmental philosopher David Abram (1996) theorizes the "more-than-human" world as the deep albeit often unacknowledged interconnectedness between human cultures and nonhuman entities, which may include plants, animals, ecologies, and technologies.

that renders accountability a messy endeavour. All this to say that grievances, including nostalgic laments about individualism and enclosure, are multiple and contingent. They vary widely depending on time, place, and context. Grievances, in my present worldview, demand dialogue and organized (re)solutions over castigation and censure. As my interlocutor in Chapter 5 astutely observed, ideal are the mediations that support the “us-us-us” over the commonsensical “me-me-me.” Such is a primary goal of this thesis, and of the ecomuseum project more broadly.

In daily conversations and observations in Codroy Valley, my gaze vacillated between the many interlocking and contradictory interpretations I noted about the Valley’s past, present, and future, with their disparate views regarding its rich and varied folklore, wealth of tangible and intangible resources, and stakes for the future. Throughout this thesis, I argue that a reflexive (re)valuation¹⁹ of structures of feeling centred on creativity, reciprocity, and *jouissance*,²⁰ with each other and those beyond the Valley’s borders (howsoever borders are narrativized, a topic I engage in Chapter 3), enables a system of vernacular ethics to (re)emerge,²¹ one that prioritizes hard work, care, and belonging. I further argue that a sustained and critical revaluation of such grassroots ethics may (re)produce spaces where a queer array of bodies, customs, narratives, and aesthetics are nurtured, welcomed, supported, and defended, and where the Valley’s inhabitants are attuned to honouring their predecessors while prefiguring a robust world for their human and more-than-human successors. One organizational platform to mediate diverse perspectives regarding history, folklore, resources, and desires is the ecomuseum.

¹⁹ A revaluation of structures of feeling, both historical and contemporary, is feasible through phenomenological and ethnographic mobilizations of counterhegemonic custom and narrative. In this thesis, I consider how the ecomuseum may be used tactically to access place-based epistemologies before their hegemonic enclosures.

²⁰ Although the term has been used in an erotic sense, I follow literary theorist Roland Barthes (1973) and feminist theorist Hélène Cixous (1975) in defining *jouissance* as physical, mental, or spiritual joy that empowers one to exercise creativity while transcending oppressive structures.

²¹ A reemergence of vernacular ethics is increasingly urgent as neoliberal discourses and desires continue to co-opt life-sustaining values nurtured in the commons.

1.3 Ecomuseum as cultural mediator

I first stumbled upon the ecomuseum idea when researching a term paper topic for a seminar on museums taught by Dr. Kelley Totten in the winter of 2021. Intrigued by its ubiquity around the globe, and its propensity to enhance sense of place in regions experiencing issues similar to those faced in Codroy Valley, such as outmigration, seasonal gentrification, and extractive industries, I wrote a paper justifying and imagining its presence in the Valley. In 2023, still committed to the notion that societal and ecological collapse can be averted in no small part through sustained, place-based dialogue, creativity, and folkloric performance, I pitched the ecomuseum idea during a mapping workshop²² I organized at the Codroy Valley Wetland Centre. It quickly gained traction. As of spring 2025, Codroy Valley Ecomuseum is presided over by dozens of volunteers collecting, sorting, managing, interpreting, and exploring modes to display their multifaceted heritage. Diverse members of the population, including elders and children, are collaborating to develop ethnographic material, arts projects, a local archive, craft exhibits, heritage trails, ecological workshops, and traditional skills training. This thesis is an addendum to their work.

The ecomuseum concept emerged during the 1970s, when museologists and curators in Europe and Latin America began to challenge institutional norms about the museum's colonialist and elitist approach to knowledge as well as its detached relations with public life (Davis 2008). The *ecomusée*, coined in 1971 by French museologist Hugues de Varine, was conceptualized as a democratic space devoted to local development, and its ideas eventually spread throughout the world, with a more overt focus on decoloniality and decentralization of power evolving over the ensuing decades. Later iterations underscored the intrinsic role of the local community in the

²² The workshop, titled "People, Places, and Culture," was delivered by a member of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (Heritage NL), an agency tasked to preserve aspects of tangible and intangible heritage in the province. Participants were given post-it notes and asked to brainstorm notable people, places, and customs in the Valley, after which we discussed our responses and mapped them on several oversized satellite maps.

museum's functioning while stressing how group articulations of identity, territory, history, landscape, and continuity create a sense of belonging (Rivière 1985). Ecomuseums now loosely describe "heritage" as a mosaic of tangible and intangible elements, including landscapes, skills, geology, wildlife, memories, material culture, buildings, music, behaviour patterns, and social structure (Davis 2011). Whereas the traditional museum comprises a building, collections, experts, and the public, the ecomuseum by contrast consists of a territory, heritage, memory, and population (Rivard 1988), with the final component indicating the localized audience for whom the ecomuseum is first and foremost intended.

My approach to ecomuseological praxis employs critical theory, ethnography, and archival research. I demonstrate the utility of a critical regionalist framework for recovering local customs and narratives—historical, economic, geographical, and cultural—which tend to be subsumed under dominant ones that implicitly or explicitly stake normative claims of entitlement to defining space, place, and identity. I consider some of the dominant representations of rural regions like Codroy Valley, which are often depicted as friendly, tight-knit, ideal for vacations, yet underdeveloped, isolated, and antithetical to mythologies of "growth," "progress," and "success." I interpret these discourses as *hegemonic*: their coerciveness, due to the cultural and economic superstructures that uphold them (Gramsci 1971), is altering the common sense of those whose identities and desires are being co-opted to the twin projects of modernization and neoliberal globalization, which demand that previously ensconced realms of everyday life now collude with corporate capital to accumulate and colonize the lifeworld (Habermas 1987). Such insidiousness hinders our ability to develop a "good sense" (Gencarella 2010; Gramsci 1971), or critical consciousness, which would enable us to trouble those underlying power structures while actively replacing them with more balanced and cooperative forms of common sense.

Yet, I also affirm that there are spaces of hope (Harvey 2000). As long as there are humans, there will be folklore,²³ and folklore is always situated in the liminal field between conservatism and dynamism (Toelken 1979), local and larger-than-local (Shuman 1993), or the intertextual third space where identities, narratives, customs, traditions, and beliefs are negotiated, altered, and conceivably reappropriated (Bhabha 1994). In this dialogical space, commonsense binaries at the heart of colonialism and ecological destruction (us/them, nature/culture, local/nonlocal, subject/object, male/female, economy/ecology, etc.) are conceivably blurred. Hence, my ecomuseological approach seeks creatively and cooperatively to seize and expand upon those folkloric forms and structures of feeling with the power to undermine those discourses that devalue them. In a sense, then, my approach is a meta study of folklore—one that urges folklore in all its diverse forms to exercise its vast counterhegemonic potential.

This approach further extends an opportunity to wed academia to everyday life. Too often, academic discourse resembles little more than an echo chamber where progressive ideas, like critical regionalism,²⁴ seldom take the leap of faith from abstraction to decolonial application in the spaces about which those theories circulate, and whence ethnographic or statistical data are extracted. My approach therefore rectifies dialogical absences by proffering a methodology that is steeped both in critical and vernacular theory, and may be realized within a long-term creative and ethnographic project. Merely writing and disseminating this thesis is an example of critical regionalism in that, throughout, it links research and theory to material and discursive practices

²³ That is not to say that nonhumans do not have folklore. Indigenous cosmologies often posit nonhumans as agentive beings who produce folklore of their own. Within North American folklore studies, at least since Jay Mechling's (1989) study of folklore in domesticated animals, there has been a growing recognition of the possibility of the production and transmission of folk traditions in the nonhuman worlds. I elaborate on narratives of more-than-human agency and folklore in my discussion of posthumanism in Chapters 2 through 4.

²⁴ Critical regionalism is a key concept in this thesis, which broadly denotes the necessity of probing into spatial and temporal forces and processes that constitute regions, like Codroy Valley, as desirable, successful, exploitable, and so on. Likewise, it inquires into and seeks to expand upon spaces of resistance to globalizing and modernizing forces that enclose and abstract regions, by linking analogous struggles between the imagined local and larger-than-local.

within Codroy Valley. Likewise, it is a clarion call for a critical regionalist approach in ecomuseological spaces elsewhere, as a method to bolster trans-local and intra-regional alliances among places and regions at risk of incorporation by universalizing, hegemonic forces.

1.4 Trouble in Newfoundland & Labrador's outports

Over eight years in the Valley, I became overwhelmed by a seemingly eternal presence—of a natural beauty and fertility unrivaled in Newfoundland and Labrador, deep-rooted traditions of commoning, camaraderie between neighbours, bawdy humour and wit, unwavering generosity, ingenuity, and minimal class distinctions—attributes I see as advantageous, if not intrinsic, to living the “good life.” Yet, the more I talked to folks about the terrain and its sociocultural and economic histories, the more disheartened I became about the dwindling numbers—short-circuited by an apparent lack of interest and/or opportunity among young people—to whom this rich, and near moribund, repository of knowledge and custom was being passed down.

I thence grew increasingly aware of a conspicuous lack—of jobs, recreational facilities, health care and education, ecological empathy, desire among youth to build a life in the Valley, 2SLGBTQIA+ spaces, and retention of vital community-building traditions. Furthermore, when newcomers, similarly lacking familial ties, started trickling into the Valley in the years following our unprecedented implantation, it became apparent that even with the best of intentions, unless they were exceptionally confident and charismatic, or marketing something perceived as locally valuable, they were destined to fade into obscurity. It is difficult to assimilate if you lack one of the familiar surnames or hail from outside one of the communities proclaimed on the shirt and road sign mentioned above. The hapless effects of intersectionality, moreover, exacerbate the marginalization of newcomers who fall outside the white, Christian, cis-hetero profile of most

community members.²⁵ To complicate matters, neoliberal enclosures, the inevitable consequence of a pervasive, capitalocentric discourse that denies commons while reducing sense of place, thwart efforts to expand a sustainable, postcapitalist politics (Gibson-Graham 1996; 2006).

This section examines forms of trouble that have been plaguing Codroy Valley and other communities around the bay, and that continue to threaten the viability of a sustainable future in those places. In Chapter 2, I provide a conceptual roadmap for thinking through methodologies of emancipation from what I suggest are iterative consequences of modernity, but likewise cyclical performances that reify modernity's causes and effects. I argue that neoliberal enclosure in its many guises is in fact dialectical and contingent, and as such can be pre-empted through public folklore's attention to commons, and to narratives that ratify commons as productive, desirable, and attainable socioeconomic relations and central components of everyday life. I propose the ecomuseum as an ideal platform to negotiate collaboratively those narratives across time and space, and likewise performatively to revalue commons and larger-than-local connections that empower everyday-life discourses and actions.

Codroy Valley's present quietude belies a vibrant past. Though official historical records are few, oral and written testimonies affirm a long habitation by Beothuk peoples, Mi'kmaq, settlers of French, English, Irish, Basque, and Scottish origins, and any number of lighthouse keepers, soldiers, merchants, artisans, spinners, weavers, war brides, postal workers, midwives, physicians, tourism operators, traders, hunting guides, loggers, ranchers, farmers, railroad technicians, fishers, trappers, shoemakers, musicians, teachers, caretakers, shamans, clergy, wayfarers, and possibly Vikings.²⁶ Until recently, Codroy Valley was the province's premier hub

²⁵ I base this observation on my own experience of intersectionality in the Valley, where racist (see section 1.5) and homophobic rhetoric (see sections 1.5 and 4.4) reinforced feelings of othering and exclusion.

²⁶ It has been suggested that Vikings settled temporarily in Codroy Valley. Archaeological excavations in 2015 and 2016, documented in a film, *Vikings Unearthed* (2016), came up with no conclusive evidence; however, several

for agriculture and wool production, and a prized destination for boatbuilding, fly fishing, cod jigging, poaching, gold and coal mining, foraging, hunting, entertainment, and even horse racing. Today, work is typically sought further afield, primarily in the Alberta oil sands. An aging population relies on food imported from the mainland—which carries its own precarities as ferries cease running in inclement weather, sometimes leaving shelves bare for weeks on end—and the remaining youngsters are often plagued by idleness. For the first time ever, available jobs are being left vacant by choice.

Of course, such troubles are not unique to Codroy Valley. Rural communities the world over are increasingly contending with unemployment, outmigration, and enclosures. Several of these changes have been documented in Newfoundland and Labrador's outports, many of which are now ghost towns (Figure 1.4). In the introduction to his edited volume, *Retrenchment and Regeneration in Rural Newfoundland*, social anthropologist Reginald Byron traces a history of oppression and manipulation by the railroad company, resource appropriation and squander, and failed industrial development projects, calamities that have led to the “current crisis in rural Newfoundland” (Byron 2003, i).

Despite the proclaimed intention of these services to improve the lot of folks living “in out-of-the-way coastal communities... [they] continued to lack overland access by road or railway; they still did not have adequate medical facilities and schools, telephones, electricity, and piped water long after these things were taken for granted elsewhere” (Ibid., 6). And while Byron concedes that modernization efforts in the 1960s did enhance the general quality of many rural Newfoundlanders' lives, the “unintended consequence of modernizing the fisheries had

people remain convinced that, based on descriptions in the Icelandic sagas matching geographical features of the valley's landscape and waterways, the issue should be investigated further.

been to create... a much higher degree of dependence on profits and wages derived from a single production system” (Ibid., 7).



Figure 1.4: Petites, a ghost town on Newfoundland’s south coast. Photo by author.

This perceptible shift in livelihoods from a “pluriactive” array of necessary and valued economic activities to a preoccupation with wage labour governed by a restrictive conception of the economy has had grave consequences for the people and places of rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Spurred by the restructuring of community and family life heavily influenced by mass media, “rural Newfoundlanders gradually drew away from homespun, pluriactive strategies of household provisioning that relied on the seasonal exploitation of a range of natural resources and craft activities, to much more specialized and narrowly focused ways of making a living” (Ibid., 7). While Byron is careful not to romanticize or advocate a return to the past, “where people eked out a precarious existence, where loved ones died for want of basic medical care, and where many people did not have enough schooling to fit them for anything more than a life

of low-wage manual labour” (Ibid., 8), he mourns the widespread corporate enclosures of civic and ecological commons plaguing much of the island in 2003:

Multinational corporations now own and control access to vast tracts of Newfoundland’s forests... Gardening is a thing of the past... As access to what had formerly been regarded as resources held in common became privatized and restricted, these places became, in effect, one-company towns, where more and more families are now wholly dependent on a single source of household income... Welfare dependency and outmigration have the potential to accelerate at a rate greater than would have been the case had the regime remained pluriactive, with households retaining the capacity to shift freely among types of fishery and among fishing, logging, sawmilling, and other productive activities. (Byron 2003, 7–8)

Another contributor to the volume, ethnographer Dona Davis, documents a shift in a southwest Newfoundland outpost from the “high point of the century” in the late 1970s, when a “largely small-scale, family-based, artisanal, inshore, year-round fishery” was “thriving” and where a “marked and elaborated pride of place and occupational traditions dominated and shaped the emotional, symbolic, and moral fibre of the community” (Davis 2003, 177), to “the end of a way of life” in the late 1980s, a period described by locals as “the ruinations of us all” (Ibid.).

As in most outports, where socioeconomic occupations and cultural imaginaries were constructed almost entirely around the cod fishery, the community documented by Davis was devastated by the 1992 cod moratorium, which followed the collapse of the inshore fishery and remains the largest industrial closure in Canadian history. Much has been narrated about how the collapse was a culmination of decades of complex wranglings of power, technology, and greed fueled by modern capitalism’s growth-at-any-cost prerogative, and indeed, the effects of these pressures were already being felt in the region prior to the moratorium. As Davis points out, the youth she interviewed in 1989, which she describes as the “very initial stages of crisis” (Ibid., 178), were already strongly weighing their education and employment options outside of their

community. While the scenario outlined around this community does not neatly parallel Codroy Valley's situation, also on the southwest coast but with a much heavier reliance on agriculture and pastoralism than on the fishery, Davis's comparison of the two periods are familiar:

If the dominant theme of community life in the 1970s was, 'we all come up together or we don't come up at all,' the dominant theme of the late 1980s was 'you've got to break away to get ahead.' Whereas the 1970s gave primacy to the survival of family, community, and collective occupational heritage, the 1990s focused on 'career jobs' and the individual and social and geographical mobility. Whereas in the 1970s people viewed their marginality in temporal terms, for example, 'before The Road when we were all poor,' 'catching up with time,' or 'getting up-to-date,' 1990s youth tended to view their marginality in geopolitical terms. Instead of the past, their reference points were the American and Canadian middle classes. They had a far more informed political and antinational perspective on their sense of marginality. (Davis 2003, 180–181)

Sociological analyses like those by Davis and Byron hint at transformations in structures of feeling by illuminating how socioeconomic and behavioural patterns are shaped by larger-than-local forces that coax place-based relationality toward displacement by universal chronotopes of progress. The "break away to get ahead" ethos observed by Davis in the late 1980s may contrast with earlier structures of feeling around communalism, but the outward mobility it espouses is nothing radical. Migration is an eternal truth for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Since at least the time of its first settlements, the land and sea have witnessed surges of movement in all directions motivated by any number of factors (Nolan 2007).

Another observed characteristic of community transformation in the province is that migrants tend to remain tethered emotionally to their homeland. According to geographer Sara Beth Keough (2012), media becomes a critical resource for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians living in Alberta and elsewhere because it keeps them tied to "The Rock" and "The Big Land," as Labrador is commonly known, connections that in turn facilitate the movement of family and friends between Newfoundland and Labrador and elsewhere and help migrants get reestablished

if they decide to return. Stephen Nolan's popular history of outmigration from the Viking times up to the modern-day diaspora to Alberta and beyond declares that "the loss of people and the destruction of families is an epidemic in all parts of the province... When a trade position in Alberta offers the youth up to \$100,000 per year, while in their home province it is difficult to obtain the same employment for a third of the salary, the choice becomes obvious" (Nolan 2007, 129, 132). His positivist approach concludes that, despite a widespread and intense longing to stay or return, for many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, "it has become abundantly clear that there is no living to be had on their own, unfertile soil" (Ibid., 134).

Similarly espousing rational rhetoric that posits an either/or migratory choice for many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, a 2003 "final report" by The Newfoundland and Labrador Government's Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening Our Place in Canada concludes that "with job losses in many parts of the province being so severe, and without sufficient growth in employment opportunities elsewhere in the provincial economy, people have been forced to choose between unemployment and out-migration" (Royal Commission 2003, 35). Martha MacDonald, Peter Sinclair, and Deatra Walsh take a more nuanced view of migration from rural Newfoundland and Labrador by examining the dialectic of mobility and stability, and considering movement of not just labour but also ideas, capital, and technology. Like Keough, they remind us that "mobility has been as much a constant of rural Newfoundland society as have 'rootedness' and sense of place, often tied to nationalist sentiment and cultural preservation" and that it is "through mobility that a sense of place can actually be strengthened" (MacDonald, Sinclair, and Walsh 2012, 123).

However, they cite numerous problems in present-day rural Newfoundland and Labrador stemming from outmigration. For instance, as it is mostly men who leave for work, existing

services are stressed. They tell us that “women who remain are increasingly triple-burdened with their own paid work and increased unpaid work not only in their own households but also in the wider informal sector of the community. Loss of volunteer labour can lead to cancellation of activities and burnout for those who remain”²⁷ (Ibid., 124). Another issue they cite is that the postsecondary education system is “geared toward the demands of students for skills needed ‘away’” (Ibid., 125), but that, due to insufficient funding for qualified instructors, programs frequently risk termination. Local labour shortages are a further problem. Students tend not to return home for summer employment, and residents are unwilling to work for low wages offered by local employers, which puts pressure on and threatens the viability of local businesses. Finally, there is emotional stress placed on families when one or both parents work away, which often has adverse effects on schooling and the disciplining of children.

The outmigration of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians is so pervasive and the temporal and spatial dynamics of the province so unique to Canada, that literary scholar Jennifer Delisle terms it “the Newfoundland diaspora.” To justify her use of the term, she cites five of its most prominent features, including “(1) painful displacement and a condition of loss; (2) a continued connection to homeland; (3) the formation of diaspora communities abroad; (4) the construction of homeland in neo-national rather than regional terms; and (5) a sense of difference and marginalization in the new home” (Deslisle 2013, 10). The condition of “experiential nostalgia” (Ibid., 52) felt by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians about “going home” helps displaced migrants define their social self and personal identities, a process that tends to manifest in writing. Indeed, Delisle contends, “This pervasive pressure to leave is often experienced as a

²⁷ An issue that surfaced during my interviews in Codroy Valley was the ephemerality of school programs. Often initiated by contract teachers, after-school clubs, sports programs, and other extracurricular activities tend quickly to grow in popularity but then are foreclosed abruptly when the teacher’s contract terminates.

painful rupture from home and identity, and this loss is reflected in much Newfoundland literature” (Deslisle 2008, 66).

Contemplating the social, cultural, and economic reconfiguration of Newfoundland and Labrador’s outport communities after the collapse of the 500-year-old cod fishery, Ursula Kelly suggests that in order to move forward, it is necessary first to acknowledge loss. Thus, while “loss as a persistent condition of life is vividly felt... what is often misrepresented in such circumstances as an acceptance of disadvantage is more often an intricate and, on many fronts, satisfying negotiation of abiding attachments, longing, and hopes set against a backdrop of ecological and economic insecurity” (Kelly 2009, 2). Unacknowledged loss is unproductive and may even lead to fatalism and retrenchment. Nostalgia, on the other hand, is an articulation of loss fueled by dissatisfaction. Rather than lacking agency, for Kelly, nostalgia “is an expression of alienation and conveys in muted ways a nonetheless strongly felt desire for a better world... [and therefore] should command our critical attention so that we might understand its inclinations and consider how best to tap its potential in order to promote change” (Ibid.). In later chapters, I return to nostalgia—critical nostalgia (Cashman 2006)—as a potentially productive and counterhegemonic tool that may be capitalized upon in performances within the ecomuseum.

In a volume of essays, Amarjit Singh and Mike Devine invite us to ponder the real and potential role of elders’ local, nuanced knowledge as contributing to “the decolonization of the life world in Newfoundland and Labrador” (Singh & Devine 2013, 22). The 36 essays document how “grandparents, families, and communities in the province are attempting to come to terms with ongoing processes and forces of globalization as a contemporary manifestation of modernity” (Ibid., 24). For Singh and Devine, it is crucial that we ponder the conditions of possibility for future grandparents in the province to develop a “Newfoundland and Labrador

global cosmopolitan social self” and thus become “local/global cosmopolitan Newfoundlanders and Labradorians” (Ibid., 10). With a similar nod to futurity, the ecomuseum will strive to capture the nuances of place-based knowledge through the provocation of intergenerational dialogues, art, and performances.

Yet some scholars have critiqued the ways diasporic Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, in an attempt to connect with home, embrace and objectify cultural symbols, such as stories, songs, and objects, alongside cultural imaginaries that “are believed to embody the essence of Indigenous values” (Pocius 1991, 25). Folklorist Diane Tye (2008, 48) theorizes the “mummer as a pivotal transitional image for a rural Newfoundland diaspora and... a primary symbol for a lost rural way of life and the vanishing ‘real’ Newfoundland.” Folklorist Cory Thorne (2012) uses a critical regionalist lens to rectify normative regionalisms that essentialize and romanticize identities, while considering how related discourses both unite and divide people. His study of regional folklore, particularly among Newfoundland diasporic communities in Fort McMurray, Alberta, is an example of how such regionalizations “demonstrate the weakness of the dominant cultural imaginaries that lead to false imagination of Canadian, Albertan, Newfoundland... identities. To pretend that we are something that we are not and never were is disingenuous and dangerous; it enables us to continue an us/them mentality and engage in xenophobia” (Thorne 2012, 54). This thesis, and the project it propounds, respond to these anxieties through a grassroots revaluation of the commons.

1.5 Enclosure of Codroy Valley’s commons

Relics of an economically and culturally vibrant past read like palimpsests across the terrain, often difficult to detect. Signs of fields can be read amid the new growth of alders and birches: a pile of boulders here, a barn foundation there. Indeed, much of the forest in the Valley today was

once used as farmland by nearly every household. Cows, chickens, pigs, and sheep roamed those fields, and in lieu of the manicured lawns that one sees from the roads today, a variety of crops were cultivated by most families. Today, most open fields in the Valley are owned by one dairy company and used to grow hay for thousands of cows, who eat and dwell exclusively indoors.

This consolidation of farmland has antecedents in the English Enclosure movement, whereby common land was systematically fenced off and converted into private property for the privileged classes. Robert Cantwell's summary of the vicissitudes and ironies of enclosure sweep through "the rise of the commercial classes, the enclosure acts, the gentlemen who with economic instruments displaced a people, their history, and their traditions in order to erect in their gardens and parks idealized pictures of history and culture, sometimes of the very culture they had displaced" (Cantwell 1993, 43). With strip- or open-field agriculture, peasants had enjoyed a manageable work schedule built on collective governance and autonomy. The commons were the material foundation upon which peasant solidarity and sociality thrived. Festivals, games, and gatherings were held there. Women used them for subsistence, autonomy, and exchanging views outside of the purview of men. In 1688, one quarter of the total area of England and Wales was common land (Linebaugh 2012, 114–124); by the end of the 1900s, common land made up just 3% of the territory. In only 80 years, between 1760 and 1844, England passed over 4,000 Acts of Parliament to remove all traces of common ownership of land and possessions (Trogal 2015, 174). Less than a century after the emergence of agrarian capitalism, 60 European towns were instituting social assistance programs and vagabondage had become an international scourge²⁸ (Lis & Soly 1979, 87).

²⁸ Indeed, land privatization and commercialization of agriculture throughout history have not increased the food supply available to the common people, but rather for the market and export. We see this in World Bank structural adjustment programs in the Global South just as we saw it in the English Enclosure movement.

Transformations in the Valley were less the result of forcible or parliamentary enclosures than the inevitable consequence of capitalist expansion, such as accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2005), which may be insidious and protracted rather than rash and aggressive. Before the arrival of white settlers in Codroy Valley, its Mi'kmaw inhabitants, who referred to the region as *Katalisk*, engaged in seasonal migrations and occasionally more permanent habitation involving mixed agriculture, hunting, trapping, fishing, and foraging. It is almost certain that lands were held in common, as the concept of land ownership pre-colonization was foreign²⁹ (Mi'kmaw Resource Guide 2015, 3).

A friend, Anne Meaney, took me for a walkabout on her Mi'kmaw ancestors' land (Figure 1.5), an area designated "Lot 22 Indian Reserve" by the British government in 1895.³⁰ Today, it is popularly known as "Indian Hill," though I am told that few people are aware of the name's origin. According to Anne, and the copies of maps she showed me (Figure 1.6), all of the surrounding land was appropriated first by the Catholic Church and later subdivided among white settler families. The Church retained for itself a strip of land on Lot 22 bordering the river and built a chapel there, directly adjacent to the Reserve, likely for ease of patrol and conversion. It is not clear which or how many parties were involved in the terms. As with countless dispossessions of Indigenous lands in North America, however, it is almost certain that the terms were based upon white settler ontologies of ownership and entitlement underpinned by Western, racist notions such as "the white man's burden."³¹

²⁹ However, it is likely that the Mi'kmaq who inhabited *Katalisk* were themselves migrants from Nova Scotia, and thus had already encountered settlers and their worldviews to some degree. In Chapter 3, I outline conflicting narratives around the origins of Mi'kmaq in Newfoundland, including the so-called "Mi'kmaw mercenary myth."

³⁰ Codroy Valley, as most of Newfoundland, was either under direct British rule or a self-governing dominion until joining Confederation and becoming, together with Labrador, Canada's 10th and final province in 1949.

³¹ "The white man's burden" is an imperialist term that originated in an 1899 poem of the same name by the English writer Rudyard Kipling, who urged the United States to colonize the Philippines while also warning of the personal strife involved in the building of empire. The phrase was later used by white, male colonizers in the Americas and elsewhere as justification for their "civilizing mission," which was underscored by their perceived superiority.



Figure 1.5: View of the Grand Codroy River from Indian Hill. Photo by author.

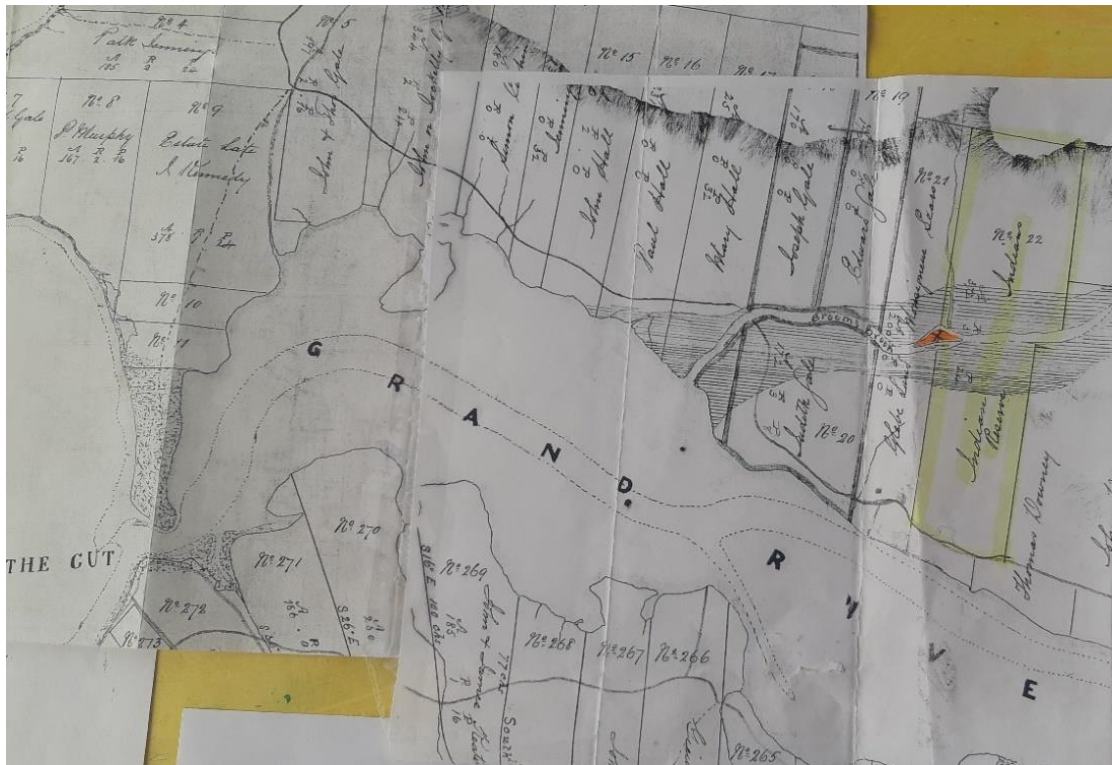


Figure 1.6: Maps showing the division of lands along the Grand Codroy River. The “Indian Reserve” on Lot 22 is highlighted in yellow. Photo by author.

The early white settlers to *Katalisk* were similarly engaged in mixed agriculture, hunting, fishing, and so on. In the more rugged coastal communities of Codroy, Cape Anguille, and Woodville, settlers migrated inland for the winter. The transition from ubiquitous mixed agricultural plots to the monocropping observable today was the result of long, complex processes of globalization and modernization. Most people I spoke to in the Valley contend that a shift from polyculture, animal husbandry, foraging, and habitual sharing of resources toward a primary dependency on supermarkets and individual gain started in the 1960s and 1970s. Already, in 1957, one senses frustration regarding the overproduction and undercompensation of crops cultivated in the Valley from an entry in the opinion section of the provincial daily, *The Daily News*, titled, “Complaints for Premier Smallwood”:

Mr. Smallwood has *provided* the Codroy Valley farmers with expensive land clearing units. We have increased our agricultural acreage, and if we were given a fair chance we could supply the twin towns of Channel and Port aux Basques with nearly all the potatoes, cabbage and beef that they require. Channel and Port aux Basques being adjacent to the Codroy Valley, are our natural outlet for farm products, but the merchants and wholesalers there are indifferent to the fate of the Codroy Valley farmers. We are obliged to depend on them for the commodities that we require. They don’t seem to realize that they control our destiny, and they cripple our economy by refusing to buy from us. Every week they import tons of vegetables and beef from other provinces while our own vegetable bins are overflowing, and our barns are overstocked with unsold beef cattle. If it were not for the pulpwood that we sell to Bowaters, our buying power would be severely limited -Dolan³²

Clearly, notwithstanding governmental attempts to build infrastructure, agriculture was no longer deemed economically viable in Newfoundland’s breadbasket in 1957 if most food was being imported from the mainland at lower costs.³³ Whereas Newfoundland and Labrador communities around the bay were primarily involved in the fishery, Codroy Valley was, with the exception of its coastal communities of Codroy and Cape Anguille, more heavily invested in agriculture.

³² From the Digital Archives Initiative: *The Daily News* of Tuesday, December 17, 1957, p. 4

³³ On a much grander scale, the United States’ government, upheld by a revolving door of agribusiness, big pharma, and kleptocrats, has been choking out domestic agricultural economies in much of Latin America for decades.

While the rest of the province was adversely affected by the cod moratorium and collapse of the inshore fishery in 1992, Codroy Valley was witnessing hardships decades before then, with a market crisis fueled by subsidized farming on the mainland. Income was being withheld and, likewise, families were suffering from economic precarity. Or were they?

One advantage of being a monetarily impoverished society in a fertile valley replete with autochthonous material resources is the ability to clothe, feed, and shelter one another. Based on interviews with folks who lived through this alleged economic decline, and corroborated by archival texts, the period from the 1950s to the 1980s was a time of abundance, resourcefulness, and joy, in spite of little formal wealth. In fact, the very lack of cash and material wealth was sometimes seen as deeply imbricated in a fulfilling lifestyle upheld by mutual aid, unbounded creativity, and strong sense of purpose. Today, by contrast, mused Eric Hillier, who grew up in the Valley in the 1950s and 1960s, children are losing a sense of place because they lack roles in the community. He grumbled one afternoon that, based on his observations, “all kids are hanging out in their rooms and they’re took over by the machines and there’s no originality about life.”

Of course, the commons of earlier times and the individualism of the present are results of complex dialectics of modernization and globalization shifting and sticking through time and space. Nor are they monolithic qualities describing the “spirit of place” in either period. Selfish people existed a hundred years ago in the Valley, just as there are commons extant today. Few 2SLGBTQIA+-identifying people today would voluntarily swap lives with ancestors who were governed by comparatively more repressive social structures. Likewise, not everyone would agree with Eric’s characterization of “all kids” today. Nonetheless, most people I spoke to agree that the Valley is in real trouble. It is therefore a worthwhile endeavour to strengthen people’s will to ensure a healthy, productive, and inclusive future there.

One decidedly discriminatory element of life I have witnessed in Codroy Valley is homophobic discourse, along with its deceptive cousin, heteronormativity. I explore in Chapter 4 how these unchallenged discourses of violence have shamed and battered many lives, and may continue to do so in the absence of a third space that enables revised narratives and identities to flourish. While I have personally felt the effects of sexist and homophobic discourses hellbent on trivializing or demeaning any relationship that falls short of the obligatory cis-male/cis-female binary,³⁴ as well as traces of whispers about “the lesbians,” which likely aggravated our wider acceptance despite our best efforts to fit in, I am privy to much graver shortcomings and violent suffering experienced by 2SLGBTQIA+-identifying people and motivated to curtail further grief.

Heteronormative discourse is punctuated throughout everyday life in the Valley, much harder to pin down, but inextricably tied to capitalism and enclosure (Butler 1997). It is a social construct that assumes the normativity of gender binaries and heterosexuality. The entrenched binarism of heteronormative discourse in society at large casts perceived non-normative bodies, discourses, and relations, including 2SLGBTQIA+ ones, as “out of place,” a danger I discuss throughout this thesis. When the stories we tell, to ourselves and each other, reify and perpetuate hetero- and homonormativity³⁵ in everyday life, we move further from being an inclusive society, and render it ever more difficult to reverse those habits of thought. As I argue in Chapters 3 and 4, narratives and customs that eschew discourses of violence and exclusion are also present throughout the Valley, and a necessary first step in amplifying and normalizing those perspectives in the public sphere is learning how to recognize them.

³⁴ Lana and I were confronted with sexual advances during our first two years in the Valley by men who were at least nominally aware that we were in a romantic relationship. More innocuous, but equally absurd, was the persistent question, usually but not always by men, of whether we were sisters. Over eight years, dozens of Codroy Valleyers posed that question, despite the common knowledge that we cohabitated, not to mention our very distinct phenotypes.

³⁵ Homonormativity is the adoption of heteronormative and neoliberal values, goals, and discourses by anyone who identifies as 2SLGBTQIA+.

Racist discourse is another pathological consequence of modernity, with, in the case of Newfoundland and Labrador and much of Canada, ties to settler colonialism and capitalism and reinforced in cultural and political narratives. I rarely witnessed encounters between local and racialized folks during my eight years in the Valley; however, I did feel the effects of racism on more than one occasion. For example, in 2018, when I was still a newcomer,³⁶ an acquaintance was helping me unload from his truck dozens of cinder blocks, the base-to-be of our geodesic dome greenhouse. Our small talk about Wreckhouse winds must have taken a gusty turn when he suddenly blurted out, “I’m not racist or nothing, but one race I hate is the Pakis.” I glanced at Lana uneasily, whereupon he turned to me with genuine concern. “Wait, uh, you’re not, right?” “No, Brian,” I replied, “I’m not Pakistani, my father was from India.” While I regret my terse response in that moment, I submit that there is a time and place for transformative dialogue, and amid the hauling of 35-pound bricks off a noisy truck may not top the list.

Nonetheless, the incident convinced me of the dangers of recirculating floating signifiers, in this case, a term like “Paki” wrapped in colonial narratives of racial superiority and fortified through misinformation. In retrospect, of course, I could have dialogically entered the third space he extended in his sudden and self-conscious realization that an avowed object of his rancor was in fact his interlocutor and acquaintance. I could have exploited that space to mention the cruel history of colonialism in that part of the world, whereby British nationals of his forebears were complicit in fomenting three centuries of religious divisions for relative ease of hegemonic control, culminating in the 1947 Partition of India that forcefully divided the Asian subcontinent

³⁶ It has been noted (Durstun 1998; Soderling 2016) that rural temporalities and social capital are indelibly linked. Unlike in urban environments marked by anonymity and constant, visible migratory flows, rural areas like Codroy Valley tend to embrace a “never met a stranger” ethos (Gray 2009) whereby social capital marked by association, trust, and civic engagement (Bourdieu 1986; Putnam 1993; Wiesinger 2007) is often historically determined, thus posing challenges of access for newcomers. Hence my status as newcomer two years after moving to the Valley.

into India, Pakistan, and later Bangladesh. Or I could have mentioned the offensiveness of his casual utterance of a stale Britishism that has no place in any contemporary society. While I did none of those things at the time, I did internally resolve to initiate roundtable discussions about race, colonialism, and cultural appropriation. It is my hope that the ecomuseum will furnish necessary spaces for untangling some of the complexities around these critical issues.

Ecophobic discourse likewise exists in an unmarked tension with posthuman sensibilities, which I discuss in later chapters. I keenly felt its presence, for instance, when observing public responses to a young black bear who spent several days in my neighbourhood poking his nose in garbage boxes and rending trash bags asunder. A few Facebook comments requested, without provoking any disapproval, that someone “put it down.” Rather than address the overproduction of waste, or the anthropogenic factors that create conditions for hungry bears, a convenient solution was to eradicate an undesirable symptom of those underlying issues, namely the physical embodiment of a black bear struggling to survive inside territory perceived as belonging exclusively to humans. Fortunately, the bear managed to avoid harm. The garbage boxes, however, continue to grow in number and contents, only beckoning more rummaging.

Elsewhere (Caputo-Nimbark 2021), I examine the lack of waste in traditional foodways of ethnic New York and rural India in the middle of the 20th century. In the present study, I have tried, through interviews and informal conversations, to draw attention to and provoke a sense of urgency around the overproduction of waste as being a relatively recent phenomenon. Indeed, through these conversations it becomes apparent that overflowing garbage boxes filled with decaying, methane-releasing organic matter contaminated with plastic containers, chemicals, and preservatives would have been a grotesque anachronism in many residents’ earlier lives, when food was largely homegrown or locally sourced rather than processed and imported, and where

all parts of meat and produce were seen as valuable, if not as food for humans or animals then as fertilizer for gardens. I contend that those intuitions have not yet vanished from the worldviews of Codroy Valley's inhabitants, and are in fact retrievable, via dialogue and activities in common that bestow value on the earth and futurity. Tapping into a local sense of urgency is perhaps the biggest challenge, where local knowledge translates into action, which may propel the activation of larger-than-local alliances committed to ensuring a healthier future for all inhabitants. In Chapter 8, I consider some tactical activities and alliances the ecomuseum might galvanize.

Alongside ecophobia, I encountered a disturbing number of intolerant and reactionary discourses tinged by that brand of nationalism upheld by a false perception of eternal isolation. As a racialized woman etically labeled as a lesbian CFA ("Come From Away," a term used to describe anyone born outside of Newfoundland and Labrador), although my relations in the Valley were generally accepting, on a few memorable occasions I felt targeted by racist, sexist, xenophobic, and homophobic discourses. I use these experiences less as an exercise in egotizing and more as a convenient vantage point from which to observe and try to make sense of iterative barriers to building a more sustainable and inclusive community. Indeed, this is not a free-for-all confessional ethnography; rather, I take a leaf from Ruth Behar's suggestion that exposing our selves as agents and spectators must "be essential to the argument, not a decorative flourish, not exposure for its own sake... [A] personal voice, if creatively used, can lead the reader, not into miniature bubbles of navel-gazing, but into the enormous sea of serious social issues" (Behar 1996, 14). For Behar, our role, perhaps, is "to map an intermediate space we can't quite define yet, a borderland between passion and intellect, analysis and subjectivity, ethnography and autobiography, art and life" (Ibid., 174). This thesis is partly an attempt to take advantage of my unique positioning in order to map that liminal space as a blueprint for community organizing.

To be sure, CFAs are nothing new here. There have always been in- and outmigration, in no small part fueled by exogamy and industry. Folks tell me that only since the 1980s has the population really dwindled. When Scottish folklorist Margaret Bennett came to Codroy Valley in the 1960s and 1970s to study its Scottish-inflected customs, memorialized in her esteemed monograph *The Last Stronghold* (Bennett 1989), a diminishing population was not yet cause for alarm. Rather, she tasked herself with documenting the stories and songs of the Valley's last native speaker of Scots Gaelic, a holdover from settlers of the Valley's shores and fields, mostly Scots arriving via Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Bennett knew, as did her Scottish-speaking research informant and companion, Allan MacArthur, that along with his Gaelic tongue would perish an entire repository of folk knowledge, and that translation as conciliatory measure, while an enriching endeavour, is no replacement for the real thing.

Language loss is a grave phenomenon occurring the world over at an alarming rate (Nettle & Romaine 2000). It is mostly affecting Indigenous languages that encode irreplaceable cultural and socioecological knowledge of those places in which they are spoken. Scholars refer to *biocultural diversity* as “the diversity of life in all its manifestations: biological, cultural, and linguistic—which are interrelated (and possibly coevolved) within a complex socio-ecological adaptive system” (Maffi & Woodley 2010, 5). The concept highlights the deep correlations between linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity in part as a way to galvanize support for language revitalization. As much folklore is transmitted verbally, it behooves folklorists to play a more active role in language revitalization action and research.³⁷

³⁷ The Him-Dak EcoMuseum in Maricopa, Arizona, the first ecomuseum in the United States, was founded in 1991 in large part to address the loss of the O'odham language spoken by Ak-Chin Indian Community. Spurred by activities surrounding the ecomuseum, Ak-Chin Indian Community is now the first Native nation in Arizona to have state-certified O'odham language instructors (Doğan & Timothy 2020). Ecoamgueddfa is an ecomuseum in Wales dedicated largely to the safeguarding of Welsh language and culture. In Chapter 7, I discuss my opportunity to travel to Ecoamgueddfa and to interview practitioners and locals about such matters.

When Allan MacArthur passed away in 1971, so too did the Gaelic language in Codroy Valley. Few people may still recall the isolated Gaelic word, or lines from a song, but for all intents and purposes it is a dead language in the Valley. According to linguist Joshua Fishman (1991), the myriad forces precipitating language death and loss are bound up with processes of modernization and globalization, including the dominance of a *lingua franca* in educational, economic, political, religious, and recreational institutions. Daniel Nettle and Suzanne Romaine argue that those in power, who dominate regional and global politics, the workplace, and mass media, also control the assignation and distribution of linguistic capital in society, which invariably favours their preferred lingua franca. For Nettle and Romaine (2000, 160), “economic growth” is biased to favour urban élites, resource liquidation, and homogeneity, at the cost of the rural poor and marginalized groups elsewhere. It is worth mentioning, however, that while moribund languages and the nuances of knowledge breathed through their idioms, puns, songs, and teachings are nearly impossible to revive, place-based knowledge is at least partly retrievable through a phenomenological approach to learning that attends to the commons. I examine this possibility more closely in later discussions of posthuman ontologies.

Another current and pressing issue is around a proposed windmill megaproject in Codroy Valley. Positioned to be “Canada’s first commercial green hydrogen and ammonia producer” (World Energy GH2), the windfarm, called “Project Nujio’qonik,” is being touted by politicians and interest groups from local businesses to the federal government as a progressive model for global energy development. According to the business plan, power from 164 wind turbines³⁸ located on Crown land in the Anguille Mountains will split freshwater molecules diverted from a local river system. Resulting hydrogen will be converted into liquid ammonia, 100% of which

³⁸ There are plans in place for hundreds more windmills to be erected in other regions of the island, but the Codroy Valley section is among the most extensive.

will be shipped to Germany on containers, where it will be reconverted to hydrogen. None will be used in Newfoundland and Labrador. The deal has evoked impassioned pleas, fomented bitter divisions, and sparked unlikely alliances among diverse interests in and around the Valley, on- and offline, centred on inadequate public consultation, job loss, high environmental risks, wind turbines' relatively short life and recalcitrance in erratic wind zones, unfavourable alterations to the Valley's iconic landscape, skepticism about a speculative hydrogen market, and enclosure of common lands and waterways used for hunting, fishing, foraging, recreation, and recollection.

A further issue, given the growing prominence of seasonally occupied homes, especially on the boundaries of the Valley, is the looming threat of seasonal gentrification (Phillips & Smith 2018). A phenomenon that often accompanies "rural development," seasonal gentrification has been documented in other parts of Newfoundland that rely heavily on tourism, most notably Bonavista, Trinity, and Brigus. At one Codroy Valley Area Development Association (CVADA) annual general meeting, several Codroy Valley residents expressed concern about the possibility in the case of an influx of tourists, for instance, when the Starlite Trail is expanded or when the ecomuseum is operating. Scholars have noted that rural gentrification, seasonal or not, runs a risk of displacing locals and impacting on sense of place (Kocabıyık & Loopmans 2021). These are issues I take up in Chapters 7 and 8, partly building off my fieldwork in North Wales, where an ecomuseum is organized around threats of seasonal gentrification to Welsh-speaking and Welsh-identifying residents. Although tourism is not usually the driving force behind an ecomuseum, its ramifications tend to feature in planning and conservation efforts in North Wales.

1.6 Spaces of resistance

The above scenarios are examples of enclosures resulting from material and discursive processes part and parcel of globalization and modernization. The crisis of modernity facing folks the

world over is succinctly captured by critical theorists Herbert Reid and Betsy Taylor when they posit that “[c]ontemporary consumer culture encrusts its believers in an electronic shell of rationalized and sensationalized world imagery generating a numbness at once for public life and genuinely intimate life” (Reid & Taylor 2010, 72). Going deeper, they identify a pervasive culture of enclosure of the commons—commons being the necessary substrate for third space dialogue and environmental stewardship—as having its roots in “the ontological dichotomization of life and thought at the core of bourgeois-liberal culture: the subjectivization of existence and the objectivization of world ascetically and parasitically abstracted from a larger, encompassing, and open-ended experience of society and nature” (Ibid.).

Moreover, as the dominant narratives promulgated by institutions, mass/social media, political pundits, and educational systems regarding ethnic minorities, nonhumans, and other underprivileged groups are circulated among members of society, the social reproduction of those biases is firmly entrenched and often left uncontested, particularly in rural and racially homogeneous communities (Garland & Chakraborti 2006). However, while racism, speciesism, and white supremacy, largely the result of a complex interplay of fear, guilt, anger, and popular validation (Jensen 2005), are tight balls to unwind, cultural meanings and symbols do not exist in a perpetual vacuum. Throughout this thesis, I outline a critical regionalist and phenomenological approach to furnishing a potentially emancipatory space for the contestation of us/them binaries and the flourishing of queer and hybridizing cultural identities. In such a space, a reevaluation of inclusive commons and collaborative and empowering work hinders discourses of intolerance.

Returning to Gabbert’s study of rural Idahoans’ complex dialectical relationship to the enforced standardization of their addressing system, what she is effectively documenting is the imposition of and resistance to “time-space distancing.” It is a concept she borrows from

Anthony Giddens (1990), itself a refinement of Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981) concept of *chronotope*, which he defines as the power-laden configuration of time and space in language and discourse. I refer to chronotopes throughout this thesis, especially in Chapter 4, where I contrast chronotopes of queer commons from heteronormative regional chronotopes of linear time and empty space perceived as available for extraction. For Giddens, time-space distancing is a fundamental condition of globalization and modernity, characterized by the "emptying" and abstracting of time and space, and the consequent "disembedding" of social relations from particular places. Two disembedding mechanisms identified by Giddens as prime consequences of modernity are "symbolic tokens," such as money, and "expert systems" presided over by professional technical and knowledge regimes. Each of these mechanisms has had the effect, across the globe and at different scales, of abstracting social relations from place, and place from space.

Codroy Valley poses some interesting perspectives of these systems at work. Several quotations from my fieldwork and archival research succinctly capture the shift from reciprocal social supports to symbolic tokens and expert systems in the Valley. Other testimonies, derived chiefly from young adults, rue the lack of recreational spaces and cultural opportunities vis-à-vis their parents' and grandparents' generations. At the same time, their anxieties reflect shifting values. Throughout my fieldwork, I observed how, whereas older interviewees intoned structure of feeling around cooperation, hard work, reciprocity, ingenuity, and storytelling, younger folks exhibited a more overt focus on consumerism, recreation, and digital technology, as well as the near inevitability of moving away for work and life. Folklore studies tends to prioritize people's memories of yesteryear; we need equally to valorize the perspectives of the younger generations through ethnographic work that provokes a critical regionalist lens for understanding how processes of globalization and modernization are shaping their own present and future.

Such processes take shape in different ways based on unique interactions between environments, histories, and larger-than-local forces. Giovanna Del Negro (2004) uses the term “multiple modernities” to characterize the distinct forms modernization can assume in distinct spatiotemporal scenarios. Overt attempts to re-embed space and time to counteract disembedding forces may even be observable. For example, in a 2022 study, I demonstrated how the ancient Faroese custom of *grindadráp*, the communal slaughter of an entire pod of pilot whales in plain sight, has provoked misinformed smear campaigns in recent years, which are compelling many Faroese to safeguard their heritage with recourse to the primordialization of a tradition they claim is centred on codified rules, communalism, and food security (Caputo-Nimbark 2022). Defenders of *grindadráp* thereby refuse to adopt the rationalist and moralizing chronotopes that exploit power-laden strategies to champion hegemonic encroachment of their avowed commons.

Reorganization of space around capital, increased digitization of social relations, and overwork are diminishing *third places*, defined by Ray Oldenburg (1999, 10) as public gathering spaces on neutral ground outside of work and home, and “the heart of a community’s social vitality, the grassroots of democracy.” When Lana and I suggested opening a café in the Valley in 2016, many locals expressed enthusiasm at the prospect, citing an unfortunate dearth of third places to socialize. A few years later, amid desperate pleas for a café, Codroy Valley saw the opening of a corporate chain, Robin’s Donuts, on the TCH. Rather than provide a space for folks to sit down and chat over coffee, however, its drive-thru compels customers to take their fare to go. Yet, I have noticed that folks compensate for the lack of indoor seating by lining up their cars in the parking lot and chatting through their car windows, nonchalantly blocking traffic while creating a third place. Resistance to enclosure, though often subtle, is always present.

The re-embedding of social place against a corporate chronotope of maximum efficiency thus constitutes an everyday tactic of resistance to time-space distancing. Where Michel Foucault (1977) saw subjects as surveilled and disciplined through the rational reorganization of space, Michel de Certeau (1984) bestowed an agentive and resistive urge on those very subjects, tasking the social scientist to understand how authoritative control is undermined on the ground. “If it is true that the grid of ‘discipline’ is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive,” de Certeau counselled, “it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also ‘miniscule’ and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only to evade them” (de Certeau 1984, xiv). He saw the conditions of modernity as diminishing sociocultural life, thereby forging spaces for powerful entities to further their hegemonic agendas using what he called *strategies*. On the other hand, he observed that such strategies necessitate counterhegemonic *tactics*, “a therapeutics for deteriorating social relations” (Ibid., xxiv), as resistance to conformity.

How the folklorist might “discover” these tactics of resistance deployed by the allegedly powerless is through ethnographic investigations of ordinary events in everyday life, including storytelling, cooking, and walking in public spaces. For de Certeau, telling stories is a potentially subversive act that includes “repertoires of schemes of action... mementos [that] teach the tactics possible within a given system” (Ibid., 23). Tales and legends are mobilized in spaces “outside of and isolated from daily competition” where “the models of good or bad ruses that can be used everyday” are revealed (Ibid.). Observing socialization in public space, we gain insights into how the spatial “text” is written: spaces are subjectively interwoven in ways that subvert authoritative attempts to abstract and signify places through planning, mapping, and naming. The tactics Codroy Valley folks are pursuing to read and mobilize those texts are elaborated in Chapter 8.

1.7 Timeline of research

Several steps have been taken thus far to establish an ecomuseum in Codroy Valley, from my own encounter with the concept to its present realization by community members. As mentioned, I initially encountered ecomuseums in the winter term of 2021 while researching topics for a term paper. With a keen interest in museology's potential role in cultural and ecological sustainability, I was surprised to learn that while the ecomuseum concept was flourishing in many parts of the world, it had not yet taken a firm hold in Atlantic Canada. I was drawn to the grassroots nature of the ecomuseum, its emphasis on flexible community-building activities vis-à-vis tourism and local economy, and its potential to enhance sense of place and belonging. My paper developed into an introduction to the concept and a thought experiment that envisioned its application in Codroy Valley.

The thought experiment in 2021 was compelling, but I did not seriously pursue the idea of an ecomuseum in Codroy Valley until two years later. In the interim, I attempted to develop a local community project called Codroy Valley Commons.³⁹ The objective was to grow crops on unused land in the community, whether backyards or fallow fields, revive traditional foodways and storytelling, and redistribute harvested crops and seeds to residents. Although some land was pledged and two tracts were used to grow food, the project was ultimately unsuccessful in fulfilling its goals of a long-term commoning project. However, it did galvanize my own interest to pursue research into historic and contemporary commons in Codroy Valley, for which I was granted a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship for two years (2023-2025). During that period, and in compliance with a renewable ICEHR ethical contract (file # 20240001), I recorded semi-structured interviews with 12 residents lasting from one to three hours. My youngest interviewee

³⁹ An article (White 2023) about Codroy Valley Commons published in southwest Newfoundland's weekly paper *The Wreckhouse Weekly* can be found in Appendix B.

was 15-year-old Brooklyn Cormier, a high school student, dancer, and budding stage actress. The eldest was Joe Bruce, who has lived in Codroy Valley most of his 83 years and is able effortlessly to recall a past life dominated by storytelling, music making, and collective foodways. All interviewees were people I already knew, apart from Anne Meaney who contacted me directly with a keen interest in sharing her life experiences for the ecomuseum project. I recorded conversations in my interlocutors' homes and supplemented interviews with fieldnotes containing personal reflections and observations, alongside ample conversations around the Valley. All of the quotes dealing with customs of commoning, foodways, and queerness in this thesis derive from interviews recorded during that period.

It was not until September 2023 that I revisited the ecomuseum idea and presented it to the Chair of CVADA, Ron Laudadio. It was also around that time that I organized a community mapping event with Heritage NL, who sent a member of their team to lead a public workshop in the Codroy Valley Wetland Centre. There, I used a PowerPoint presentation to introduce the ecomuseum concept and was able to gauge interest from participants. Reception to both the mapping workshop and ecomuseum idea was encouraging, leading to Ron's decision to back the ecomuseum and create a volunteer-run Ecomuseum Sub-committee, for which I was appointed Chair. In order to learn more about the ecomuseological process on the ground, I was awarded a research grant from the JR Smallwood Foundation, which allowed me to travel to parts of Europe and Saskatchewan where ecomuseums are active. I present some of my findings from that trip in Chapters 6 and 7, including segments from 10 interviews I recorded in Saskatchewan, Wales, and England.

The Ecomuseum Sub-committee has held several meetings to elaborate on the concept and take concrete steps toward turning it into a reality, including several mentions of our activity

in Codroy Valley’s quarterly newsletter. At one Zoom meeting, I invited Dr. Glenn Sutter from the Saskatchewan Ecomuseum Initiative (SEI) to reflect on his experiences galvanizing a provincial ecomuseum network in 2011. At a meeting in October 2024, I outlined an overview, context, vision, and possible themes to get us started. The document I created and presented in conjunction with a PowerPoint slideshow can be found in Appendix A. Residents are currently in the process of conducting interviews for a series of heritage trails around the Valley. Central to that project is a collaboration with the local K-12 to pair students with elders for two-way interviews that inquire into affective and anecdotal experiences in specific places in the Valley. An upcoming goal is to compile stories, recipes, and growing tips in a Codroy Valley cookbook. Plans are also in the works for craft workshops and all-age ecological activities.

In December 2024, Codroy Valley Ecomuseum was formally recognized as the newest member of the Museums Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANL) and Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives (ANLA). One Codroy Valley-based artist recently applied for three public arts grants⁴⁰ on behalf of Codroy Valley Ecomuseum. We are now in the early stages of forging alliances with larger heritage and public interest groups in the region, as well as applying for funds to enable us to hire environmental and arts educators and project managers, as outlined in Appendix A. We intend to partner with academic institutions including Memorial University’s folklore department and related circles for ethnographic resources and expertise. Ethnographic and historical data, along with relevant material pertaining to Codroy Valley’s history, culture, and folklore, will be stored in an archive currently under construction as part of the ecomuseum. Some relevant material is already archived at The Rooms, the Centre for Newfoundland Studies (CNS), and the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and

⁴⁰ The public art projects include a collaborative mural about Codroy Valley’s multifaceted identity, and a series of workshops related to Mi’kmaw contributions to the valley’s arts and crafts heritage.

Language Archives (MUNFLA), all located in St. John's. It is my hope that the theories, interpretations, and suggestions provided in this thesis will be consulted as a reference in future plans and designs.

1.8 Structure of thesis

By way of introduction, I have summarized my experiences living in Codroy Valley, including the challenges I faced as a perceived outsider. I have introduced concepts employed throughout the thesis, such as sense of place, structure of feeling, hegemony, and ecomuseology, as well as the overarching goals of this project. I have also contextualized troubles plaguing Codroy Valley, and rural Newfoundland and Labrador more broadly, in order to justify both the theoretical framework and the decision to pursue an ethnography-based, public folklore project like an ecomuseum. Troubles I have identified include a dearth of third places, exclusionary discourses, unfulfilling employment, outmigration, and, ultimately, risk of enclosure of the commons. I have provided a timeline of my research project thus far. In Chapter 2, I provide a review of concepts and methods I employ throughout the thesis and project, namely, critical regionalism, narrative, relevant strands of ethnography, archives, and public folklore methodologies.

Chapter 3 explores issues around narrative and ethnography. I contextualize dominant narratives based on observations, conversations, and archival research pertaining to Codroy Valley's history, geography, economy, and ecology. I also consider human/more-than-human relations and posthuman ontologies consistently marginalized by Eurocentric rationalist discourse but still accessible in narratives, particularly those elicited in dialogue. I argue that ethnographies that draw on human and more-than-human relations need to be recentred in Codroy Valley, citing examples from my research as justification. Moreover, I demonstrate the inseparability of ecology and economy, cognates for which an ontological reconceptualization is

key to realizing a more sustainable future in Codroy Valley. Finally, I proffer methods by which an ecomuseum might recentre marginalized narratives in a struggle to reclaim the commons.

Chapter 4 links queer theory to narrative and commons through an application of my proposed method of “reading for queerness” with recourse to ethnographies around Codroy Valley’s foodways. I aver that the commons, as the antithesis of heteronormative discourses and practices, are inherently queer, and that, given the deep history of food commons in Codroy Valley, a “then and there” queer utopia is already legible but needs to be embraced. Despite the metronormative narrative that posits a no man’s land for queers in rural spaces, using interviews, archival research, and autoethnography, I encounter queerness in the Valley’s crop harvests, Winter Carnival potlucks, and affective relations with nonhumans. The challenge, I argue, is to bring the Valley’s queerness “out of the closet” but in a specifically rural way that honours the multiple and intersecting identities of Codroy Valley queers of the past, present, and future.

In Chapter 5, I trace the evolution of museological paradigms from cabinets of curiosities for the enjoyment of élites’ perusal to democratic institutions for community empowerment. I then provide examples of ecomuseological praxis around the globe, probing the production of third spaces in an ecomuseum setting whereby discourses espousing xenophobia and exceptionalism are questioned, and narratives of connection and disjuncture are mobilized to empower both community members and those further afield. The antithesis of coloniality, third space is where conflicting cultural narratives, myths, and symbols—objects of folklore studies—are encountered. The potency of the ecomuseological process, I argue, derives from its necessary invocation of the art and ingenuity of everyday life of the past and present, and the phenomenological performance of these findings—always in a position to be reassessed—for the future. A third space provisioner *par excellence*, the ecomuseum is oriented toward multiple

pasts and infinite futures, partly determined—rarely overdetermined—by *in situ* dialogue that values connection to place, commons, and ecology.

In Chapters 6 and 7, I connect existing research thus summarized to ecomuseums I visited in Saskatchewan and the United Kingdom. First, in Chapter 6, I look at work being done by Calling Lakes EcoMuseum around the Qu’Appelle River watershed, where posthumanism and sociocultural desires are entangled with hegemonic politics dictated by capital. I turn next to Prairie Winds & Silver Sage in Val Marie, a community of 120 inhabitants, to examine how practitioners are tackling the complex issues of rural decline. For them, a revived grain elevator and conservation tactics go hand in hand with larger-than-local partnerships. I then explore in Chapter 7 how the perception of boundaries is implicated in ecomuseological processes in the British Isles. Ecoamgueddfa in North Wales is bringing visibility and activist scholarship to a network of local businesses and organizations dealing with external threats to their language and culture. Further east, Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum along the northeastern border with Scotland and England is finding common ground on the quincentennial of a pivotal, albeit often overlooked, border battle, the Battle of Flodden.

Chapter 8 exposes caveats and entertains possibilities intrinsic to the practice of representing community within a deliberately counterhegemonic frame. First, I consider risks associated with the objectification of culture and heritage, including the potentially reactive notions of authenticity and singularity, while also suggesting resolutions stemming specifically from the phenomenology of the ecomuseological space. While the folkloric performativity of the ecomuseum is likely to trigger *jouissance* and empowerment over antagonism and hopelessness, I argue that a critical awareness of larger-than-local forces, both congenial and hegemonic, is necessary for a holistic appreciation of why and how power at multiple scales tirelessly shapes

place and space. This is achieved, I contend, through collaborative ethnographic methodologies centred on a revaluation of the social, cultural, and ecological commons in a specific Codroy Valley context. I conclude this chapter with a nod to futurity, both in academia, through the marriage of folklore studies, critical heritage, and third space theory, and within communities facing depopulation and enclosure, much like Codroy Valley, through the activation of third spaces in community building projects akin to the ecomuseum. I cite examples of larger-than-local alliances in other ecomuseums, and proffer potential partnerships, such as a regional network of allied projects in Atlantic Canada and beyond.

I conclude this study by tying the preceding arguments together and imagining an ecomuseological praxis in Codroy Valley that embraces a truly critical regionalist framework. I consider issues around historic linkages to the Caribbean, for example, to illustrate the need for diverse perspectives if we are to present a full and nuanced picture of Codroy Valley's spatial and temporal presence. I end with a meditation on my own small legacy in the Valley. Indeed, our desires for a more widespread shift in commonsense ecologies and economies are being realized, slowly; with the aid of an ecomuseum, the aesthetics inscribed within such unconventional, albeit life-affirming practices might just become reinscribed in our *good sense* and normalized in a more efficacious and widespread fashion.

CHAPTER 2: FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGIES

When I introduced the ecomuseum concept at the Codroy Valley Wetland Centre during a heritage mapping workshop I organized in October 2023, the room was abuzz. A resounding sentiment of, “Yes! If we don’t act now, our community will suffer!” filled the air. And it seemed that everybody knew somebody with tons of fascinating stories and personal narratives to share. We each made lists of people, places, and customs that distinguish Codroy Valley from other places. Then we talked about them. After over two hours of nonstop chatter, it was nearly bedtime so we had to call it quits. The ecomuseum had hatched.

Celebrating a place’s distinctiveness brings its own risks, however. A romanticized framing of “our” past and “our” place may teeter on reactionary and exclusionary discourses of singularity and self-containment. Moreover, an exclusively inward focus, besides ignoring the important journeys and connections that contribute to a place’s temporal and spatial trajectory, cannot proffer solutions for a balanced and equitable future. By looking inward for all solutions, the possibility to forge solidarities with similarly afflicted places, or to probe the broader patterns and multifaceted dynamics that produce places and regions, including their troubles, is severely compromised. Thus, as they move forward with their designs, it behooves Codroy Valleyers to consider an approach that draws attention to how narratives of rural decline are created and sustained, but also how narratives of resistance and renewal are always present in day-to-day economic and ecological practices and discourses, particularly those that eschew dominant narratives of linear development while celebrating everyday life in Codroy Valley.

Although not underscored in the literature, the functioning ecomuseum is heavily reliant on collaborative ethnography and public folklore methodologies, from the conceptualization of place and region to the ongoing collection and representation of narrative and custom, and

inclusion of all possible perspectives at each turn. And yet, ideas about what constitutes best ethnographic practices are varied and conflictual. Furthermore, while narrative is recognized as constitutive of our worldviews, and forms the crux of ecomuseum performance, rarely have I seen a sustained and critical engagement with the topic in ecomuseological literature. Therefore, in order thoroughly to envision and contextualize a long-term ecomuseum project in Codroy Valley that works to dismantle rather than sustain hegemonic narratives, and in the event that a theoretically inclined person wishes to consult this thesis down the road, a sizeable corpus of academic work is cited herein.

After reviewing literature around the suggested framework, critical regionalism, and revising our definition of sense of place, I turn to key counter/hegemonic processes that construct narrative, including cultural translation, third space, intertextuality, and intersectionality. Next, I trace ethnographic trends whereby researchers and their participants are seen to embody shifting, emergent, and intersecting identities while they are further recognized as co-performers of narratives that formulate the commonsense knowledge we take for granted as truth. In particular, I highlight challenges, advancements, and opportunities in those methods I deem useful here, such as phenomenological and decolonial ethnographies. Finally, I reference archival and public folklore methodologies relevant to ecomuseological praxis.

It should be noted that I avoid any positing of historical teleology in this thesis, with the acknowledgement that history and culture are inherently multiple, contingent, and changing. Any attempt to narrate history by way of an evolutive rationale necessitates a metaphysical or transcendental discussion, which is extrinsic to the present scope. The moments discussed herein are reflective of mainstream folkloristic and related trends: non-cis-hetero-white-male and other minority voices are conspicuously absent from most early conversations, and many did not enter

the fore until well into the present century. These absences are not accidental but bound up with heteronormative, racist, and patriarchal worldviews on which Western academia was founded (Prahlad 2021), and which will not be consistently challenged within academia until at least the end of the 20th century. This chapter looks at some such attempts to shake up the status quo in the realms of public folklore and novel ethnographic conventions, from which I will advocate best practices in and around Codroy Valley's ecomuseum.

2.1 Critical regionalism

It is axiomatic within cultural studies that contemporary conflicts around colonialism, capitalism, racism, speciesism, heteronormativity, and patriarchy—all visible in Codroy Valley—are results of rationalist, Eurocentric ontologies governed by Cartesian dualisms used to justify colonization of the marked Other. Exercising direct violence and/or semiotic “soft” power, colonizers have conquered lands from Indigenous peoples around the globe, appropriated their physical, spiritual, intellectual, artistic, and corporeal resources, imposed empirical rule, and enforced their hubris on next generations to protract the colonizing project. A hubris of such gargantuan proportions as to justify the ravaging of persons and places deemed inferior warrants explication. How did it transpire that powerful men dictating the various European empires over the last 500 years saw their own nations or regions as spiritually, morally, physically, or intellectually superior to other nations or regions? How is it that they deemed themselves worthy of inflicting heinous crimes, of massacring, enslaving, impounding, dividing, converting, and controlling the perceived Other?

Postcolonial scholar Edward Said's foundational text, *Orientalism* (1978) explores the rhetoric and representation used by Europeans in the exoticized construction of the Oriental Other, particularly the Middle East. Marxist economist Samir Amin (1989), in *Eurocentrism*, likewise argues that European élites believed themselves unique for possessing a canon of

progressive philosophies transmitted in a linear path from the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations to the Enlightenment. Extending the Orientalist concept, Milica Bakić-Hayden (1995) developed the idea of Nesting Orientalisms, which explains how a perceived subject who imposes Orientalist ideology on an objectified Other can also be Orientalized by a group that perceives itself as a superior subject, and so on. For instance, Maria Todorova (1997) has applied the concept to the Balkans, whose inhabitants possess an internal hierarchy loosely based on one's relative position as further north and west to one's inferiors, but simultaneously a dual identity as both Europeans and constituents of Europe's "darker side."

Those lines of regionalist reasoning are current as they have been transmitted to our civic, political, and educational institutions including the various disciplines that comprise the science and humanities programs at our institutions of higher education. Commenting on the relevance of Orientalist thinking decades after Said's publication, Gyan Prakash (1995, 199–200) argues that the "hallowed image of the Orientalist as an austere figure unconcerned with the world and immersed in the mystery of foreign scripts and languages has acquired a dark hue as the murky business of ruling other peoples now forms the essential and enabling background of his or her scholarship." We persist in engaging Cartesian premises of linearity and duality, or, even when our approach is critical, we uncritically construct ordered oppositions, linking images of ourselves hierarchically with our objects of scholarship, which manifests as an "internal régime of power" (Foucault 1980, 112). Those epistemological linkages intact, the colonial floodgates stay open and the Other remains voiceless (Spivak 1985).

According to folklorist Charles Briggs (1993, 388), we unknowingly employ "metadiscursive practices," what he defines as "methods used in locating, extracting, and interpreting various forms of discourses." These ensure our tools of inquiry remain basically

unchanged. For Briggs, *discourse* consists of oral and written texts as well as techniques used to represent material objects. It also presupposes particular spatiotemporal locations, strategies, institutional formations, and social relations that compound power dynamics. *Metadiscursive* differs from a sociolinguistic concept like metacommunication because, whereas the latter describes how speakers “create and structure meaning and facilitate mutual understanding within a specific discourse” (Ibid., 390), the former deals with how effects of power are exerted on other situated discourses. Awareness of such dynamics necessitates close analysis of *entextualization*, processes by which texts are produced to serve social and political agendas. Thus, rather than appraise what poetics reveals about dominated groups, Briggs considers what poetics reveals about its own social and political underpinnings, in order to show how entextualization “always already has been deeply political” (Ibid.).

For example, Sadhana Naithani (2001) probes into the mechanisms by which late 19th century British folklore collectors in India—typically missionaries or civil servants with no real training in folklore—presented their regional collections to an exclusively British and European readership, claiming to represent the “mind of the people” of the subcontinent. The ideological underpinnings contained in these writings, notably their scholarly prefaces, fundamentally shaped and validated colonialist imaginings by future collectors, as well as functionaries of the colonial state, thereby abetting in the continued subjugation of India. The collectors’ narratives were all very similar regardless of where the stories were recorded, and all riddled with similar contradictions. One such narrative, that Indian folklore is ancient and authentic but its bearers cannot be trusted to preserve it, invited its “rescue” by the colonial empire. Such contradictions succeeded in luring various segments of British society to civilize the helpless and unruly Indian natives, thus dutifully fulfilling the white man’s burden.

Moreover, the publishing and circulation of Indian oral tradition among the colonizers in Britain codified the former in writing so that the latter “could henceforth be considered more knowledgeable about the colonized folk than they were about themselves” (Ibid., 75). That their colonialist project persists in postcolonial spaces becomes evident upon seeing contemporary scholars praising the Brits’ “untiring efforts and earnest purpose” (Dorson 1968, 348), thereby lending credence to their “intellectual authority.” Such uncritical metadiscursive practices remind us of Briggs’s admonition that “notions of tradition, authenticity, and the like can help maintain unequal power relations between dominant and dominated communities when they become the basis of public policy... [K]eeping such definitions implicit constitutes an effective strategy for rendering their creation—and the power relations that reserve their production to certain groups—invisible” (Briggs 1993, 421). In the same vein, Stephen Gencarella (2010, 239) argues that “folklore scholarship is never neutral—and that when it seems to be so, it is probably adhering to the status quo and upholding current structures of domination.” Approaches that mark unmarked strategies of knowledge production and circulation inflect the goals of a critical regionalist framework to understand, in order to de- and reconstruct, how representations of place and region, such as “the bay,” as situated firmly in the past, adhere in discursive processes and the social, cultural, and environmental ramifications of those unmarked processes.

Critical regionalism may be understood in part as an inquiry into the synchronic and diachronic metadiscursive practices that constitute regions such as “Codroy Valley” or “the bay” as authentic, even romantic, emblems of pan-Newfoundland identity that are nonetheless deemed unsuitable for living a “successful” life. Like Amin’s rereading of Eurocentrism, it inquires into the power dynamics that shape the construction of certain regions as superior to regions and bodies perceived as Other. Importantly, critical regionalism further queries how colonized

regions construe themselves vis-à-vis the colonizers, in order to discern what resistance might look like. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said (1993, 78–79) implores us to read *contrapuntally* the “great canonical texts with an effort to draw out, extend, give emphasis and voice to what is silent or marginally present or ideologically represented in such works. The contrapuntal reading must take account of both processes—that of imperialism and that of resistance to it, which can be done by extending our reading of the texts to include what was once forcibly excluded.”

Priyamvada Gopal similarly urges scholars to read for voices of dissent in a postcolonial context. Her critical reading of the British Empire goes a step forward, however, in not only identifying resistance, but conceding a dynamic and agentive force onto practitioners. In *Insurgent Empire*, Gopal (2019) traces a dialectic whereby dissent in the colonies spanning India to the Caribbean fueled anti-colonial activism at the heart of the empire in London, leading not only to emancipation of Britain’s enslaved and colonial subjects, but also pushing empirical forces to question and revise their received notions about freedom and empire. Carsten Stahn’s analysis of Western texts regarding “takings”—objects stolen from overseas colonies by colonial regimes for display in “exotic” private collections, such as cabinets of curiosities—“shows that colonial narratives, archives, or semantics have often concealed the violence of takings, the protest or resistance concerning exploitation or dispossession, or attempts to reclaim objects taken by explorers, traders, colonial officers, missionaries, or soldiers” (Stahn 2023, 11). It is tempting to imagine how colonization and resistance would have unfolded through time and space had more people been privy to the perspectival shifts advanced in hindsight by Gopal, Stahn, and others.

As these scholars illuminate, it is a critical task to read historical subtexts in order to find evidence of codes, plots, evasions, and other forms of unscripted resistance to domination.

Critical regionalism seeks to amplify those spaces of resistance with the goal of decolonizing the margins so as ultimately to hijack the material or discursive necessity of any hierarchical centre in the first place. The ecomuseological-critical regionalist approach I advocate in Codroy Valley emphasizes phenomenological arts and structures of feeling around *jouissance*, cooperation, and belonging. Resistance takes the form of revaluing those customs and narratives that reclaim and cultivate the commons, so as to defend them from threats of enclosure by colonizing forces of global capitalism. And yet, it is necessarily a balancing act because, if too inward-looking, a community sees the “home-grown” beauty of a place without recognizing the contingencies, the journeys and linkages, that produce that place. Such contingencies are themselves complex and entangled with other places, narratives and representations of place, and so on. It thus becomes futile to retain an us/them dichotomous worldview. In Chapter 3, I examine other dichotomies to be reconsidered in the context of rural renewal, like nature/culture and economy/ecology.

Dichotomous worldviews, and the various forms of violence they entail, are the effect of complex hegemonic processes, themselves insidious acts of violence designed to maintain the status quo of those in power. Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci, while imprisoned in Italy under fascist dictator Benito Mussolini, developed the concept of hegemony as the ever-present dialectic whereby dominant forces use tools of coercion to construct subjectivities and common sense for the presumed subordinate in order to serve the formers’ interests. For Gramsci (1971, 419), common sense comprises a “conception of the world which is uncritically absorbed by the various social and cultural environments in which the moral individuality of the average man is developed,” and which thus enables the maintenance of hegemonic orders and class stratification based on differential access to philosophical, scientific, and political currents.

Like most Marxists of his era, Gramsci envisioned a new, grassroots hegemony promulgated by peasants and working classes to villainize and displace fascism, capitalism, and bourgeois ideologies. However, he had little faith in the ability of ordinary proletariats, limited by their parochial worldviews and inherent inconsistencies, to organize politically (Gencarella 2010, 223). Gencarella reads Gramsci as having distinguished common sense from *good sense* by degree of reflection, where the latter is “the empirical and social knowledge that promotes class consciousness, an understanding of the practices of a given hegemony, and so an awareness of the philosophy of praxis” (Ibid., 231). Through a slow process of education, Gramsci affirmed that common sense could be replaced by good sense, and ultimately philosophy, to promote an understanding of “human nature” as an unfixd abstraction, and that “unity and difference arise from the social conditions through which one fosters identity” (Ibid., 235).

In Gencarella’s estimation, Gramsci believed that hegemonic control and consent were achievable primarily through the press, but realistically through any means positioned to influence public opinion, from schools to “the layout and names of streets” (Gramsci 1985, 389, quoted in Gencarella 2010, 237; c.f. Gabbert 2007). Echoing postcolonial scholars, Gencarella urges those invested in forging new collective identities to advocate, like Gramsci, “an intimate proximity between intellectuals and the people they represent, as well as incorporation of popular movements, attentiveness to language as it influences consciousness, careful repetition and articulation of novel ideas, and promotion of an international rather than a parochial perspective” (2010, 239). Intimating a critical regionalist perspective, he adds, “Such critical scholarship might also need to venture into exploring subjectivities much ‘larger’ than the ‘small’ groups to which American folkloristics has become accustomed...[and] promote certain conceptions of life and intervene against others through the production of critique” (Ibid.).

Indeed, an extended scope is admissible when considered against the unfathomable reach of semiotic power in the realm of cultural imperialism. McDonaldization, Coca-colonization, and Disneyfication are a few of the terms that signal the breadth of American cultural globalization. Many are embodied in iconic visible landmarks, as witnessed in globalized monuments (Golden Arches), consumer products (Coca-Cola), or fantasylands (Disney World). It is no small wonder, then, that the term critical regionalism was coined and popularized by architectural theorists. Displeased with what they saw as an encroaching post/modernist architecture utterly abstracted and universalized vis-à-vis a particular place's history or culture, and equally distrustful of "historicist" architecture that romanticized a place's history without recognizing its global influences, Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre published a 1981 essay titled "The Grid and the Pathway" (Tzonis & Lefaivre 1981), laying the groundwork for a new architectural paradigm that accounted both for a site's indigenous and external influences. Two years later, Kenneth Frampton articulated a definition of critical regionalism that encompassed a dialectical "culture of resistance," which "self-consciously seeks to deconstruct universal modernism in terms of values and images which are locally cultivated, while at the same time adulterating these autochthonous elements with paradigms drawn from alien sources" (Frampton 1983, 149). In response to romantic historicist trends in architecture, he warned that any "attempt to circumvent the dialectics of this creative process through the eclectic procedures of historicism can only result in consumerist iconography masquerading as culture" (Ibid.).

It is worth mentioning that historian Carmen Popescu locates the critical regionalist and phenomenological seed of Tzonis, Lefaivre, and Frampton's paradigm in a lecture given three decades earlier by Martin Heidegger at the Darmstadt Fifth Colloquium in 1951, wherein the latter posited that "space does not have value per se if it is not understood as place, that is, in its

multilayered physicality and spirituality” (Heidegger 1971, quoted in Popescu 2020, 213). Three years later, Sigfried Giedion addressed a “new regionalism” while Sibyl Moholy-Nagy praised an “anonymous architecture.” “Both texts introduced several pivotal elements for the future discourse on critical regionalism: the input of the regional diversity, the connection with the site, the necessity to understand space as place, and the importance of tradition seen as continuity” (Ibid.). In particular, Giedion (1954) defined new regionalism as “respect for individuality and [the] desire to satisfy the emotional and material needs of the area... [and its] cosmic and terrestrial conditions” (quoted in Popescu 2020, 213). For Giedion, each of these elements needed to be tempered by its otherness, “both because of its relation to ‘the so-called “technically underdeveloped areas’ and of its attempt to repair the long-lasting injustice of a dominating Western culture” (Ibid.). For Moholy-Nagy (1954), “vernacular and the tradition it encapsulated were the closest to an essential thinking in architecture” (Popescu 2020, 214).

In Codroy Valley, a related architectural study was undertaken in the late 1980s by folklorist Richard MacKinnon. In *Vernacular Architecture of the Codroy Valley*, without using the term critical regionalism, MacKinnon (2002, 4) asks “how vernacular architecture expresses the unique personality of this area.” This he addresses by considering “international architectural fashions that appeared in the Codroy Valley in the late nineteenth century and continued until the 1920s” (Ibid., 65) alongside architectural trends in Cape Breton, whence most white settlers arrived in the Valley. His fieldwork brought him into the homes of various residents, where it became apparent that, even when using an architectural design like the American bungalow, which is “devoid of regional variation... Codroy Valley residents continued to alter these plans to suit their own needs” (Ibid., 96). MacKinnon presents a critical regionalist argument when he disputes “the notion that people of rural regions are geographically isolated and unaffected by

outside ideas. As George Kubler says, ‘Human desires in every present instant are torn between the replica and the invention, between the desire to return to the known pattern, and the desire to escape it by a new variation.’!’ (Ibid., 162). For instance,

Francis McIsaac chose to retain an older floor plan style while using the new form of the biscuit box exterior for his new house at the turn of twentieth century. Others chose to add selected features of international style such as Martin Devoe’s choice of bay windows and Joe Pat Downey’s front gothic peak, making a statement to their neighbours that they were modern in their thinking. Even though some of the new forms required more spatial division within houses, Codroy Valley builders continued to construct large kitchens and smaller parlours within the confines of these international forms. The new manner of building, however, did not hastily usurp the older form of construction. Just as linguists see regional dialect as local examples of standard language, we see here indigenous versions of international styles... In some regions the building itself may be a replica of a particular international type. However, the way in which the structure is built—re-using local materials, getting assistance from friends and neighbours, using the barter system for obtaining materials—are all ways in which the local region can express its personality. (MacKinnon 2002, 162–163)

MacKinnon’s study thus offers a close account of the friction that occurs when the stuff of globalization, which seeks to bind together those places it touches into a legible, ordered system controllable by the agents of capital, takes on a life of its own once it gets stuck in place. Since the success of global capital is entirely dependent on its semiotic material being incorporated by individuals within localities, this friction is inevitable and constant. Anna Tsing (2005, 1) calls the moment in which universals are adapted to the particularities of place the “sticky materiality of practical encounters.” MacKinnon’s analysis in Codroy Valley demonstrates how the practical encounters can be observed and valorized through ethnographic work.

The stuff of globalization only “sticks” if it is relevant to a locality. For cultural theorist John Fiske (1989, 1), popular culture is constructed out of discursive and material elements “that are provided by the social system that disempowers them.” Yet, those elements will be rejected if they “do not contain resources out of which the people can make their own meanings of their

social relations and identities” (Ibid., 2). Surfer culture is an example of popular culture evading hegemonic controls because, by performing and creating meaning through moments of bodily pleasures or *jouissance*, just beyond the reach of hegemonic forces, surfers remain unscripted by the dominant ideology, an act which he sees as foundational to resistance. Taking a leaf from Roland Barthes, Fiske counsels, “The politics of pleasure may be our only way of situating the forces of social change within the domain of the popular” (Ibid., 76). In Chapter 4, I consider the queer and subversive potential of laughter and the carnivalesque in Codroy Valley’s festivals.

In terms of architecture, critical regionalism’s place-specificity derives from available materials, familiar construction processes, local aesthetics, and environmental considerations. Architecture scholar Tom Sanya (2013, 6) suggests that by “basing [itself] on regional customs and resources and being responsive to site-specific circumstances, Critical Regionalism produces an architecture that is both ecologically benign and cost-effective in contradistinction to the mechanical approach of violating nature through brute force to control environmental conditions.” This overt focus on regional practices, aesthetics, and ecological sensibilities in a productive tension with universalizing, larger-than-local forces lends itself to an extended scope beyond the field of architecture. Indeed, the concept was eventually picked up within cultural studies by Cheryl Herr in an influential work that sought to produce “a unified but highly adaptable analysis of international flows of capital and resistance to the negative effects of those flows at the local-regional level, toward the end of a more heterogeneous and tolerant future” (Herr 1996, 18), what she describes as a “cross-regional architectonics of the spirit” (Ibid., 53).

For Herr, critical regionalism is an antidote to the late capitalistic “corporate geography” that exploits elements of regions they deem relevant for commercial interests, all too often leading to their commodification. In order to distinguish localized regionalizations from the

corporate ones, her approach aims “to establish provisional parallels and to separate local mores from practices and administrations that exist world-wide” so as to enable “understanding places seeking some form of relation beyond that woven by capital” (Ibid., 18). In a case study, she compares Ireland and the American Midwest, two regions she sees as “filiated locales... caught in a productive mirroring that allows one to fill in the interpretive blanks for the other... [W]e seek access to the limen that spans rural areas and offers them a productive meconnaissance, an interzone beyond the structures of administered society” (Ibid., 195). Studying assemblages in “mutually constituted, interregional spaces,” Herr lays the groundwork for a critical regionalist method in cultural studies that seeks “to participate actively in social change without falling prey to recidivist longings or the induced paralysis of an ever-consolidating market economy” (Ibid., 12). It is a method that makes legible disparate spaces of hope in an effort to connect and expand the life-giving commons within them as an antidote to extractive capitalism.

By highlighting the constant exchange between the local and the global, a dialectic often referred to as the “glocal,” critical regionalism seizes upon questions of power and authority. Our attention thus drawn to the social constructedness of region, it becomes evident “that the semantics of regions are quite contingent, and one may even see region as an empty signifier that is made to signify various hierarchies in historically specific discourses” (Lösch & Paul 2016, 5). I expand on the implications of empty or “floating” signifiers with regard to narratives and identities below and in Chapter 4. Armed with new perceptual capacities, we are compelled to ask not so much what a region is, but *why* it is that way, and rather than see ourselves as mere observers and analysts, we realize that simply by asking those questions we are implicating ourselves in the infinite discursive construction of region (Powell 2012, 7). Literary scholar Douglas Reichert Powell (2012, 19) avers that “[c]ritical regionalism’s insistence on places and

their cultural artifacts as dense palimpsests of broader forces represents an intentional challenge to the tradition of ‘regionalism’ that informs most literary and cultural criticism.” Like Herr, Powell is hopeful that the approach might “link individual moments of cultural struggle to larger patterns of history, politics, and culture, by understanding how they are linked not only in time and in the nebulous networks of discourse but also in space, through relationships of power than can be material and cultural” (Ibid., 20–21).

Moreover, for Powell, “critique of region should sponsor the cultural production of new kinds of regions” (Ibid., 23), and in order “to make the ‘social invention’ of region an act of radical possibility, it must be broadly social” (Ibid., 26). “Broadly social” points to the requisite local participation in reclaiming the formation of “region,” a process that must include the voices and experiences of Others who are marginalized on the basis of any number of intersecting, etc identifiers. Indeed, Powell insists that “a region is not a stable, finite thing, but a concept that emerges cumulatively from the circulation of texts about the region... even scholarly texts are partial, tendentious versions of the region that circulate in broader discourses” (Ibid., 36). I discuss in later chapters how ecomuseums are creating those inclusive spaces in which to foment and circulate new texts about region, ones that are intended to emancipate popular consciousness from the control and definition of those texts by hegemonic powers, ones that put the power into the hands and hearts of community members to serve their own best interests.

2.2 A glocal sense of place

It thus becomes necessary to nurture novel identities while encouraging a critical stance with regard to hegemonic interests imposing themselves insidiously on specific places. For folklorist José Limón (2008, 167), we can use critical regionalism to link “cultural and socioeconomic localized identities, especially as these stand in antagonistic, if also negotiated, relationships with

late capitalist globalization.” Equally important is the realization that such localized identities “are not fixed practices, although they often do retain their distinction and discretion over against a globalizing ‘outside’” (Ibid.). Limón, like Herr, draws on the notion of *assemblages*, which are “discernibly unified, local yet globally comparable, regional practices—both socio-economic and cultural, both residual and emergent—through which one or more regions manifest their critical difference but also their engagement with the global” (Ibid., 167–168). When we work with assemblages, bodies and identities come to be seen as individual nodes affecting one another across time and space. It becomes impossible to view places, with their infinite nodes working on them at any point in time, as anything less than shifting, multiple, and emergent. Indeed, all places come to be seen as cosmopolitan assemblages always in flux.

Marxist geographer Doreen Massey (1994) invites us to revisit sense of place equipped with this understanding of cosmopolitanism. Tim Cresswell (2014, 105) summarizes Massey’s warning signs against a dangerously reactionary sense of place: “1. a close connection between place and a singular form of identity; 2. a desire to show how the place is authentically rooted in history; and 3. a need for a clear sense of boundaries around a place separating it from the world outside.” Political or corporate interests may exploit these weaknesses, even inventing traditions (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983) to impose them hegemonically. For example, Hugh Trevor-Roper’s essay in *The Invention of Tradition* posits that Scottish clan tartans were largely invented by 19th century apparel manufacturers, who exploited Scottish nationalism in order to market an allegedly ancient tradition. To the contrary, he claims, there is no “pictorial, sartorial, or literary [evidence showing] differentiation of clans, no continuity of setts... Tartans were a matter of private taste, or necessity, only” (Trevor-Roper 1983, 23). Trevor-Roper’s research demonstrates how the primordialization of regional tradition finds its way into commonsense narratives about

place, often to political or economic ends. Briggs (1993, 422) similarly argues that hegemonic control may be “exerted through the trope of preservation when professionals assert that a tradition or community is in danger of dying out and then take it upon themselves to create and enforce definitions of what is traditional and how it should be ‘preserved’ or ‘revived.’”

Regarding Tsing’s “sticky materiality of practical encounters,” there is no denying that global interests, often dictated by capital, necessarily materialize in places. Critical theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1947) termed the manipulation of mass society into passive consumers of standardized cultural goods the “culture industry” as a warning against the false sense of psychological fulfillment imposed by capital. While their critical contributions to the inherent dangers and contradictions of capitalism are undeniable, it is also apparent, as Tsing and others argue, that universalizing forces are never frictionless. Dan Peretti’s (2017) study of personal ethnographies and vernacular traditions, for instance, reveals a surprising diversity of lived experiences that emerge around pop culture behemoth, Superman. Rather than a monolithic culture of consumption, Peretti documents how a variety of Superman tattoos, jokes, and festival experiences are used to express disparate identities and bring meaning to people’s lives based on their unique relationship to the pop icon and the localized cultures built around him. Likewise, Fiske (1989) demonstrates how Madonna’s pop songs are used by young women in disparate locales to empower themselves against patriarchal repressions they experience in everyday life.

The question thus becomes not whether cultural diversity exists in spite of global forces, but how to foster a critical awareness of a place’s “glocality” in light of the troubles increasingly plaguing places like Codroy Valley. Rather than deny the links between place, history, and identity, we can acknowledge the “throwntogetherness” of place (Massey 2005) due to its infinite linkages. It is unproductive to assume a primordial coherence only to be disturbed by

“external” forces. For Massey, it is precisely the throwntogetherness of place that necessitates our negotiation and “implicate[s] us, perforce, in the lives of human others, and in our relations with nonhumans [by asking] how we shall respond to our temporary meeting-up with these particular rocks and stones and trees. [Places] require that, in one way or another, we confront the challenge of the negotiation of multiplicity” (Ibid., 141). Therefore, rather than discard the concept of sense of place wholesale, we can now apprehend a “progressive sense of place” effectively marked by its throwntogetherness. Specifically, Massey redefines sense of place as: “1. Place as process; 2. Place as defined by the outside; 3. Place as site of multiple identities and histories; 4. A uniqueness of place defined by its interactions” (cited in Cresswell 2014, 192). Fostering a progressive sense of place in Codroy Valley is a prime objective of the ecomuseum.

Capturing and representing the hybridity of a place is no simple task, however. The dynamism of place resulting from “global interconnections and differential power geometries” makes it impossible for an ethnographer to “find” (Gabbert & Jordan-Smith 2007, 220). With its only constant arguably that it is “grounded in change,” any felicitous engagement with “the production and reproduction of place requires strangers, travel, movement, and contestation” (Ibid., 222–223). In her phenomenological study of place, *The Lure of the Local*, Lucy Lippard comments on the implicit role of anyone, including the ethnographer, in producing place just by being there: “Each time we enter a new place, we become one of the ingredients of an existing hybridity, which is really what all ‘local places’ consist of. By entering that hybrid, we change it; and in each situation we may play a different role” (Lippard 1997, 6). Intervening in what they view as the pervasive neoliberal displacement of humanity’s essential grounding in a just and durable world, a grounding they term “body~place~commons,” Reid and Taylor (2010) urge us

to recognize both the phenomenological complexities of identity formation in place, as well as the deep implications of displacement on those identities.

Place is not a neutral location within interchangeable space/time coordinates. It is a nexus of multiple and unfolding chains of events, and multiple pasts and futures are enfolded into immediate reality. The sedimentation of stories transform interchangeable spaces into *a* place, drenched with a particular history and signified concretely through sensory forms that evoke, provoke, and intensify thought but always exceed and evade it. It is deep and full because there is a tenacity of connection between the individual and the matrix (unlike in universalizing and space-based logics). It is tenacious, in part, because of the emotional power of sensory and kinesthetic forms that seize our attention at all neurological levels, from the cerebral cortex through primate modes of ambulation and prehensibility to much more primitive and affectively charged mentations including smell, foregrounding and backgrounding of sight, and constitutive and unconscious locational orientation. But it is also tenacious and full because of the complexity and volume of metonymic condensation of matrixical forces and meanings into the identity of an individual—such that displacement can radically reweave or disrupt individual identity. (Reid & Taylor 2010, 151–52)

That our sense of place affects and is affected by infinite “matrixical” meanings and symbols filtered through our unique perceptions of history, our “sensory and kinesthetic” engagements in space, and our complex emotion eludes its facile characterization. Now, in order to reconstitute the sense of place and related structures of feeling being everywhere disrupted by space-time distancing, we need to recognize the complexities around its (re)production.

Marxist geographer David Harvey (1996, 302) points out how the evocation and revival of “sense of place” is itself a postmodern phenomenon borne out of global capitalism. He notes that efforts to revive sense of place and belonging often manifest in the celebration of an “authentic” “heritage” that represents a sense of rootedness, for consumption. The marketing of heritage is a point I return to in Chapter 8 when I discuss some of the caveats of representing culture within a touristic space. Harvey concedes that the political pursuit of a sense of place such as I advocate in this thesis is mobilized when the particularity of place is seen to resist global capitalistic forces. This seizure upon the qualities of place, in an attempt to reanimate the

bonds between the social and environmental and to alter space-time distancing, he calls “militant particularism,” a term he adopts from Marxist cultural theorist Raymond Williams, who sought to describe oppositional actions in distinct places, such as strikes, used to pursue common goals. As place is, among other things, a “locus of collective memory” linking some inhabitants to a common past, “The preservation or construction of a sense of place is then an active moment in the passage from memory to hope, from past to future” (Ibid., 306).

Furthermore, and echoing my attempt to evoke structures of feeling drawn from the past as a window into a more sustainable future, Harvey tells us that “the reconstruction of places can reveal hidden memories that hold out the prospects for different futures. Some memories can be suppressed and others rescued from the shadows as identities shift and political trajectories into the future get redefined” (Ibid.). Yet, he reminds us that the politics of memory are also part of the hegemonic matrix in which certain memories are produced and perpetuated while others are repressed, keeping intact a common sense that ensures the continuation of a particular social order. As Cresswell (2014, 99) contends, “Places do not come with some memories attached as if by nature but rather they are the ‘contested terrain of competing definitions.’”

How, then, can we revive memories, relations, and structures of feeling that enhance sense of place and belonging and encourage care and creativity, while also exposing the hegemonic systems that seek to suppress or manage them for ease of legibility and control? A related question is how we might cull critical regionalism from the realm of the theoretical and abstract into the terrain of everyday struggle. Theorization is but mere abstraction if not put to practical use—although, of course, a dialectic exists, too, between theory and application of theory, as for example I am drawing from theory to write this thesis in order to pursue a public ecomuseum project. In addition, as Powell concedes, writing about region is itself part of the

ongoing performance of regionalization. And yet, in the event that only a handful of people ever read this thesis, how else can critical theory be made relevant to communities?

Mary Hufford, who uses theory as a tool for activism in rural Appalachia, where discursive and material resources are continually exploited by media, politics, and extractive industry, argues that folklore, “[a]s the study of narratives and practices whereby collectivities produce localities that interact with larger entities like the nation and the global marketplace... lends itself to critical regionalist study” (Hufford 2003, 268). She notes that while regionalization by the media has sustained “Appalachia” as a bourgeois social imaginary, folklorists are in a position to challenge these discourses by attending to the ways local people regionalize folklore and themselves through the performance of local knowledge in myth, legend, anecdote, place names, ritual, material construction, and so on. Indeed, just as the Appalachian Mountains must be reclaimed as constitutive of the commons, the Long Range and Anguille Mountains surrounding Codroy Valley, whose qualities are presently being redefined in rational terms by extractive industry, “cannot be reduced to a set of physical attributes without doing violence to the local, regional, and national publics anchored in them” (Ibid., 270).

Thus retrieving particularities of place, folklore participates in a dialogue explicitly linked to the political project of democratically amplifying voices. Referring to historicist (romantic) and extractivist (rational) discourses as types of “monologue,” Hufford enjoins folklorists to interrupt monologues through collaborative ethnography, which “can be a mode of retrieving genres that cast romantic and rational regionalisms in a ludic and critical light, that form in the aggregate a carnivalesque regionalism” (Hufford 2002, 66). Herr similarly claims it is our duty as cultural scholars using a critical regionalist approach to “look at ourselves with the eyes of the other and to enter into the space where the uncanny side of the composite self—a sort

of n-degree subjective space caught in negativity—can be detected, however indirectly, much as a critical regionalist building expresses, literally, the Heideggerian presencing of coconstructed ‘place-form’” (Herr 1996, 23). My own positionality as insider, outsider, and ethnographer who is tacitly accepted while also othered on various fronts (race, education, sex, gender, provenance, eating habits, etc.), rather than producing an opportunity to egotize or wallow, offers a unique and critical vantage point from which to observe the dynamic interplay of glocal forces.

Limiting oneself to one’s own positionality better to understand glocal dynamics is not sufficient, however. I discuss below a praxis of engaging diverse perspectives and performances that challenge hegemonic narratives while implicitly defending and revaluing the commons: the production of third space dialogue. It is upon horizontal dialogue that resistive ethnographic research may be adequately grounded. I therefore turn now to a theoretical discussion of third space and narrative, including cultural translation, intertextuality, and intersectionality, after which I turn to ethnographic and public folklore methodologies that furnish a space for the ethnographic engenderment of public critique.

2.3 Third space and narrative

In his appeal for a revised definition of folklore that foregrounds its basis in *practice*, Simon Bronner (2016) invokes the Greek goddess PHEME, who personified renown and was known for spreading rumours. For Bronner, practice implies that knowledge acquisition is *phemic*—a term that denotes stylized, culturally situated, and expressive transmission through visual, oral, or written means, imitation, or demonstration, so that the material is implicitly associated with its process of transmission. PHEME, with her multiple tongues, eyes, and ears, and a trumpet for broadcasting messages, selectively reframed what she learned so the missives would vary between receivers and become locally entrenched knowledge, recognized both for its content and

mode of transmission. “She was a relay station of sorts, serving as both recipient and transmitter of earthy material that, being shared from person to person, became aestheticized, elaborated, and localized” (Bronner 2016, 16). A core aspect of communicative performance is narrative.

Literary critic Hayden White (1980, 5) outlines the etymology of narrative as such: The terms “narrative,” “narration,” and “to narrate” have their roots in the Latin *gnarus* (“knowing,” “acquainted with,” “expert”) and *narroi* (“relate,” “tell”) from the Sanskrit root *gnrd* (“know”) and from the Greek *γνωριμος* (“knowable,” “known”). Accordingly, he defines narrative as the translation from *knowing* to *telling*, which is tantamount to “the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning that are generally human rather than culture-specific” (Ibid.). Likewise, folklorist Amy Shuman (2005, 59) describes narrative as “excerpting events from everyday experiences that are then represented as significant beyond the immediate group of people who were present during an experience.” However, Shuman goes a step further by presenting a paradox: “Narrative promises mutual understanding (empathy) and entitlement, and these are competing promises, the first determined by questions of translatability and border crossing, and the second by questions of custody and containment” (Ibid., 150).

Implicit in the aforementioned scholars’ contributions, and occasionally made explicit (Rogers 2002; Prahlad 2021) since late 20th century grappling over authentic representations by culture brokers, is the clarion call for greater folkloristic engagement with third space, in concept and in essence. Lefebvre (1991) rued what he viewed as our culture’s propensity for privileging second space (*espace conçu*), or the conceptual and representational articulation of that which is material, socially produced, and directly perceivable “out there” in first space (*espace perçu*). Third space (*espace vécu*) is dialogical and relational, simultaneously encompassing and set apart from the other two spaces. For Lefebvre, all philosophical abstractions, like signs and

codes, mask the foundational importance of space and occlude our full engagement with it. They misrepresent the text with reality, further abstracting space and even rendering it invisible. In folklore studies, *espace conçu* is frequently summoned in traditional genres such as songs, proverbs, jokes, and myths—which are produced informally and dialogically within third space, to be sure—so that space is conceptualized at the expense of direct experience (Rogers 2002). Collaborative ethnographic projects like the ecomuseum offer the potential to reconcile misgivings about the privileging of second space through the co-creation of non-hierarchical third spaces that encourage self-reflection and direct action, a position I defend in Chapter 8.

In his foundational postcolonial text, *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha (1994) extends Lefebvre's discussion by revealing how hybrid forms of cultural identity may displace dominant narratives of cultural hegemony through engagement in a third space that exists at the boundaries of difference related to class, gender, nation, race, generation, and location. He describes this site as a dialogic contact zone wherein cultural meanings and symbols are “appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew” (Bhabha 1994, 37), thus precluding an *a priori* notion of cultural purity, which underlies exclusionary and hegemonic discourse. The anomalous third space provides the possibility of continual hybrid identifications as one interacts and performs difference in a non-hierarchical setting, an opportunity that is consistent with the ecomuseological ideal of reflexive representation of political, aesthetic, and everyday practices within a site of mutual exchange where culture is repeatedly articulated and negotiated.

Influenced by the sociocultural notion that the human mind is the product of cultural artifacts accumulated over generations, Bhabha demonstrates how hegemony functions in the postcolonial context, where “unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation” (Ibid., 245) shape the development of our thought processes. For instance, the dominant or host culture often

endorses cultural diversity publicly while simultaneously trying to contain cultural difference.⁴¹ Thus, despite a superficial performance of benevolence, racism remains widespread due to the masking of ethnocentric norms, values, and interests in multicultural discourse. For Bhabha, the concept of *difference* reveals the limits of Western liberalism, relativism, and mythologies of “progress” because cultural difference cannot be accommodated within a universalist framework. In fact, different cultures, cultural practices, and constructions of culture within and between different groups are often incommensurable and do not easily coexist. We are naïve to assume that all forms of cultural diversity can be understood on the basis of some form of universalism. This Western perspective ends up limiting our understanding of how cultures construct their own systems of meaning and social organization.

Bhabha defines culture as a signifying or symbolic *activity*. Hence, although cultural contents vary across time and space, the articulation of cultures is possible because “all cultures are symbol-forming and subject-constituting, interpellative practices” (Rutherford 1990, 210) whose cultural meanings are obtained through signification via icons, symbols, metaphors, myth, and so on. The gulf between signifier and signified necessitates *cultural translation*, which proves the impossibility of any totalizing essence of the “originary,” itself always in a position to be retranslated. Bhabha argues that cultures are necessarily decentred structures, always constituted in relation to an internal otherness based on the use of symbols. Acknowledging this opens up the possibility of articulating and/or displacing different cultural practices and priorities, even incommensurable ones.

⁴¹ For instance, Carol Silverman (1989) critiques efforts by the Bulgarian state to manipulate and appropriate gypsy traditions by neutralizing cultural difference in a folk festival context while forcefully prohibiting performances in “natural” settings like weddings. In this case, incommensurable cultural constructs are appropriated and controlled in order to publicly display “authentic” multiculturalism that serves a nationalist agenda for a unified socialist culture. In a recent article (Caputo-Nimbark 2024), I discuss a similar cultural containment strategy whereby the Turkish State permits exclusively depoliticized and staged public performances of Kurdish oral traditions.

All forms of culture are therefore always in a state of hybridity, flirting with a third space that holds the potential to enable other positions to emerge and displace old histories so as to set up new structures of authority, politics, values, and so on.⁴² Third space is always already present in our creation of culture through our constant appropriation and recontextualization of symbols, language, and myths. It allows marginality to become, in the words of bell hooks (1990, 149–50), “a site of radical possibility, a space of resistance... [that] offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds.” If heritage is an articulation of culture for which ethnographers and tradition bearers collaborate in the act of writing and reproducing narratives, then the ecomuseum is an intriguing place to test third space theory’s emancipatory potential.

Apropos to ethnographic interpretation and performance, Shuman (2005) cautions against moralistic arguments that claim to “give voice” to the marginalized as a way to counter hegemonic narratives, or claim that the desired response of narrativizing is empathy for another’s situation. The paradox of narrative is that its vehicle (e.g., a story) may always be appropriated during its necessary travel beyond its owner and beyond third space in its bid to accomplish cultural work, which risks “serving the interests of the empathizer rather than the empathized” (Ibid., 18). She prefers a *critique of empathy*, defined as “a place to begin to see narratives as a relationship between tellers and listeners and their cultural, political, and historical contexts” (Ibid., 25). For Shuman, a critical awareness of this exchange may inform the productive tension between personal and collective stories. Here, empathy allows for “the possibility of critique and

⁴² Here, I see similarities to Pierre Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of discursive fields, opinion and doxa, where the boundary separating the two is where agency is potentially realized. Similarly, Erving Goffman’s (1983) interaction order is where institutional and individual agency come into contact and attempt to assert or maintain control. Henry Glassie’s (1995) description of conflict erupting at the collision site between traditionalizing and modernizing agendas also invokes radical delinking from oppressive institutions. All treat the subject of hegemony but Bhabha’s third space perhaps best articulates the performative acts of displacement in a de- or post-colonial context.

counternarrative, providing whatever redemptive, emancipatory, or liberatory possibilities narrative holds” (Ibid., 19). By critiquing empathy, we insist on obligations between tellers, listeners, and their appropriated narratives and can guard against its liabilities, such as erasure or cooptation of the Other.

“Oral testimony is never the same twice, even when the same words are used, because the relationship—the dialogue—is always shifting,” counsels anthropologist Julie Cruikshank (1998, 40). Story-based knowledge is demonstrable, relational, and “cannot easily be construed as a written, formally encoded, reified product,” in which case “it begins to accumulate different [potentially harmful] meanings” (Ibid., 70). Cruikshank cites techniques by Walter Benjamin, Harold Innis, and Bakhtin to forge dialogical contact zones by navigating “the relation between storytelling, cultural translation, and social action” (Ibid., 140) through an imagination of “the power of oral tradition to destabilize commonsense categories, to promote non-confrontational ways of reevaluating hegemonic concepts, and to encourage dialogue rather than monologue” (Ibid., 154). The ephemerality of stories and storytelling is the hallmark of the ecomuseum. In contrast to tendencies in the conventional museum, whereby professional texts narrate the story of a culture or individual, ecomuseum participants simultaneously narrate and author their disparate stories derived from phenomenological performances *in situ*. In the event the story is authored by another, whether sourced from the archives or elsewhere, ecomuseum performers are held accountable for the research and exploration of its possible interpretations and, further, for the extension of a public conversation around the processes that led to that interpretation.

A concept that inhabits storytelling events, and narrative generally, is intertextuality, first theorized by Russian literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin in his essay “Discourse in the Novel” (Bakhtin 1981). There, Bakhtin introduced the concept “heteroglossia,” the capacity of language

to reflect different ways of perceiving and engaging in the world. Intertextuality encapsulates how individual speech acts are animated by perspective, evaluation, and ideological positioning, which combine to display a unique worldview. Utterances are bound to their context, speakers' intentions, and the intentions of other speakers vis-à-vis those same utterances, and therefore may never be reduced to abstraction. For Bakhtin, language "lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes one's 'own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intentions, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention" (Ibid., 293). Intertextuality denotes that language, as other symbols, exists prior to appropriation, in other contexts, and always at the service of other intentions: "Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process" (Ibid., 294). In other words, intertextuality is requisite, and held accountable, for translation.

Intertextuality may be exploited to propagate narratives of intolerance and racism, just as it may be drawn on to serve the interests of disenfranchised populations. Yet, while it is often an explicit remobilization of symbols, motifs, and concepts, Bakhtin assures us that all utterances involve some form of expropriation since language is always a culmination of others' intentions. Indeed, as Jeff Todd Titon (2003, 74) points out, intertextuality may be "a quality inherent in thought or consciousness... [I]t is not much of a leap to consider our minds not so much as socially constructed as textually constructed." The process of retrieving language, thoughts, and symbols intertextually is a core part of cultural translation, which, as we have seen, is the site where narratives are at least slightly transformed in their telling.

Another process inherent to narrative is identity formation, which, amid the growing space-time distancing and individualization being imposed on many communities' lifeworlds, is presently wrought with unprecedented challenges. Indeed, citing philosopher John Dewey, Reid and Taylor aver, "Corporate globalization from above has accelerated the process Dewey described in 1927 as 'the dislocation and unsettlement of local communities,' which he linked to the most urgent problem of the public: 'to find and identify itself'" (2010, 152–153). Before considering the ecomuseum's potential role in furnishing third spaces to help communities "find and identify" themselves, which is the topic of Chapter 5, I turn to the ubiquitous and politically charged convergence of identities known as intersectionality.

2.4 Intersectionality and queerness

Hegemonic narratives around cultural purity and heteronormativity that condone or commit violence against nonconforming bodies and epistemes are perpetuated through monologic conduits, which inhibit the third space exchange necessary for producing counternarratives. As Bhabha reminds us, it is in third space where differences related to various identifiers such as class, gender, sexuality, race, and age are negotiated and hybridized. Failing to attend to these anomalous sites of mutual exchange, dominant narratives continue to mark otherness while leaving unmarked those identifiers perceived by social and cultural élites as normative or ideal. As antagonisms against perceived Others are thus normalized, discriminatory effects are compounded when multiple markers of otherness intersect to produce hierarchies.

Temporally reconciling an accessible queer past with an imagined queer future, what he terms the "no-longer-conscious" and the "not-yet-here," in *Cruising Utopia*, queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz seeks an end to the polarization of identity politics by urging for the disruption of a "version of reality that naturalizes cultural logics such as capitalism and heteronormativity"

(Muñoz 2009, 12) to the exclusion of other potentialities. In a quest to replace violent and intolerant narratives with the naturalization of intersecting identities, which allow us to rethink utopia outside of the chronotopic confines of homonormativity, Muñoz maps a blueprint for queer worldmaking possibilities by looking for traces of queer aesthetics and structures of feeling in past and present works of art, performances, and social movements. Photographs of empty public urinals, for example, conjure the structures of feeling that inhabit an all-but-forgotten underground sex culture. Such traces, Muñoz suggests, may uplift those whose histories and lives have been systematically repressed or ignored by “a phobic majoritarian public culture” (Ibid., 67), and who may finally be able to access shared memory, affect, and modes of survival, becoming, and belonging. When building their archive and designing temporary exhibits for Codroy Valley’s ecomuseum, researchers may wish to seek out traces of *jouissance* in the commons of the past, or the queer pleasures of the present, so as to mitigate threats of enclosure of these crucial worldmaking blueprints for a more equitable future.

White, leftist intellectuals have a tendency to eschew intersectionality in their ideological imaginings, which Muñoz argues works against queer futurity. For instance, he decries David Harvey’s dismissal of “the narcissistic exploration of self, sexuality and identity” as “the leitmotif of bourgeois urban culture” (Ibid., 30) for its misrepresentation of the many non-bourgeois-identifying urban queers who fall outside his tidy categorization of an irrevocably complex demographic. A regrettable consequence of pronouncements such as Harvey’s is that the left remains blind to intersectionality, while “queer and utopian thinkers alike [become] wary of left thought” (Ibid., 31). In Chapter 4, I discuss intersections of rurality and queerness, and the requisite revisitation of prevailing homophobic and metronormative discourses, so that rural

queers may finally relish the rich cultural and ecological abundance of places like Codroy Valley, which I argue are already queer; we need only refine our tools to read them as such.

As my own autoethnography attests, I may have been cast as an object of mild derision and curiosity in Codroy Valley. I nonetheless remain hopeful that tools from critical regionalism and public folklore, outlined herein, hold the potential to recast narratives around whatever floating signifiers obstructed my chance of belonging in a more nuanced and intersectional light. Provided the third space, counternarratives may be just a performance away from realization. Indeed, in her work on fairy tales, folklorist Kay Turner discerns both censure and redemption in discourses around intersecting identifications. For instance, in her recapitulation of a workshop titled “Thinking with Stories in Time of Conflict,” Turner (2019) recounts the murder of her childhood neighbour, Viola Liuzzo, by the Ku Klux Klan directly after the 1965 Civil Rights March from Selma to Montgomery. As a white woman who habitually transgressed expectations of heteronormative domesticity common in that era, following her murder Liuzzo came to be typecasted in the popular imagination as a “witch,” an intersectional floating signifier found in personal experience narratives, rumours, local legends, gossip, and accusations against real women. Turner argues that narratives that typecast the “house witch” figure as “fearsome, untrustworthy, even demonic—that is, ungodly and incapable of repentance and rehabilitation” (Ibid., 30) are reinforced by her classification under ATU 334 (“Household of the Witch”) in Stith Thompson’s *Motif-Index of Folk Literature*. Floating signifiers are seen in the dominant narrative to “signify according to the ways people know one another, speak to one another, listen to, or fail to listen to one another” (Ibid., 32; c.f. Laclau 2005).

However, floating signifiers like “race” and “witch” belie any intrinsic meaning. As their semantic underpinnings rely entirely on intersectionality, lacking fixity they are always subject

to intertextual reappropriation and redefinition during cultural translation. For Turner (2019, 37), it is crucial “to follow both a tale’s messages about something taboo such as ‘woman out of bounds’ or ‘dangerous woman’ and its messages about how society codes—condones or condemns—and communicates about these topics.” Liuzzo’s condemnation as whore, bad wife and mother, and witch fits the narrative lineage of gender-controversial “witches and warriors of suffrage and feminism” (Ibid., 41) who preceded and followed her. It also fits the patriarchal, Judeo-Christian “separate spheres” dogma, which fueled a further “assumption of her deviance in other regards, including promiscuity, drug use, even insanity” (Ibid., 42).

Fortunately, Turner reads the intrinsic mutability of fairy tales as providing a viable outlet for counternarratives. The theme of intersectional discrimination recorded in Liuzzo’s story “maps significantly onto the fairy-tale genre, in which many stories concern the undoing of prejudice and oppression through escape, journey, disappearing, flying, and other agencies of bodily choice in motion quite often facilitated or represented by a witch” (Ibid.). Intertextuality and intersectionality may therefore join forces in the act of storytelling to open up a range of alternative and counterhegemonic meanings, which, in the case of fairy tales, may have already been alive in the tales and their tellings (Turner & Greenhill 2012) before their appropriation and marketing via unmarked metadiscursive practices insidiously championing hegemonic structures.

It appears, then, that sometimes even the goddess PHEME overlooks certain perspectives when relaying messages. Despite her best efforts to reframe knowledge into locally accessible information through the acts of telling and receiving, some external receivers remain blocked, and her otherwise dialectical missives turn into monologues. Thus has been the case in the increasingly polarized and consumerist societies dotting the planet. A result of these monologues is hegemonic narratives that use their power to undermine, coopt, exploit, and deny narratives of

resistance. And yet, while hegemony is a glaring subtext in most acts of narrative production and circulation, many of the studies we have seen thus far foreground the subversive tactics bound up in these acts. Subversion of hegemonic narratives typically involves a folk group or community organizing to share and mobilize aesthetic resources in order to achieve oppositional goals in common. Priviness to these tactics may prove invaluable for Codroy Valleyers when planning and constructing their ecomuseum, but also when forging alliances with similarly distressed communities further afield. Indeed, they may discover fellowship among distinct locales undergoing rapid space-time distancing, but, likewise, retaining some of those customs and narratives that remain populated by subversive tactics.

One scholar who sees value in narrative beyond symbolism or affect, and whose work parallels the situation in Codroy Valley, is Ray Cashman. In particular, his work on “critical nostalgia” (Cashman 2006) draws attention to narrative’s capacity to galvanize group solidarity so as to effect real social change. Responding to critics of nostalgia who claim it is a “universal modern malaise” (Ibid., 137) and an indiscriminate or unproductive preservation of trivial relics of the past, he observes how a Northern Irish community inhabited by Catholics and Protestants (formally enemies in that country) collects, preserves, and displays scraps of heritage, critically, in both senses of the word: vitally important, and analytical by way of informed evaluation of the past and present. Residents thus cope with social, ecological, and technological change over the past century, and assert a collective identity that transcends political, religious, and ethnic lines.

Whereas critics “implicitly endorse modernity as a project of positive progress,” seeing nostalgia as “preclud[ing] creative change, dooming society to inertia and decline” (Ibid., 140), For Cashman, nostalgia extends beyond imagination into the realm of action, practice, and material culture, and thereby “implicates a critique of modernity” (Ibid., 138). Echoing Bakhtin

and Muñoz, he identifies, in their displays, residents' implicit "existential ideological stance... in opposition to a modern teleology of progress that blindly endorses change" (Ibid., 147).

Narratives that inhere in critical nostalgia, moreover, "offer a much-needed challenge to other, more divisive representations of the past" (Ibid., 152) prominently displayed across the country, particularly in urban environs (Santino 2001). Through historical research and ethnography, the ecomuseum encourages participants to embrace a form of critical nostalgia that centres structures of feeling around commons and border crossing, so as to ratify them as urgent temporalities amid the unprecedented crises Codroy Valley and analogous rural spaces are presently faced with. One crucial site of inquiry is the archive.

2.5 Unsettling the archive

Archives are textual records of the past accessed in the present. A portal into another time and place, their contents can be mobilized in part to make sense of the present and shape a better future. Yet, given the Eurocentric and heteropatriarchal epistemological foundations upon which our predecessors produced and circulated knowledge, archival materials are inevitably biased and fragmented. They contain countless silences and misrepresentations. Recent years have seen innovative and decolonial approaches to disrupting, queering, and transforming the archives. Stuart Hall's concept of "living archive," which is "present, on-going, continuing, unfinished, [and] open-ended (2001, 89), emphasizes how community engagement in archiving compels participants to document cultural expressions, social movements, and marginalized voices. Codroy Valleyers are presently constructing a community archive to live on into futurity. I advocate a blending of Hall's living archive with Hufford's mitigation archiving, elaborated in Chapter 6, to take stock of the commons of the past and present, particularly in the face of enclosures, such as threats by extractive industries. Nor must interpretations of archival materials

be viewed as immutable or monolithic. Indeed, as Walter Benjamin (1968, 225) mused, “To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognise it ‘the way it really was.’ It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger.”

One of the most compelling methods to temper dominant narratives is the concept of troubling, disrupting, or queering the archive. An excellent example of this subversive tactic that may assist Codroy Valleyers, as they consider their own queer, posthuman, and anticolonial archives buried at the margins of heteronormative interpretations, is Shirley Moody-Turner’s *Black Folklore and the Representation of Culture*. Throughout, she employs a participatory ethnographic framework in the context of historiography so as to “invite previously silenced voices to the table as participants” (Moody-Turner 2013, 9). As readers informed by her archival methods, we too are invited to juxtapose prescient methods propounded by African American folklorists like Anna Julia Cooper, who, as I describe below, was already in the late 19th century championing folklorists’ interaction and exchange with research subjects in contradistinction to the “objective” gathering and documenting by her counterparts.

Moody-Turner simultaneously exposes how acts of narrativizing and representing Black folklore, by concealing and distorting African American culture and history, were violent agents of social, cultural, and political imperialism throughout the second half of the 19th century, and how, equally significantly, African American folklorists, informal collectors, authors, scholars, and activists undertook an “aesthetic of engagement” to reclaim their identities and pave the way for later, more visible, liberation movements such as the Harlem Renaissance. Using a critical regionalist framework to unsettle the archive, she recasts American folklore’s origins as playing a fundamental role in romanticizing African American communities and in inventing notions of

Black authenticity⁴³ so problematic even today. Through the codification of a long history of racism by scientific and philosophical evolutionary discourses, white notions of Black identity have helped maintain white racial homogeneity and protect existing power structures: “The folkloric study of a racialized, removed, and pre-modern other enabled the construction of a modern, civilized white identity” (Ibid., 6). In order to extend conceptions of folklore studies beyond the extractivist, scientist prescriptions that placed Western civilization at the apex of civilization, she argues that Black perspectives and epistemologies must be recovered.⁴⁴ Moody-Turner’s work thus unearths some of the critical African American scholarship that employed epistemologies—subjective interactions, memory, storytelling, dissimulation, masking, and so forth—that ran counter to the objective, empirical approaches firmly established in the white, male academy. Moreover, she exposes the epistemic violence that has been and continues to be central to academic discourse and popular culture today. Over the next few pages, I summarize some of her critical findings to illustrate the transformative potential of archives.

The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute was founded in 1868 Virginia by white Protestant missionary, Samuel Armstrong, who believed in the power of industrial education to civilize and train former slaves, who would then go on to educate and civilize other rural blacks. He was active at a time when freed blacks were viewed as a political threat and national problem, solvable only through incorporation and education. His model fashioned dichotomies between moral, educated, civilized, modern Black students and immoral, uneducated, uncivilized, old-fashioned Black folk, and of utmost importance in his institute’s curriculum was the obliteration of superstitions and folk beliefs, which he saw as reflective of moral and intellectual deficiencies.

⁴³ I take up the complex issue of authenticity in Chapter 8.

⁴⁴ Likewise, I argue that many of the epistemologies and structures of feeling I observed among Codroy Valleyers, which are often cast in dominant discourse as backwards or romantic, must be recovered and recast for their subversive and community-building potential.

Armstrong's civilizing techniques, including photographic propaganda, were intimately tied to those used by Richard Henry Pratt, founder of Carlisle Indian Industrial School, who famously proclaimed, "Kill the Indian, save the man" (1892, 46).

While acknowledging that Hampton students were deeply influenced by the Hampton industrial education paradigm, Moody-Turner examines personal texts that reveal a willingness to expose and challenge its founding ideology's racist politics. She also revisits a bold speech delivered at the 1895 American Folklore Society (AFS) annual meeting by Hampton graduate and educator Robert Moton, in which he identified popular constructions of Black folklore and claimed the right to intercede in what he considered problematic dialogues around it, including those perpetuated by the AFS. Displaying theoretical rigour, including impressive descriptions of Black folksong performance, dissimulation, and subversion, he challenged the prevailing binary of African Americans as folk but not folklorists, evincing the notion that "the white American cannot know the Negro, although he often professes that he does" (Moody-Turner 2013, 84). Moton further encouraged counterstrategies to redeem African American folklore and to create positive representations by shifting the folkloric lens and celebrating dissimulation as resistance.

African American author and educator Anna Julia Cooper was born into slavery in 1858, published and lectured extensively on civil rights issues, earned a doctorate in 1924 from the Sorbonne in Paris, and died in 1964 at the age of 105. Like Moton, Cooper was deeply involved with the Hampton Folklore Society and critical of her contemporaries' compliance with dominant standards for measuring progress and success. She championed ideas considered radical even today, such as the need to expose underlying assumptions and practices that perpetuate systemic inequalities, or to identify folklore's "impartial" epistemologies, which are weighed down by racist and classist biases. She advocated a personal and subjective

epistemology rooted in memory and experience and called for an African American literary tradition in dialogue with African American vernacular culture so as to validate each on their own terms. Furthermore, she was a trailblazing feminist and early advocate of intersectionality without using the term. In her autobiography, *A Voice from the South*, Cooper dispelled how intersections of race, gender, and geography create unique experiences for Black women, and challenged white feminists to seek Black perspectives in their liberatory quest, asserting, “The cause of freedom is not the cause of a race or a sect, a party or a class—it is the cause of humankind, the very birthright of humanity” (Cooper 1892, 26).

Cooper’s 1894 address to the Hampton Folklore Society was arguably as relevant then as it is to decolonial efforts today. For instance, at a time when whiteness was wholly unmarked in conventional discourse and assumed as the “disembodied originator of culture” (Moody-Turner 2013, 90), she used historical and physical descriptors, some grotesque, in order to cast the white man as both an heir and imitator of non-Western civilization and an embodied, marked individual. She further identified a firm link between imperialism and racial hierarchies, urging for a new approach to folklore not wed to Western hierarchies, but rather, one that sees African American folklore as aesthetically valid in its own right and thus not in need of being stylized into “civilized” forms.⁴⁵ In the realm of methodology, Cooper’s speech encouraged active exchange beyond the mere, objective gathering and documenting of folklore. She suggested that students’ memories of their communities and family traditions be recalled, reconstituted, narrated, and shared. For Cooper, folklore was a “site of memory” with the ability to challenge authoritative historic narratives and open up a space for silenced, co-opted, and suppressed

⁴⁵ This point signaled a radical shift from conventional scholarly approaches adopted by African Negro Academy scholars such as Du Bois, Crummell, and Dunbar, who embraced “racial uplift” ideologies that subsumed Black culture under white culture.

voices so as to negotiate with the past and construct alternative ways of knowing. Concealing memories would only erase the slave past⁴⁶ and obscure African American humanity, thus permitting racist myths to prevail.

Some scholars and archivists today are recentring previously discounted epistemologies, such as conjure, dissimulation, affect, magic, and masking, all of which Cooper and Moton fought tooth and nail to sanction in the academy over 100 years ago. Rachel González-Martin (2021), for instance, corroborates Cooper's appeal to folklorists to valorize magical thinking—in the present so as to avoid pitfalls of presentism—as an alternate epistemology wherein magic is treated as a form of science. When entextualizing and decontextualizing discursive forms drawn from fieldwork, she suggests that we “acknowledge our rhetorics as part of a system of magical thinking that academics call ‘theoretical discourse,’ and we incorporate the magic we find in the field into our discourse as a method of community-based intellectualizing” (2021, 29). Shawn Wilson, Andrea Breen, and Lindsay Dupré (2019) likewise note that Indigenous epistemologies entail the reception and sharing of relational knowledge, such as attentiveness to dreams and symbology, dialogue with Elders and ancestors, religious ceremonies, stories, mythologies, intuitions, rituals, and magic to impart wisdom about the past, present, and future to one's human and more-than-human community. They argue that the “alive and agentive quality of Knowledge is evident in the central place of Stories within Indigenist epistemology” (2019, 9), which should be centred within mainstream methodologies.

It is not odd to hear the utterance, “Codroy Valley is a magical place.” Magic abounds in the Valley, as any of its mystics, witches (who may go by other names), spiritualists, children, beekeepers, or gardeners can attest. I discuss below how stories about fairies are not uncommon,

⁴⁶ In my conclusion, I draw attention to Codroy Valley's plausible links to the transatlantic slave trade as an example of a violent past largely concealed.

nor are anecdotes about ghosts, apparitions, exorcisms, and inexplicable serendipities. That these hegemonically dubbed “irrational” ways of knowing have had an enormous impact on many lives in the Valley is reason enough to engage with them ethnographically and archivally. Documenting personal experience narratives in archives, interviews, or autoethnography, participants in the ecomuseum may give voice to epistemes that have been all but forgotten.

Of course, efforts to unsettle the archive can prove challenging when the archive itself is fragmented. Martha Norkunas (2004, 106), for instance, felt compelled to “discover the space in-between” the words of her mother, a terrific storyteller, so as to situate her “in the political discourse of women’s struggles for justice.” Yet those stories never entered the archive. Nor are they told publicly, since they lack ties to any particular historical moment or object. “Like so many women’s stories,” she tells us, “hers fades into the infrastructure, that nebulous zone that never becomes a part of the making of history” (Ibid., 107). One is reminded of Diane Tye’s ethnography of her late mother, *Baking as Biography* (Tye 2010), in which the latter’s catalogue of recipes reveals the dominant narratives she was compelled stoically to adhere to in mid-20th century rural Nova Scotia, as captured in Tye’s words: “In a cruelly ironic twist of patriarchy, the better the job my mother did in feeding the family, the more invisible her work became to us” (Ibid., 96). So too was the suffering of Norkunas’s mother rendered invisible, for she managed to mask it in a patriarchal world where women were expected to “behave.” Unlike Tye, who finds hints of subversion in her mother’s scribbles and in memories of her scant “down time” with the other church women, Norkunas finds only silence. That we “allow others to control the present through their interpretations of the past” (Norkunas 2004, 115) is her clarion call to “rescue” those suppressed narratives from the past to address historic and contemporary injustices. Codroy Valleyers may not be able to recover the stories they wish to tell. Jotting down memories

and exchanging them with peers will remobilize at least some of them. Norkunas and Tye remind us just how urgent it is to document those narratives before they risk evaporating into oblivion.

2.6 Posthuman and decolonial spaces

While scouring the archives or reading for difference in people's narratives, our metadiscursive practices are often left unmarked. An example of an unmarked metadiscourse that persists in informing our methods is the assumption that folklore is the exclusive purview of *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Such anthropocentrism not only denies the possibility of more-than-human subjects to exhibit culture and agency, but even sanctions a hegemonic interpretation onto the lore of the very folk whose worldviews presuppose more-than-human personhood. In other words, an anthropocentric framework for approaching folklore precludes an infrastructure for interpreting the animistic ontologies through which many of our folkloric subjects construct their worlds, including those very texts we choose to analyze, thus effectively rendering them silent, fundamentally misrepresenting their knowledge systems, and inadvertently exacerbating the colonialist project. The first step therefore is to acknowledge that multiple and intersecting ontologies exist (Blaser 2013), as I examine more closely in a Codroy Valley context in Chapters 3 and 4. Then may we begin to engage with subaltern lifeworlds in a critical and productive way, working together to decolonize our intersecting worlds.

In *Posthuman Folklore*, Tok Thompon (2019, 12) defines posthumanism as “the general approach of questioning previously held notions of ‘personhood’ in Western academic discourse, which tended to unproblematically assume a categorical link between ‘person’ and ‘individual *Homo sapiens sapiens*.’” Rather than essentialize any given group or tradition that espouses non-Western concepts of personhood, a posthuman folkloristics first points to the radical implications of merely acknowledging alternative ontologies, then considers methodologies that might bring

those ontologies into dialogue with commonsense notions of personhood as a move toward subverting the epistemic violence that continues to undermine marginalized lifeworlds that nurture the ecological and civic commons. Of course, ideas about interspecific relations are not new to the social sciences, with notable contributions by Gregory Bateson (1972), on human-animal and contrasting mammalian species' intersubjectivity through play, and Donna Haraway (2008), who extends the conversation to include cyborgs. Jay Mechling (1989) was among the first folklorists to hypothesize the existence of an interspecific, dyadic folk group, particularly in the context of play traditions between humans and their pets that constitute aesthetic vernacular culture, but also exclusively between nonhuman animals. He concludes with the declaration, "In short, by all the criteria generally used by folklorists to decide if they are in the presence of communication worthy of being called 'folklore,' I see no persuasive reasons why non-human animals cannot be included in 'the folk.' It is only a fiat, by speciesism, that folklorists define folklore as a unique possession of human animals" (Mechling 1989, 318).

Introducing a special issue of the *Journal of Folklore Research*, Sabina Magliocco (2018) proposes an advancement of Mechling's insights by imparting posthumanism and the "animal turn" to folklore studies, citing research in animal studies that highlights the existence of those traits considered in Western tradition to be exclusively human: language, culture, self-awareness, and sexual promiscuity, among others. She recognizes a key in "alternative ontologies... to turn around centuries of animal and planetary exploitation" (Magliocco 2018, 5), but falls short of taking up the issue of coloniality with regard to those othered systems of being and knowing. While Magliocco and fellow scholars view non-Western ontologies as potential panaceas for the current ecological crisis, a critical path forward remains murky. Similarly, Thompson's call for posthumanism in folklore studies involves the investigation of non-Western mythologies, which

he claims to be a potentially postcolonial project enabling us “to learn anew from previously discounted cultural discourses of knowledge” (Thompson 2019, 45). As with previous scholars, however, no evident path is drawn to this imagined decolonized and sustainable future.

A comparison of cosmogonic myths between Judeo-Christian and worldwide Indigenous traditions demonstrates the divergence of Western and non-Western explanations of the cosmos and our relation to them. Each attempts to answer both the big questions about life as well as provide a sacred charter for rituals, values, and even the most mundane of actions (Ibid., 46). Thompson notes the active role played by animals in Native American cosmogonic myths, where it is often an animal or council of animals who creates the world, including humankind. Another salient feature is the blurred division between humans and animals, where shapeshifting, intermarriage, and engagement in one another’s mundane activities is common. Thompson points out that even ostensible counternarratives to Genesis born out of rationalism and Enlightenment philosophies maintained biblical anthropocentrism. René Descartes’s radical proposal of a mind/body distinction had grave implications for interspecific relations in the West with its view of animals as mere “fleshy robots” (Ibid., 49), an ontology that endorsed a rationalist justification for existing anthropocentric discourse. For Thompson, such a view stands in stark contrast to Native American statutes of reciprocity with the natural world and respect for more-than-humans as teachers and guides.⁴⁷

As mentioned, fairy narratives persists in Codroy Valley, and have been documented and analyzed extensively in other parts of Newfoundland and Labrador, as, for example, in Barbara Rieti’s (1991) *Strange Terrain: The Fairy World in Newfoundland*, or Peter Narváez’s (1997) collection of essays, *The Good People: New Fairylore Essays*. In the latter volume, Ann Helene

⁴⁷ Archives and ethnography in Codroy Valley similarly reveal a historical ontology of reciprocity with the more-than-human world, as I demonstrate in the next two chapters.

Bolstad Skjelbred complicates any facile rendering of posthuman ontology as essentialist, arguing rather that rituals connected to fairylore embed alternative, earthly interpretations into dominant religious traditions while not entirely subverting them. For instance, the liminal period between separation and incorporation in preindustrial Norwegian christenings was a time of “social imbalance” between humanity and the fairy realm, and therefore humans took protective measures against supranormal agents. Women who had given birth but not yet been through the ceremony of “churching” (postpartum period where she was forbidden from entering the temple or touching sacred things for fear she were prone to bewitching or harm by dangerous entities) were considered “unclean” or “heathen.” In Christianity, this means they are in danger from the Devil, but in fairylore, evil is transferred to fairies. Her best protection was incorporation into the church. A changeling is a fairy child exchanged by fairies for an unchristened human child as yet unincorporated into Christian society. To protect the baby, constant supervision, along with various protective items, was continually observed until its baptism, the most effective protection against a changeling. To coax fairies into re-exchange, the changeling had to be treated with such cruelty that the fairies took pity and exchanged it with the human child.

Skjelbred’s study thus demonstrates how two parallel belief systems may clash, coexist, and bleed into each other in third space, with the potential for subversion of core commonsense values: “The folklore of the changeling illustrates that it is not the Christian values of heathen versus Christian that are at stake, but a question of being human or not” (Skjelbred 1997, 222). This ultimatum compels an understanding, neither capitalist nor Judeo-Christian, of maintaining balance and respect between earth’s inhabitants, in this case humans and fairies. While I have never heard anecdotes about changelings in Codroy Valley, Bennett (2004, 20) contends that “within living memory there are several reports from virtually all over Scotland of people who

actually saw and spent time in the company of a changeling.” Moreover, supporting the thesis that fairylore and Christianity can and do coexist, she cites a 1541 text written by Martin Luther, chief initiator of the Protestant Reformation, declaring his own witnessing of a twelve-year-old changeling, whom he advised to be thrown into the water as it was surely the offspring of Satan.

Seemingly in response to nuanced posthuman inquiry into rarified ontologies such as fairylore, the “ontological turn” heralded a paradigmatic shift in the social sciences. Like the “animal turn,” it challenged anthropocentric assumptions inherent in most Western ontologies by emphasizing the incomprehensible depth of cultural differences with regard to ontology. The turn sought to obsolesce the conventional Cartesian nature/culture divide, which assumes the existence of different interpretations of a single nature or reality. Rather, it proposed a revised perspective, spurred by research in Amerindian societies, for which there exist multiple worlds that interact in a pluriverse of ontologies. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2004), working with the Araweté peoples of the Amazon, advanced a perspectivist framework based on emic notions of personhood regarding animals and spirits, where no differentiation is made between human-humans, human-animals, human-plants, and human-spirits. For instance, the jaguar is considered a person who knows she is a person but who has a unique perspective on a world that only she understands. All entities share “humanity” rather than “biology” or “nature,” so that rather than multiculturalism within Araweté society, there exists a “multinaturalism” (Viveiros de Castro 2015), all the natures of which are anthropomorphized into one “culture.”

This turn is significant because it not only places a pluriverse of ontologies, marginalized or otherwise, on equal footing, thus altering our frameworks in order more seriously to engage with the diverse groups and texts we claim to study, but it is becoming critical in the face of the existential crises of modernity and ecological turmoil to re-examine our own ontological and

epistemological assumptions that constitute our lived realities. Anthropologist Mario Blaser (2013) problematizes the myth that the “all-encompassing modernity” has the power to eradicate alternative ontologies⁴⁸ by pointing out that multiple ontologies continue to exist in tension with Western ones. Only by engaging such a pluriverse may we imagine a less anthropocentrically defunct world better suited to take up the challenges we collectively face. Gender studies scholar Breny Mendoza (2018) introduces a caveat when she asks us, “Can the subaltern teach us?,” both to acknowledge the world-saving potential in marginalized ontologies and to warn against colonialist knowledge extractivism. While accepting the importance of the ontological turn, she points to history to demonstrate scholarly pursuits of “otherworldly” knowledge systems to help moderns cope with problems of their own creation, with only tokenistic forms of reciprocity. An example she cites is the failure of *testimonio* literature, which was heralded as a genre that finally gave a voice to the subaltern, but which ultimately led to profiteering by Western publishers and detached entertainment for Western audiences.

It thus becomes disturbingly apparent that seeking to incorporate marginalized ontologies and epistemologies uncritically into dominant structures more often than not prolongs colonialist projects of extractivism and oppression, which are tied up with Eurocentric institutions of capitalism, hyper-individualism, classism, racism, sexism, patriarchy, and heteronormativity. Their deeply entrenched effects are referred to in decolonial theory as the “coloniality of power” (Quijano 2000) and considered to be the “darker side of Western modernity” (Mignolo 2011), which persists in committing epistemic violence on the Other. At its core, decoloniality seeks to

⁴⁸ A parallel idea in economics is the diverse economies framework (Gibson-Graham 1996), which asserts that despite capitalism’s far reaches, it is not all-encompassing in the sense that multiple types of economic practices exist alongside it that are simply not valorized in the dominant system. Like Blaser, these theorists see hope for a sustainable future if we manage to recentre these devalued and/or invisibilized economic practices, a paradigm I explore in subsequent chapters.

delink marginalized groups from those oppressive institutions and their developmental and modernization projects in order to reclaim ontological and material sovereignty.

Cultural theorist Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) proposed the term “borderlands” to refer to the liminal material and intellectual spaces beyond the borders of those worlds where “universal” knowledge is created, where instead the “decoloniality of thought” may occur, to reflect the often autochthonous, minority lifeworlds that are antithetical to Western hegemony. These othered forms of knowing and knowledge production, in the case of the Americas, have barely survived 500 years of colonization and are occasionally documented, but still placed outside of legitimate intellectual spaces. “Border thinking” (Anzaldúa 1987; Mignolo 2000) is the radical praxis of centring the borderlands and using these as the starting point for constructing a world outside of hegemonic structures. Various movements in Latin America such as Zapatismo in Mexico and the Landless Workers’ Movement (MST) in Brazil, as well as the transnational Vía Campesina movement (Martínez-Torres & Rosset 2010), are examples of decoloniality in action where sovereignty, egalitarianism, and anticapitalism are enforced among their constituents. It is not a question of being incorporated into the dominant system, but rather the iterative expressions of direct action that disobediently legitimize and reproduce marginalized forms of knowing.

Like the ontological turn, decolonial theory challenges the assumption of a universal Western ontology, but, unlike most of the intellectual currents described thus far, it is primarily praxis-based. That is, delinking cannot occur without action or, more specifically, “epistemic disobedience” (Mignolo 2011), which might take the form of transnational social movements and autonomous political projects spurred by creative forms of “activist ethnography” (Juris & Khasnabish 2013). I contend in this study that rural places like Codroy Valley, where everyday life is largely underscored by unmediated relations with the more-than-human world, which are

also enshrined in structures of feeling borne out of a lifetime of hard work and reciprocity, are ideally positioned for a recovery of the commons through a sustained and critical engagement with border thinking. Similarly to how *Vía Campesina* empowers community via transnational networks of communication with myriad others afflicted by epistemic and material enclosures of place-based ways of being and knowing, rural regions like Codroy Valley may benefit from finding common ground with analogously troubled regions and communities in an effort to conserve ecologically valuable knowledge systems and folklore while building a grassroots infrastructure of resistance. Chronotopes of progress that depict rural regions like Codroy Valley as “behind the times” and inadequate for living a successful life are driving the affective and rationalist justifications for emigrating to larger urban centres, while simultaneously thwarting efforts to build a better life in those “underdeveloped” spaces and places.

I suggest that ecomuseums hold the potential to reframe a community’s relations with the more-than-human world in part by encouraging the reflexive performance and encouragement of already-existing diverse economic activities, such as sustainable hunting practices, seed swaps, communal haymaking, beach cleanups, the cultivation of flowers that attract bees and insects, gifting, volunteerism, cooperative business ventures, or natural building techniques, to name a few. After illustrating, in Chapters 5 through 7, some ecomuseological tactics being employed in analogous places, in Chapter 8, I enjoin Codroy Valleyers to take up the ecomuseum project in a spirited effort of regional network building, epistemic recovery, and renewal of the ecologic and economic commons.

Reflexivity in an ethnographic project like the ecomuseum opens up a third space for appreciating larger-than-local perspectives by unsettling the subject/object binary, which otherwise tends to be exploited by extractive industries, populist governments, and corporate

advertising. A critical regionalist framework will further encourage collaboration between rural and academic milieux. Indeed, as Powell (2012, 99) reminds us, “For this methodology to be truly transformative for the geographical margin... this project must be taken up on a broader scale by the people of these communities, and must be transformative not only of communities but of the academy as well, drawing academic practice into new areas of public life by making it part of the local cultures in vital but also vernacular ways.” The time of academic silos is at hand, and the ecomuseum presents a means for bridging public and academic praxis. Decolonial ethnographic methodologies offer an inroad into that partnership.

2.7 Ethnographic advancements

To collect and document narratives in and about Codroy Valley may seem like a straightforward endeavour, yet as we have seen, the reproduction of hegemonic narratives transpires under the radar. This section therefore traces trends and concepts I deem relevant to the decolonial ethnographic work the ecomuseum will demand in the coming years. I limit my scope mainly to decolonial and phenomenological ethnographic trends, followed by public folklore figures and methodologies that prioritize creative work by diverse segments of the population.

In the century since Bronisław Malinowski first stepped “off the verandah” to engage more intimately with his Trobriand Islander research subjects (Singer 1986), ethnographers and their participants have continued to challenge a Western scholarly tradition that seeks to “know” and represent the Other according to biased and nonreflexive perceptions under the guise of objectivity. Deeply ensconced in the reflexive turn of the 1970s, which troubled the imagined researcher/subject binary, Clifford Geertz (1973) spurred a wave of “interpretive ethnography” through his methodological advancement of “thick description” and epistemological notion of “webs of significance,” which used symbols, texts, and language to decipher meaning of

observed phenomena. Thick description is a useful concept in the ecomuseum, and the social sciences more broadly, because it promotes an interpretive method that goes beyond merely describing the surface of behaviours and occurrences so as to incorporate context, detail, affect, emotion, and webs of social relationships, all with the anticipation of how one's work will be read and interpreted by others. As I discuss in Chapter 8, thick description is an important tool for performing ethnography in the ecomuseum in an effort to recentre subjectivities, language, and collective action in defense of the commons.

One anthropologist who put thick description to boundary-pushing use, and a welcome female voice among the cadre of predominantly white men, is Barbara Myerhoff (1978). In her four-year ethnography of elderly Jewish residents in Venice Beach, California, *Number Our Days*, Myerhoff manages to bring readers in as witnesses to the dialogues and activities she herself witnesses, many of which are tragicomical. With the title of the first chapter, "So what do you want from us here?," she deftly positions herself among her research subjects; rather than depict them as passive informants, she uses their unabashed questioning of her motives and methods to interrogate her own role as ethnographer with accountability toward her participants. In a guide to writing ethnographies published over three decades later, Kirin Narayan (2012, 100) commends this aspect of Myerhoff's ethnography, even using it in a writing exercise: "Write a scene that shows you explaining your project to the people you'll be writing about." This reflexive ethnographic method of transparent witnessing while accepting accountability for inserting oneself into other people's lives is fundamental to an ecomuseological *modus operandi*.

In an influential article, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1988, 149) cites a problematic assumption within ethnographic trends, that they have "tended to embrace received notions of ethnicity and ethnic group, of heritage and tradition, without considering the historical formation

of these notions in the postwar American context.” A similar critique is voiced by Lila Abu-Lughod three years later in another significant essay, “Writing Against Culture” (Abu-Lughod 1991), which indicts the concept of culture as uncritically rooted in its colonialist and patriarchal foundations. To denaturalize its constructedness, she engages feminist and postcolonial theory, reminding scholars that “the self is always a construction, never a natural or found entity” and that “the process of creating a self through opposition to an other always entails the violence of repressing or ignoring other forms of difference” (Ibid., 140). Like Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, she invokes the notion of Reverse Orientalism in that through our attempt to revalorize what was formerly devalued by Orientalism, essentialist terms are preserved. For instance, strategies of “cultural feminism” built on a notion of “women’s culture” revalorize those “feminine” qualities that have been attributed to them but were previously devalued. As a result, they “overlook differences within each category constructed by the dividing practice” and “ignore the ways in which experiences have been constructed historically and have changed over time” (Ibid., 145).

More to the point, she urges scholars to “ask questions about the historical processes by which it came to pass that people like ourselves could be engaged in anthropological studies of people like those, about the current world situation that enables us to engage in this sort of work in this particular place, and about who has preceded us and is even there now with us” (Ibid., 148). As an antidote to exclusion, she proposes “ethnographies of the particular,” a method that foregrounds the shifting and contingent nature of relations in the field. It also forecasts Shuman’s critique of unmarked localness in its assertion that extralocal and diachronic processes always are “manifested locally and specifically, produced in the actions of individuals living their particular lives, inscribed in their bodies and their words” (Ibid., 150). Generalization manifests as a language of power and of a supposedly detached reflection on what one is describing. She

critiques mainstream scholarship that seeks to legitimize its work by borrowing from “elite disciplines like philosophy and literary theory rather than looking to more prosaic sources like ordinary experience or the terms in which their anthropological subjects operate” (Ibid., 152).

In effect, Abu-Lughod is proposing a shift toward a vernacular theory wherein outward manifestations of culture are contradicted or complicated by continual attention to everyday life. It is a notion that was articulated by Bakhtin (1981) much earlier, and one which folklorists would soon champion as the bread and butter of their discipline. In her ethnography, Abu-Lughod is expressly aware of the performativity of her observing presence, as was Myerhoff in Venice Beach. The postmodernist and feminist currents of the 1990s ensured that positionality remained a recurring theme in much ensuing ethnographic research. Narayan’s essay “How Native is a Native Anthropologist?” (Narayan 1993), for instance, dispels the fallacious notion of objectivity and pushes back on the insider/outsider dichotomy in ethnographic research, pointing to the colonialist underpinnings of that very notion and the need to embrace our “multiplex” identities and situated knowledge production. For Narayan, the essentialist assumptions behind the term “native” are problematic since, even “in the simplest societies, gender and age provide factors for social differentiation” (Ibid., 676). Moreover, she sees it as an epistemological iniquity to accept Malinowski’s invitation to “grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realize *his* vision of *his* world” (Malinowski 1922, 25, quoted in Narayan 1993, 676, emphasis in original) without recognizing that *we* are always implicated in that world through our politics, fieldwork, and globalized relations. With her “enactment of hybridity,” Narayan argues for a “double vision” that merges the popularly conceived, albeit unproductive, narrator/analyst binary, proving the impossibility of teasing apart ethnographic experience from theory (c.f. Neustadt 1992).

Ruth Behar expands upon Narayan's enactment of hybridity in her autoethnographic study, *The Vulnerable Observer* (Behar 1996), wherein she demonstrates how emotions guide how she thinks about, writes about, and performs ethnography. Many of the experiences and tensions she witnesses while observing and participating in ethnographies are informed by her three cultures at a unique time-space juncture: Cuban, Jewish, and American in a post-Soviet context. Her subtitle, *Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart*, speaks to a deep commitment to witnessing radical upheavals in the world at a historical moment when "new stories are rushing to be told in languages we've never used before, stories that tell truths we once hid, truths we didn't dare acknowledge, truths that shamed us" (Ibid., 33).

For Behar, it is dangerous to reduce our identity to a single affiliation, which leads to sectarianism and, at worst, suicidal or homicidal tendencies. Rather, the recognition of a mixed identity promotes peace and empathy. In my own case, as a relative newcomer with various identifications imposed from without—urban, educated, queer, female, non-white, etc.—I am marked as culturally different on many fronts.⁴⁹ Thus, my perceived status as "insider" is far from a dyed-in-the-wool certitude, despite my strong desire to de-essentialize those very markers of difference, which possibly have the effect of delaying or, at worst, foreclosing rapport building with community members. The aforementioned ethnographers' methodologies offer a possible antidote to social exclusion by demonstrating how foregrounding the shifting and contingent nature of our relations in the field "necessarily subvert[s] the most problematic connotations of culture: homogeneity, coherence, and timelessness"⁵⁰ (Abu-Lughod 1993, 154).

⁴⁹ Narayan's observation regarding her racial identity is personally resonant. Like me, Narayan identifies as part "white" and part "Indian" but demonstrates how "exotic difference overshadows commonalities or complexities... the darker elements in our ancestry serves to define us with or without our own complicity" (1993, 677).

⁵⁰ With these examples we are reminded of folklorist Richard Bauman's concept of differential identity (1971) in his recommendation that folklorists consider larger-than-local cultural phenomena when considering notions of local culture. In the same publication, Alan Dundes (1971, 99) also warns against the assumption that "all the folk ideas of a given culture are necessarily mutually reconcilable within a uniform, harmonious worldview matrix."

Paul Stoller's ethnography of the Songhay-speaking peoples of Mali and Niger is particularly relevant to Codroy Valley, where there is despondence among elders about the uncertainty of knowledge transmission to the younger generations. In his study, griots are the only humans "capable of meeting the greatest challenge: imparting social knowledge to the next generation" (Stoller 1994, 353). Whereas griots are strictly oral practitioners, ethnographers must also learn history and cultural knowledge, but they use print or film to convey their messages. They are considered griots by Songhay elders when they read their works at gatherings. Elders do not care, however, about their theoretical contributions; they *do* care about "the poetic quality of the story" and whether respect for the "old words" is demonstrated. In a scenario reminiscent of the attitudes of many Codroy Valley elders, Stoller tells us that for "most Songhay elders, the ultimate test of ethnographers is whether their words and images enable the young to uncover the past and discover the future" (Ibid., 354).

Griots creatively and respectfully use "old words" in their position as intermediaries "to reconstruct history and culture, to negotiate social identities, and to ruminate on stasis and change" (Ibid., 357). Unlike "disengaged and disembodied" ethnographic texts, griots' words are performative. They help create social life by talking it. Ethnographers who produce texts that analyze, describe, evoke, and provoke are like griots insofar as they become "interlocutors in the ongoing conversation that constitutes sociocultural life" (Ibid., 359). Because everyday life is complex, multifaceted, and creative, ethnographies of everyday practices "demand a complex and multidimensional approach... [They] must now combine, as does the West African griot, history and economics, past and present, narrative and exposition... [and integrate] individual and social, and local and global perspectives through cultural analyses of gender, identity, and politics" (Ibid., 362). Reflecting the progressive aims of the critical nostalgic, Stoller urges

ethnographers, and by extension, ecomuseum practitioners, to seek ways of writing and filming sociocultural life “that enable the dead to live again and the living to recognize better ways of coping with the confusion of contemporary life” (Ibid., 363). As I discuss in Chapters 3 and 8, the sociohistorical dimension Stoller commends in griot performances and the middle voice is akin to the “middle ground” engaged by Hufford (2016) in her phenomenological ethnography that seeks to revive ancestral knowledge through custom and speech genres.

An antidote to infelicitous interpretations of others’ narratives is what ethnomusicologist Jeff Todd Titon’s (1988) terms “hermeneutical phenomenology,” whereby ethnographers configure reinterpretations based on their informants’ interpretations of their interpretations. This methodology enables Titon to resolve key ethical dilemmas while simultaneously merging two important philosophical traditions: hermeneutics and phenomenology. George Marcus similarly argues that to collapse the fissure between “life-worlds” (phenomenological interactions in everyday life) and “systems” (institutional or external political economies within which lifeworlds are traditionally seen as embedded), “[s]ingle projects must traverse and work through systems and life-worlds in the very same frame, needing to keep eyes on both institutions and everyday worlds in transcultural space” (Marcus 1995, 96). For Marcus, multi-sited ethnography (MSE) is the ideal method for the critical synthesis of lifeworlds and systems, and one that will feature prominently in the ecomuseum.

MSE “is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography” (Ibid., 105). The researcher constructs multiple sites by selecting and following a particular path along which various relations are identified and traversed. She may

follow the people, the thing, the metaphor, the plot, story, or allegory, the life or biography, the conflict, and so on. In a critical regionalist move, Marcus claims that by juxtaposing global phenomena to parallel, related local situations and making the former an integral part of the latter, the former is seen not as monolithic or external to the latter. The researcher must either move spatially between two or more places or conceptually by juxtaposing data. To identify relationships and interpret them in new ways not apparent in predetermined theoretical, spatial, or geographical categories, she must apply thick description to a network rather than its individual nodes. Sites may be people, ideas, markets, universities, media: any places or imaginaries where cultural logics are multiply produced within a system. When planning ecomuseum sites, Codroy Valleyers will need to identify threads connecting the nodes of their heritage trails, workshops series, multisensory maps, classroom activities, public murals, or whichever media eventually crop up.

Although his later work stresses the importance of apprehending methodological strategies as research imaginaries, or “provocations to alter or experiment with the orientations that govern existing practices” (Marcus 1998, 6), rather than as prescriptions, the prescriptive nature of Marcus’s 1995 essay differs markedly from anthropologist Kathleen Stewart’s methodologies in *Ordinary Affects* (Stewart 2008). Here, Stewart plots no predetermined path or association between sites and therefore makes no case for MSE in advance of her study. Rather, she allows herself to be swept up in the diverse sites she immerses herself in, so as eventually to discover contingencies and leave room for surprise. Her ethnographic moments appear while waiting in line at the mini-mart, conversing in a trailer park hot tub, witnessing road rage or a random act of kindness at a highway tollbooth, or experiencing solidarity being forged by a West Virginia coal miner intoning his Robin Hood fantasies.

Like Williams's structures of feeling, Stewart's ordinary affects are "social experiences in solution [that] do not have to await definition, classification, or rationalization before they exert palpable pressure" (2008, 2–3). Totalizing discourses on neoliberalism, globalization, or capitalism "obscure the ways in which a reeling present is composed out of heterogeneous and noncoherent singularities" (Ibid., 4). Her stated objective is thus "to slow the quick jump to representational thinking and evaluative critique long enough to find ways of approaching the complex and uncertain objects that fascinate because they literally hit us or exert a pull on us" (Ibid.). Through a series of (auto)ethnographic "slice of life" vignettes, Stewart exposes the extraordinary in the everyday, while attempting to build "an idiosyncratic map of connections between a series of singularities... to create a contact zone for analysis" (Ibid., 4–5). In effect, Stewart manages to mark the physiological or physical presence of the unmarked anonymity of contemporary middle America through everyday observations. Codroy Valley community ethnographers may find that, alongside MSE methodologies, Stewart's nonlinear and unpredictable approach may offer an enticing mode for enacting nonrepresentational praxis.

A different form of affective research is propounded by Regina Bendix (2000) with her "ethnography of listening." She prefaces her thesis by arguing that despite the deep, emotional sensory attraction early practitioners had to song, narration, and craft, the "nineteenth century's unreflected preference for writing and print as media of learning and communicating knowledge almost automatically impoverished our understanding of the sensory and sensual totality of experience" (Bendix 2000, 34). Evidence of this attraction can be detected in writings by early collectors of African American spirituals, who mourned the impossibility of rendering their "soul-turning" qualities to textual or musical notation. In the push for objective rationalism, however, this implicit attraction was marginalized if not expunged from scholarly purview in a

move Bendix argues was deeply implicated in “the equal marginalization of sensory experience, affect, and emotion from ethnographic work” (Ibid.).

Even with the “writing culture movement” and “ethnography of speaking,” which paid closer attention to reflexivity and looked to the body as a site of study and of cultural agency, Bendix maintains that apart from occasional studies of co-performance, those who heard, saw, or experienced performances remained marginal, while individual listening experiences remained understudied. That folklorists bypass sensual experiences in their scholarly pursuits is regarded by Bendix as odd, especially given that those experiences are what drew them to the discipline in the first place. Crucially, the “scholarly fixation on text and textualizing, combined with the paucity of interdisciplinary vocabulary to address the aural, have then impoverished much of the ethnographic record” (Ibid., 37). From childhood, she notes, the “sensual processes facilitated by the ear are a great deal less subject to immediate social ordering than are other, more visible and hence more controllable sensual experiences such as touch or taste” (Ibid., 40). Bendix counsels that we therefore need research methods capable of grasping the most profound knowledge, which is in fact nonverbal and inaccessible in the ethnographic interview or observation. Sensory events *par excellence*, such as festival⁵¹ and custom are ideal sites for ethnographies of listening.

Hufford’s ethnographies are equally transformative, although her focus is chiefly verbal. In particular, she combines methodologies from phenomenological public folklore and critical regionalism to interrupt environmental monologues around “economic progress” and “resource development” so as to work on behalf of people’s everyday, affective experiences that implicate customary speech and rituals in and through the commons. Rather than accept regionalizations that impose space-time distancing according to their growth-oriented prerogative, Hufford

⁵¹ Codroy Valley Folk Festival and Winter Carnival are two annual events that provide ample opportunity to examine sensory experiences and collaborate on creative modes to represent them in the ecomuseum.

urges us to use our vast tools to engage with people's self-regionalizations through performances of local knowledge in myth, legend, ritual, place names, anecdotes, material construction, and so on. She avers that "folklore's commitment to fieldwork as the retrieval of the particularities of emergent genres and performances has much to contribute to an emerging cross-disciplinary discourse on critical regionalism" (Hufford 2002, 63).

Localized dialogue attended to with public folklore methodologies "destabilizes identities fixed on official maps, opening up instead a landscape that is constantly becoming, teeming with elements that transgress their boundaries to become something else... [A]nything can outgrow an original purpose and take on the status of what Bakhtin calls 'gay matter'" (Ibid., 69). On the other hand, monologization removes complex chronotopes from place, thus eliminating folklore and affect from the natural world and replacing them with one rational perspective that identifies a faceless space governed by market logics. The ethnographic interview has the tools to draw out the "second world of carnival" through questions that "intentionally co-produce an alternative time and space" (Ibid., 74), while also generating a new vantage point from which locals can imagine those very places. There is a thread connecting Hufford's work in Appalachia to current troubles in Codroy Valley related to the windfarm project, which I revisit in the next chapter.

Paralleling Hufford's efforts to denaturalize hegemonic cultural and ecological discourses by seeking a multiplicity of deep-rooted perspectives via phenomenological ethnography, feminist geographers Julie Graham and Katherine Gibson (Gibson-Graham 2006) seek to queer hegemonic representations of economy by cultivating a language and praxis for enacting diverse economies. In a manner akin to Hufford's evocation of Bakhtinian gay matter, ethnography becomes a crucial tool for Gibson-Graham as they dialogically mobilize deeply entrenched narratives of economic disempowerment while simultaneously identifying "'fugitive energies'

and emotions that exceed the fund of subjectivities institutionally provided and ‘assumed’” (Ibid., 51). They see these noncapitalist “impurities” as indicative of a potentiality of desire for new ways of being and starting point for a “micropolitics of cultivating receptivity” (Ibid., 25). With their method, a new economic narrative emerges, where “noncapitalism is rendered a positive multiplicity rather than an empty negativity, and capitalism becomes just one particular set of economic relations situated in a vast sea of economic activity” (Ibid., 70). The diverse economies framework guides my ecomuseological approach to discerning and expanding economic spaces that are perceived as locally meaningful while also being non-capitalocentric.

2.8 Public folklore

In the spirit of critical regionalism and ecomuseology, Briggs (1993, 423) reminds us that “it is much more difficult to impose and sustain a dominant totalizing framework on communities that recognize their own diversity and overtly contest issues of power and authority.” I thus open this final section with a quote by Reid and Taylor that points to the urgency of collaborative methods and infrastructures that nurture critical regionalist sensibilities among local populations as an antidote to hegemonic, dualist narratives ignorant of the sustainable goals intrinsic to so many local values and relations. Later chapters will consider how the ecomuseum may function as the “institution of fundamental change,” “collective labor for the larger good,” and “collective imagination” they cite as critical next steps in the fight to recover the commons.

The last century’s prevailing notions of ‘development’ and ‘environment’ have failed. That is why the challenge now is configuring a post-dualist ecological sensibility as a political search for institutions of fundamental change in the political and economic status quo... If the environmental commons are the substantive goods in common that are the sustaining grounds of life, the civic commons are the institutions, collective memories, social networks, and skills that enable and inspire individuals to engage with each other in stewarding the common good. Such collective labor for the larger good requires some form of collective imagination that enables awareness of self and other (human or nonhuman) as inherently valuable. But, beyond this, it requires perceptual and social infrastructures that nurture the

ability to see self and other as *emergent from* and *dependent on* the supra-individual matrix that supports both life and individual. (Reid & Taylor 2010, 108)

Building on the above scholars' work, how might emancipation from the reproduction of hegemonic narratives over perceived difference be achieved through a privileging of third space? I admit to both a personal and an ideological interest in spurring social transformation in Codroy Valley, where on the one hand many locals are anxious about conserving their culture but on the other are sometimes wary about the introduction of "foreign" or "new" traditions, ideas, and even ethnicities into their social fabric. For Robert Baron (2019), the public folklorist, in theory, is aware of creolization marked by the emergence of multiple, fluid, and contingent identities in any global community, as well as the need to challenge oppressive power structures by helping to create space for marginalized voices and de-essentialize the local. She is well-suited to act as culture broker who combines theory and practice to produce a praxis that advances holistically the interests of the community at large by aiding in self-representation through, among others, community scholar training programs that equip locals to tell their own stories.

One folklorist who paved the way for much of the ethnographic scholarship surveyed thus far is Benjamin Botkin. Botkin was a pioneer in applied folklore in the first half of the 20th century but many of his contributions went uncelebrated until after his death in 1975. In 1938, he succeeded John Lomax as national folklore editor of the New Deal's Federal Writers' Project (FWP), for which he recorded extensive oral histories, ethnographies, and personal experience narratives throughout the United States. Prescient for his time, he passionately proclaimed, "If the folklorist would only content himself with being a listener, he might be able to hear the folk voices speak more clearly and more truly" (Botkin 1958, quoted in Hirsch 1987, 22). For Botkin, applied folklore differed from "pure folklore," where the latter "stays inside folklore and regards it 'from the point of view of folklore itself'" (Botkin 1953, quoted in Baron 1992, 327). He saw

the former as “an interdisciplinary pursuit directed towards a socially useful end... [that] stood ‘outside’ of folklore as a discipline in serving the people who have created folklore” (Ibid.). He anticipated de Certeau’s theory of space when developing a multisensory urban ethnography informed by the experiential connections between city dwellers and art, life, work, and culture while navigating city sidewalks and lore (Murray 2013).

A firm believer in the power of writing to effect social change, and driven by a desire for an egalitarian and democratic society, Botkin pushed writers to help the underprivileged masses tell their own stories in their own words, which he claimed would ultimately help both society and literature. As FWP editor, he pioneered what we today call oral histories collecting (Hirsch 1987, 22), pursuing studies that could contribute to acknowledgement of diversity and increased cultural integration. He encouraged his FWP fieldworkers to challenge assumptions that viewed “living lore” as a part of primitive societies to be studied by anthropologists and survivals as dead or dying remnants of early stages of cultural evolution still found in civilized societies.

As Botkin urged decades ago, Diana Baird N’Diaye demands that we stop imagining we own the folklore, knowledge, or narratives of the people we document: “Teach the methods and tools of our field of folklore research and presentation to people outside of academia—preferably within the communities with whom we work—but at the service of all the communities with whom we work” (N’Diaye 2021, 256). Baron (2019) likewise petitions us to reconceptualize our praxis as a collaborative and dialogical partnership with community leaders or tradition bearers that requires consent, shared authority, and mutual engagement. Folklorists commonly work with marginalized groups though we seldom identify explicitly as activists challenging oppressive power structures. Yet, Baron contends that much of our work is inherently counterhegemonic in its advocacy for local communities and its provision of a platform for bringing metadiscourses

often excluded from the communities into the public by way of exhibitions, lectures, folk arts in education programs, concerts, media productions, festivals, and narrative stages.

Public folklore offers a set of tools that can be synthesized with decolonial methodologies to trace the development of unmarked categories like whiteness and heteronormativity, to assist in opening up third spaces for dialogue between hegemonic and disenfranchised voices, and to advocate for transformative education in the public sphere. The reparation of the “mistaken dichotomy” between academic and public folklore is long overdue, as is the need to look beyond an avowed quest to understand human nature but rather to use our tools, theories, and cultural appreciation to forge a decolonial future. For Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1988), such work involves a reassessment of methodologies and terminologies in the realms of advocacy, representation, art, and cultural critique. For Debora Kodish (2013, 435), decolonial work requires “a commitment to reflexivity, a learner’s stance, creole practice (and language), a sense of vision, ethical and equitable engagement, and a belief in the liberatory power and possibilities of folk arts.”

Nearly all folklorists are aware of the emancipatory potential of the arts, especially public arts, and of the didactic and dialogical spaces co-created through the performance of art. If all the folk—CEOs, prison inmates, activists, politicians, homeless persons, and nonhumans alike—are encouraged to engage in third spaces where advocacy, identity, heritage, economy, and art is negotiated and transformed through the co-performance of critical cultural work, as is being done in ecomuseums spanning the globe, social change is attainable. Creative and inclusive spaces like community radio, ecomuseums, and public arts projects may dismantle hegemonic relations and problematic stereotypes while providing a platform for previously disenfranchised folk.

Whereas public folklore is generally contrasted with academic by way of definitional terms of professional job setting and medium of exchange, such as documentary, festival, or

exhibition, Kodish (2013, 435) focuses on “what it means for our *practice* when we work closely with community-based artists and activists and become their allies.” Recounting her experiences with the Philadelphia Folklore Project (PFP), she describes how “creative border-crossing” into deep ethnographic engagement with everyday lives “reflects our collective interest in what we don’t know” (Ibid., 436). Recognizing the power gap between its white, educated, privileged funders and Philadelphia’s many underprivileged communities, PFP invests “in community infrastructure to make local folk artists more visible and viable in the very neighborhoods where they live and work” (Ibid., 437). So doing, it resists funders’ and cultural workers’ typical measures of “excellence,” choosing instead categories such as significance, impact, and relevance, which valorize local meaningfulness as well as its broader influences.

To this point, William Westerman (2006, 112) asks “what facilitating basketry projects can do *for the artists and their communities*,” an issue he claims is undertheorized in public folklore. Echoing Gibson-Graham’s critique of heteronormative conceptions of economy and endorsement of ethnography to exhume latent forms of value, he argues “it may be a trap for us to think of the primary motivating factor in craft production initiatives as economic... when the interest, or even the need, may be more social or psychological... [F]olklorists’ interest in how people articulate their own experience is indispensable to developing an understanding of this [value beyond purely economic]” (Ibid., 115). According to Westerman, craft must be promoted, especially where traditional craft still has moral or symbolic meaning, as a technique to address the needs of marginalized urban youth around the world. Baskets in particular “originate with native natural materials, [therefore] are tied to the locale from which they come” (Ibid., 117). Even if synthetic or dyed, they are symbolically tied to specific regions, plants, seasons; as such, they raise awareness of one’s surroundings. As Bendix invited ethnographers to consider the

individual's nonverbal, affective response to sound, Westerman appreciates how the "feeling that creative people experience when participating in a traditional, artistic activity is seldom well articulated, because it is fundamentally nonverbal... [T]hat creative process not only makes us feel more fully human, it connects us socially" (Ibid., 118).

An incalculable achievement since the beginning of this ethnographic arc is the inclusion of a greater diversity of voices within the academy, in our citations, and among our collaborators. While this trend is growing, however, scholars still rue the persistent dearth of subaltern, queer, female, racialized, differently-abled, etc. voices vis-à-vis the overwhelmingly white, cis-hetero academy, which remains drawn to the marked Other. And yet, much of what emerged a half century ago resonates in the present moment. Richard Bauman's notion of differential identity (1971) was prescient in its recommendation that we consider larger-than-local phenomena when conceptualizing local culture. Its connotations reverberate in contemporary discussions around intersectionality, queer theory, and critical race theory, among other topics. Alan Dundes's "folk ideas" (1971) were an early argument against folkloric genres. He advocated an epistemological approach seeking to identify expressions of worldview as opposed to texts to fit inside particular genres, much like the approach recently endorsed by Prahlad and others.

For Dundes, the task of folklorists was to make people aware of their cultures, or to make the unconscious conscious, as a method for social change, perhaps owing to the popularization of Freirean critical consciousness by pedagogues of that era. Indeed, at least since Botkin's work with the FWP, "Being a folklorist... has been about *transformation*, changing the worldview of the dominant culture" (Westerman 2006, 119). But there are likely as many folklorists today who profess greater interest in documentation, archives, description, and interpretation than in direct social, political, or environmental action. The same can be said about ecomuseum practitioners.

A diversity of talents and proclivities hold the potential to enhance community building spaces as they chug along with their multiple, emergent, and emancipatory goals, including to serve the greater good. In any case, as we employ critical regionalist community praxis alongside feminist, phenomenological, and collaborative ethnographic methodologies outlined above, perhaps our criteria for “excellence” with regard to organizational goals and measures of success will change. Perhaps, as Westerman suggests and I hope to convey in this thesis and through the ecomuseum work, exposing and subverting the worldview of the dominant culture vis-à-vis nuanced chronotopes of place, while remaining ever mindful of our own positionalities, will soon be a central criterion for evaluating the excellence of our work.

CHAPTER 3: NARRATIVE AND ETHNOGRAPHY IN CODROY VALLEY

The “Paki” incident described in Chapter 1 was an articulation of racist narratives that persist in circulating among certain milieux, particularly rural and racially homogeneous ones. The last chapter explored how hegemonic narratives of cultural purity that condone or commit violence against nonconforming bodies and epistemes are perpetuated through monologic conduits, which inhibit the third space exchange necessary for producing counternarratives. Failing to attend to these anomalous sites of mutual exchange, dominant narratives continue to mark otherness while leaving unmarked those identifiers perceived in the common sense as normative. To complicate matters further, while antagonisms against perceived Others are normalized, discriminatory effects are compounded when different forms of otherness intersect to produce hierarchies of inferiority. In my case, intersectionality is fueled by a combination of externally imposed labels including non-white, woman, lesbian, CFA, educated, hippie, and vegan/vegetarian.

This chapter explores some of the narratives, both hegemonic and subversive, circulating in and around Codroy Valley. It also examines the uses of ethnography to unsettle violent and exclusionary monologues. First, using archival and ethnographic data, I consider official and unofficial historical narratives and their implications for notions of belonging. Next, based on several interviews, I read into narratives about geography and borders. The murky binarism of insider/outsider intrinsic to these narratives is wrought with frictions where posthuman sensibilities inhabit third space. The third and final type of narrative I consider pertains to posthumanism and the eco- prefix, where the tension between commons and enclosure jostle between ecological and economic narratives. As I demonstrate in this and the next chapter, resistance narratives are sometimes latent, lying dormant in structures of feeling evoked through ethnography and dialogue. Moreover, critical regionalism emphasizes linkages with other spaces,

times, and social contexts similarly dealing with hegemonic narratives threatening to enclose the commons and colonize lifeworlds.

3.1 Historical narratives

The seemingly innocuous question, “What is the history of Codroy Valley?” is a challenging one, particularly for a folklorist. As one of the prerogatives of folklore is not to “get it right” but, rather, to interpret and contextualize popular conceptions of what “right” is, this question in part calls for an examination of the ways in which hegemony has informed the telling of history.

Although challenged through the ascension of late 20th century postcolonial scholarship, and dialectical materialism before it, historiographic approaches such as the “great man theory” have long prevailed as the chief informants of popular understandings of history, which was largely narrated as a series of events precipitated by heroic white men. Indeed, as Scottish historian and protagonist of Anglo-Saxonism, Thomas Carlyle, wrote in 1841, “The History of the world is but the Biography of great men” (Carlyle 1841, 47). The History of Codroy Valley offers few exceptions to this paradigm. However, in this chapter I investigate how alternative perspectives, discernible in tangible and intangible culture, ethnography, and archives, bring to light the fundamental contributions to the shaping of the Valley by other beings and relations.

Searching for historical narratives about Codroy Valley, not much textual evidence surfaces in writing. The best known publications with a substantial focus on Codroy Valley are by Joseph Jukes, William Cormack, Rev. Michael Brosnan, Rosemary Ommer, and Margaret Bennett. Jukes, Newfoundland’s first geological surveyor, published in 1842 an account of early settlement of Codroy Valley based on oral traditions from his Mi’kmaw guide, Sulleon.⁵² According to Jukes and Sulleon, Mi’kmaw settlers from Nova Scotia arrived in the Valley in the

⁵² My information about Jukes’s accounts derives from Bennett’s MA thesis (Bennett 1975, 51–55).

early 18th century. He depicts them as “partly civilized and converted to the Roman Catholic faith... These were armed with guns and hunted the country, making great havoc against the game” (Jukes 1842, 172). His account via Sulleon then describes encounters between incoming Mi’kmaq and the “Red Indians,” most likely the Beothuk, who were already established in the Valley. Around 1762, he tell us, a great battle between the two tribes occurred “at the north end of the Grand Pond... In this the Red Indians were defeated, as they were armed only with bows and arrows, and, according to Sulleon’s statement, every man, woman, and child was put to death” (Ibid.). In the same monograph, Jukes also reports “of coal having been seen by the Indians up the Codwy River” (Ibid., 176), though his efforts to ascertain additional information from the Valley’s Mi’kmaw or English inhabitants were evidently futile.

It is probable that oral histories would add nuance and detail to existing accounts, while providing other histories not typically in circulation in public discourse, especially as they pertain to Mi’kmaw experiences in Katalisk. In a CBC article, radio host Bernice Hillier (2021) posits that the persistence of the “Mi’kmaw mercenary myth,” which narrates that the Mi’kmaq were taken to Newfoundland by the French in order to kill off the Beothuk, has long contributed to the stigmatization of Mi’kmaw peoples and cultural forms. Taught as historical fact in elementary textbooks in the 1950s and 1960s, despite the lack of any supporting evidence, the myth, which likely circulated in oral tradition well before the readers, has cast a negative and shameful light on etic and emic perceptions of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with Mi’kmaw, French, or mixed ancestry. Only very recently have anecdotes been brought to light detailing historical efforts by groups and individuals to stifle evidence of their Mi’kmaw ancestral, linguistic, and cultural ties, for fear they would betray a violent and uncivilized past. Upon joining Confederation in 1949, Newfoundland and Labrador’s first premier, Joey

Smallwood, publicly normalized the erasure of Mi'kmaq in the province when he proclaimed that there were “no Indians on the island of Newfoundland” (Aylward 2024). As a result, countless people of Mi'kmaw and Innu ancestry living on The Rock were denied federal registration as Indians under the Indian Act, a refutation of legal rights with deep consequences for Mi'kmaw identity, land claims, recognition, and cultural awareness and continuity.

For many scholars, the mercenary myth's persistence has succeeded in discrediting the Mi'kmaq as Newfoundland's Indigenous inhabitants while also using them as a scapegoat for the decimation of the Beothuk peoples (Aylward 2024; Wetzel 1995). According to Wetzel (1995), the stigma became associated with Acadian French names in western Newfoundland, to the extent that many such surnames were formally anglicized by priests. It was not uncommon for Benoit to be anglicized to Bennett, or Aucoin to O'Quinn. Another outward manifestation of the stigma that persists even today is the “Jackie Tar” moniker for people of mixed French and Mi'kmaw ancestry. I have heard the moniker uttered in informal conversations in Codroy Valley, mostly in derogatory reference to those living around St. George's Bay, the centre of the region known as Newfoundland's French Shore.⁵³ “Jack Tar” had been an English term commonly used to describe sailors, likely deriving from the generic male name “Jack” and the tarpaulin (tar) used on their clothing as a waterproofing agent. Several years ago, I asked a Codroy Valleyer to explain his usage of the term. Unable to proffer a clear explanation, he muttered something about the French name “Jacques” and the supposedly tar-coloured skin of native inhabitants along the French Shore. External identifiers and stereotypes, and the myths that enable their continuance, demand attention to archival absences and distortions. Historical narratives long taken at face value, like Cormack's below, must be more critically engaged through research and ethnography.

⁵³ The west coast of Newfoundland became known as the “French Shore” after the 1783 Treaty of Versailles granted the French exclusive fishing rights there until 1904.

William Cormack, who was born in St. John's and raised in Scotland, is celebrated for being the first person of European descent to provide a comprehensive and firsthand description of Newfoundland's interior, including its flora, fauna, geology, and human inhabitants. His 1822 expedition in which he trekked across the island is recorded in his monograph, *Account of a Journey Across the Island of Newfoundland* (Cormack 1824), published in Britain two years later. While most people are familiar with Cormack's expedition, some quite intimately, nobody I have talked to has ever mentioned Sylvester Joe. Joe, a Mi'kmaw hunter and explorer from Newfoundland's southwest coast, was Cormack's sole companion on his expedition, consistently referred to throughout Cormack's account as "my Indian" (Aylward 2024, 42). It is clear, based on Cormack's writings including contracts drawn up imploring Joe to persist in accompanying him on the trek, that the latter's knowledge was indispensable to the arduous journey's success.

Rosemary Ommer's histories, corroborated mostly by oral tradition in the 1970s, as well as gravestones and parish records,⁵⁴ state that the greatest influx of settlers into the Valley occurred between 1841 and the 1860s, a period during which at least 51 Scottish "moves" occurred between Inverness County, Cape Breton and the southwest coast of Newfoundland, primarily Codroy Valley and St. George's Bay. For Ommer (1977, 215), a "move" comprised anything from one nuclear family to an extended kin group. Ommer's history also tells us that of the 171 households in Codroy Valley in the 1880s, 38% were of Scottish descent, the highest percentage among its 19% Irish, 22% English, 19% French, and 2% "some Micmac Indians and people whose ethnic affiliation cannot be identified" (Ommer 1973, 25). In contrast to the Lowland Scots who mostly settled the eastern part of Newfoundland to establish merchant firms, those Scots who settled western Newfoundland and parts of Labrador were agricultural workers

⁵⁴ According to Ommer (1977, 215), parish registers became continuous only after 1867. Before that time, all emigrants from Nova Scotia were classified as "British colonial" and "Roman Catholic."

from the Scottish Highlands in search of affordable and viable farmland, which they knew Codroy Valley to have in abundance.

Already in the early 1800s, Codroy Valley was recognized widely for the superior quality of its land and salmon fishery. Cormack's account tells of "seventy or eighty souls, who catch annually four or five hundred weights of codfish, and about fifty barrels of salmon, and obtain a little fur" (Cormack 1822, 105). He also identified the Valley as "the central point of the French fisheries in summer. Many square-rigged vessels are here loaded with dried codfish for France; and hundreds of bateaux brought from France in the fishing grounds," as well as the "ten Indian families encamped for the winter on the banks of the Great Codroy River... The chief attraction for the Indian here is the abundance of eels and trout" (Ibid., 99–100). Archdeacon Wix, who sailed along Newfoundland's south coast from St. John's to Codroy Valley and onwards, observed the shipbuilding being undertaken by Basque people there (Wix 1836, 127). Bennett (1975, 54) notes this to be one of the earliest references to boatbuilding on the Great Codroy River, though oral histories hint at a much earlier tradition. Wix's testimony also describes the rich soils in the Valley relative to nearby communities, the cattle in abundance, and the dearth of "fog and dampness," so that "fish may be laid out to dry here with much less risk than elsewhere of its becoming tainted" (Wix 1836, 135). According to Ommer (1977, 221), a visitor from Margaree in 1842 told of rumours that "the land on both sides of the river is of excellent quality and would admit of extensive settlement," and that "Codroy was a very fine river for salmon."

The Newfoundland railway, built by Robert Reid in the 1890s, has been variably praised and criticized for revolutionizing communications and transportation, especially between communities otherwise difficult to access by land, but also for allowing government and businesses to exploit the region's previously undeveloped natural resources. Newfoundland's

passenger train, endearingly nicknamed the “Newfie Bullet” in an ironic jab at its sluggishness, operated between 1898 and 1988 and had a monumental impact on the Valley. Not only did it play a pivotal role in transporting Valley goods to markets across the island, providing a substantial source of income to residents, but it also ushered in new services like the telegraph, post office, and a Justice of the Peace, as well as an influx of people not dependent on agriculture for a living, such as those charged with maintaining the railway and transmission lines. It also brought in travelers to the Valley’s tourist attractions, most notably the Afton Farmhouse Lodge (Figure 3.1), the island’s first fishing lodge, which ran for 70 years until burning down in 1956. In a 2017 article, Valley resident Chantelle MacIsaac describes how, even without the need for advertising, famed musicians, senators, and British nobleman would stay at the lodge, drawn to stories of salmon teeming on the Little Codroy River.



Figure 3.1: Afton Farmhouse Lodge, n.d. Photo by Ed Meyer.

Until the railway was completed in 1898, guests were brought in largely by horse and wagon or schooner after arriving to the island on the ferry. As many as 20 guides were employed at one time... Some of the names of the salmon pools are still used today. Often people talk of Skinners, Big John’s, Island Pool and there are some

lesser known such as Widow's, Kid's Pool and Deadman's Run. Until the 1950s, Little Codroy maintained healthy stocks with good numbers of fish. Once the river became accessible by road, fish stocks were noted on the decline. (MacIsaac 2017)

Another historic account comes from Donald Hustins (2010), in his 10-year oral research project about the salmon fishery in Newfoundland, titled *River of Dreams*. According to his research, in the 1880s and 1890s, anglers arrived on steamers from Boston, New York, and Connecticut, and would stay at the Afton Farmhouse for two to three weeks at a time. Adventure writer Zane Grey is known to have stayed at the lodge on a fishing trip in 1929. A photo of him and three travel companions shows them gazing across the Grand Codroy River at the snow-capped Anguille Mountains in the distance (Figure 3.2).



Figure 3.2: Zane Grey and his party during their visit to Codroy Valley in 1929. Photo by Bob Carney.

While the tracks were removed with the closing of the railway in 1988, its legacy is strongly felt. Tar-soaked railway ties are used as fenceposts, railway cars have been converted to storage containers, and nuts and bolts that lay scattered across the land find their way into household collections. The 883-kilometre route itself was designated as the Newfoundland T'Railway

Provincial Park in 1997, intended as a multi-use, all-season rail trail spanning from Port aux Basques in the southwest to St. John's in the northeast. Personal narratives abound in the Valley about youth running alongside the train to trade freshly caught eels for pocket change or candy, or of dozens of men hauling the train through a blizzard with ropes (Zinck 2014). Thanks to the infamous "Wreckhouse" southeasterlies, it was not uncommon for the trains to be blown off the railway tracks by the powerful gales. The Wreckhouse monicker was dubbed by local legend Lockland "Lockie" MacDougall, a farmer who lived in the area known as Wreckhouse, between Port aux Basques and Codroy Valley. Known as "The Sniffer" for his keen ability to predict the high winds, Lockie was hired by the railway to warn them to stop the trains lest they blew off the tracks.⁵⁵ His legacy is memorialized in a song "Stop the Trains" by St. John's-based musician Sherry Ryan, on her 2018 album *Wreckhouse*. We were fortunate to have Sherry perform twice at our hostel; she included the catchy tune both times, to the great amusement of the crowds.

One thread linking the aforementioned accounts is their general adherence to the great man theory of history. Most received histories elsewhere in Newfoundland are similarly geared toward the industrial, spiritual, and political achievements of great men. While they are not necessarily inaccurate, a propensity to limit glorification to a fraction of the population comes at a great cost. Important voices from the margins are ignored, who have nonetheless contributed to the Valley's development. Sulleon and Sylvester Joe are clear examples of engrained exclusion. To take another example, it is common knowledge that the first documented white settlers in the Valley were Gales, who sailed directly from England in the second half of the 18th century.

According to an oral account transcribed by Bennett (1975, 56), after three years, John Gale

⁵⁵ Nowadays, it is trucks that blow off the highway. Despite digital road signs that warn when the wind speeds are dangerously high, trucks persist in attempting to drive through Wreckhouse and regularly are blown off the highway. One wonders whether they would have more success heeding a human authority like Lockie MacDougall.

“took the boat that he had and went up around the coast, and he came back with a woman. No one knows where he got her—she wasn’t an Indian woman. And he settled in the Valley with her.” Marital status unclear, they had seven sons, “and so it went on, and that’s how there’s so many Gales around.”

Reading this account, I am left wondering who this woman was, half of a union that went on to populate the Valley and surrounding areas with Gales. Moreover, I am curious about all the other women who were “got” by local men to enlarge the gene pool, or the unions that indubitably transpired between settler and native inhabitants. How was land divvied up between settler families and parishes? Maps indicate which man owned what tract of land over the years, and which area was designated Indian Reserve, but the social and discursive processes, coercive or mutual, behind those arrangements are nebulous at best. Regarding the fishery, it is known that the salmon stocks declined when the Little Codroy River became accessible by road, but what efforts, if any, were made to conserve those stocks? How might the decline have been slowed, stalled, or prevented? What might past recklessness teach us about governing the commons, now and in the future?

I am further left wondering, after reading the published histories,⁵⁶ what everyday life looked like among the Valley’s diverse inhabitants. What economic activities transpired within and outside of the official realms of man-powered industry? What occupational lore existed, be it songs to assuage the labour load, games to pass the time, superstitions or rumours about specific work behaviours, prayers to ensure abundance, or other customs and beliefs related to industry? What bodies passed in and out of Codroy Valley, over the years, or in and out of focus by its inhabitants, adding to the complexity and richness of placemaking that would be otherwise

⁵⁶ Bennett’s work, which uses a folkloristic approach, is a welcome exception.

unimaginable? These are the mundane details of history that tend to be hidden or discounted, although they are the very aspects of life that imbued work and play with meaning, pain, and joy.

Unofficial histories surface in other kinds of historical text. One avenue is storytelling, which until recently was a principal conduit for connecting folks in Codroy Valley to their past. To the chagrin of elders who recall the nightly custom fondly, multigenerational storytelling is no longer current in most Codroy Valleyers' lives. The rupture in vernacular wisdom as it came to be usurped by capitalist modes of knowledge production augured, for Walter Benjamin, a dangerous epistemological shift in the human psyche. Already in 1936, Benjamin counterposed the narrative engaged through storytelling to "information" he saw circulating through impersonal conduits like the newspaper or novel. Whereas the former is authoritative precisely because of its lack of closure, its reliance on first- or second-hand knowledge imbued with the wisdom of generations that dialogically summons new questions and interpretations upon each new telling, the latter's instantaneous verifiability and monologizing foreclose wonderment and relatability. In his essay, "The Storyteller," Benjamin (1968, 109) boldly proclaims the storyteller as "the figure in which the righteous man encounters himself." Moreover, she who forgoes the psychological analysis so common to the novel is more likely to embed the story in the memory of the listener, who is then able more completely to integrate it into her own experience and more inclined to refashion it for others.

My own sense of place grew substantially each time I listened to stories in the Valley, which inevitably turned into dialogues crafted by my personal interests through questioning. Many days I would walk to the post office and, mail or not, end up engaging in longwinded conversations with Priscilla, the postmaster. Always eager to put down her lacemaking or book to chat, sometimes for the better part of an hour, Priscilla would animate the room with vivid

memories from her childhood in the 1950s. Through her storytelling, I learned about the half dozen corner stores within walking distance (today the area has none), regularly brimming with youngsters drinking pop and eating ice cream, or the cinema that used to screen films on my sleepy, unnamed road, or the packed dances at the popular dance halls, which attracted folks from hundreds of kilometres away but have since burned down, or the intrepid games she and her siblings and the droves of neighbouring children used to play in the winter, such as sliding straight down their long driveway, over the road, and onto the icy Little Codroy River below.

These stories also lie dormant in tangible and intangible culture scattered throughout the Valley, waiting to be activated through memory and hearsay. Although Gaelic has not been spoken in the Valley since Allan MacArthur's passing in 1971, some remember the odd word or song lyric. One recording, "MacArthur's Kitchen Party," written and performed by a celebrated family band based in the Valley (The Cormiers 2007), playfully depicts local personalities and lore familiar to many of the Valley's residents. At the end of the recording, one participant in the kitchen party extemporaneously breaks into an a cappella chant in Scots Gaelic. Seemingly on cue, a chorus of voices chimes in, with everyone heartily intoning the Gaelic lyrics in unison. Their sense of belonging and *communitas* is palpable. In that single recording, one recognizes a lifetime of shared histories, memories, and structures of feeling that are nearly impossible to capture in writing.

Place names, such as the local names of pools described by MacIsaac (2017), or names of roads, trails, coves, villages, and locales no longer extant, similarly conjure unofficial histories. For instance, people often refer to the "Chignic" as a wayfinding marker. I finally learned that the landmark they are referring to, which is an empty parking lot on the TCH, was once the popular Chignic Lodge. A hotel, cocktail lounge, restaurant, and ballroom, the Chignic hosted

countless parties for locals and tourists from its opening in 1960 until it burned down decades later. It is not uncommon for someone to post a picture on social media of a group fraternizing in the empty lot with the caption, “Just having a beer at the Chignic.” The Starlite Lodge, built in the 1970s at the base of the Table Mountains, was similarly renowned for its balls. Local legend Minnie White, “First Lady of the Accordion,” was known to entertain there clad in an elegant gown. The owner of the club, Franklin Young, took advantage of the popularity of his establishment to develop an existing trail used for hunting, trapping, and fishing into a hiking trail up to the top of the mountain, which he named Starlite Trail after his lodge. While the lodge no longer stands, having burned down in the 1990s, the trail is one of the best known features of the Valley, set to undergo a major expansion in the coming years. Yet, while those who frequented these lodges remember them fondly, I have learned that the younger generations are largely uninformed about their legacy.

Young people likewise appear to be unfamiliar with the Valley’s long industrial history of pastoralism and wool working, which I describe in the next chapter. One 22-year-old woman I interviewed, Felicia Farrell, admitted that, apart from her grandmother, who is renowned for her craft skills, “The rest of the stories that I would hear about people being crafty and like wool-type industry and like that type of stuff, I learned a lot about that from the Minnie White museum, actually.” Just a year prior to our interview, she and her boyfriend and brother visited the museum, which is housed in the late Minnie’s home and operated by her daughter, Helen White. There they learned more about the Valley’s history than they thought possible. “I never knew that about the wool industry,” she told me. “I never even knew that was a big thing here.” When I asked her if it made her feel prouder to be from Codroy Valley, she told me, “Yeah, most definitely. It helps me develop a better understanding of the stuff that used to go on here. It’s

good to know where you come from. It's good to know your roots and stuff." When I asked her what might be done to revive sense of place in the Valley, she pointed to the importance of social offerings. "Like if the Valley had half the activities that they had back in the '80s or whatever, that would help, too."

My mom's telling me stories of what the Valley was like when she was growing up, and honestly, I was jealous of her. Because, like, they mentioned the Chignic restaurant, they mentioned the one on Starlite or something. And they talked about how fun the Port Club used to be, and they talked about all these restaurants and clubs and all these fun places where people could go and be together and dance and drink alcohol, whatever, have fun. Listen to music, lots of music. But all of those places are either shut down or burned down, and I didn't get to experience any of that. They were all gone by the time I was born, if not by the time I was born, when I was very, very young, so I didn't get to experience any of that. So that was kind of crappy... but it's nice to know that the Valley wasn't just some "boring" place. I put that in quotations because, well, it can be boring, yes, but it also is not boring, either.

Place is always becoming. It is what its inhabitants make of it, together with input from visitors, neighbours, spectators, and commentators. Codroy Valley will never be what it was in the past. It is clear that a higher population coupled with different forms of technology and recreation contributed to a vibrancy in the Valley that young people are feeling to a lesser degree today, and that a dwindling number of bodies is contributing to a sense of loss about what is to come. Critical regionalism asks that, in order to forge the best possible future for a region, we think about it in terms of linkages to other times and places. A vibrant future for the Valley requires more people to move in and build lives and memories there, but who wishes to make a home in a place where they will feel like an outsider or an intruder? I have been told by numerous residents of the Valley, mostly women, who were born elsewhere in the province but married a local, that there is no chance they will ever feel like a true Codroy Valleyer. Lana and I were once chastised by a self-appointed gatekeeper for hosting volunteer helpers from away rather than hiring locally, claiming there were "tons" of available employees. Not only was that the first year available jobs

went unfilled in the Valley, begging as to the whereabouts of this infinity pool of workers, but we found that including our international helpers in community events brought immense joy and fascination to local people. A night of darts or open mic with a helper or hostel guest from Slovenia or Taiwan or Tasmania provided local folks, as well as the visitors, unique experiences with unfamiliar dialects and perspectives, which over time came to feel less exotic and more simply human. Several Codroy Valleyers still reminisce gleefully about some of the more entertaining, and occasionally bizarre, cultural encounters from those days.

More to the point, Codroy Valley's history is replete with outside encounters. From the very first intermarriage or trade or baptism by a priest from away, Codroy Valley folks have been undergoing a long process of hybridization. There is no such thing as a "pure" Codroy Valleyer, and to think that way is to understand the Valley as an isolated bubble closed off to the rest of the world, which it never has been. Its borders have always been contested, contingent, and porous. I therefore now turn to geographical narratives in order to contextualize popular understandings of belonging, entitlement, and difference forged across space and place.

3.2 Geographical narratives

As proclaimed on the road sign as one enters Codroy Valley, 15 communities make up the Valley: St. Andrew's, Doyles, Tompkins, Loch Lomond, Searston, Woodville, Millville, Codroy, Cape Anguille, Great Codroy, O'Regan's, Upper Ferry, Benoit's Siding, Coal Brook, and South Branch (Figure 3.3). Although I now can rattle them off by heart, one or two nearly always escapes me, and I have noticed that most people in the Valley have similar difficulties recalling all 15 in one or two breaths. The K-12 hosts students from these 15 communities, along with a handful who live year-round in McDougalls just across the trestle in St. Andrew's. At valley-wide events like Winter Carnival, the 15 communities are clustered based on relative location.

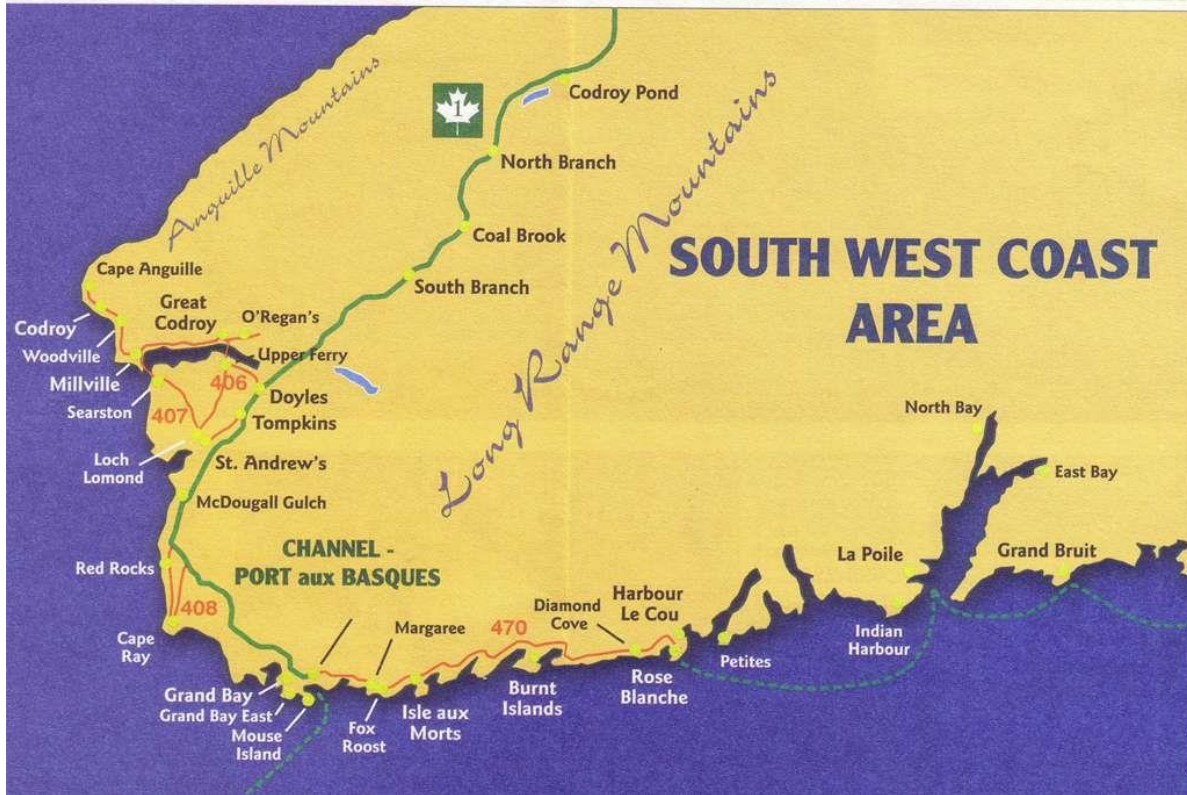
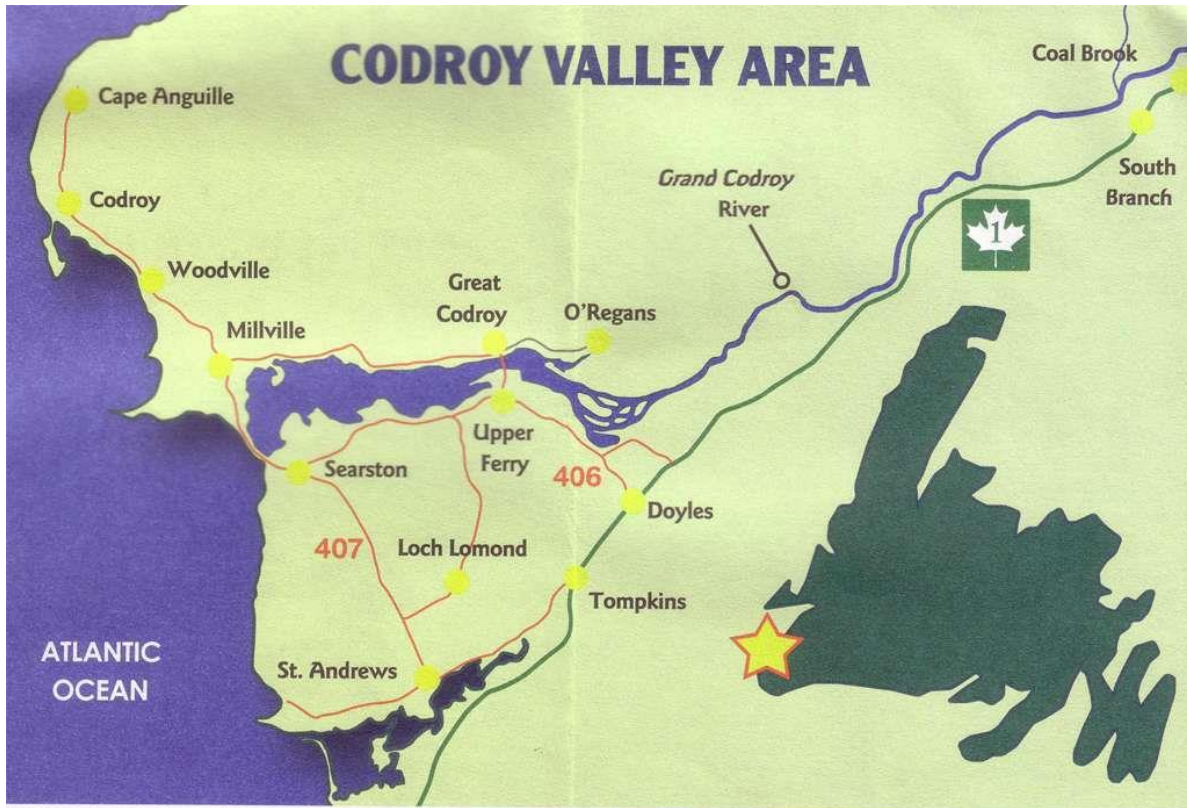


Figure 3.3: Maps showing Codroy Valley and the greater southwest coast area. Benoit's Siding is the only one of the 15 that is missing. Image from Channel-Port aux Basques Town Office website. <https://www.portauxbasques.ca/tourism/explore-the-coast/>

These clusters are based largely on their respective community centres or “clubs,” of which there are four in the Valley. The one just down the road from our home in St. Andrew’s, known as St. Kevin’s Centre, or Mountainview Club, was where we went weekly for either darts or “local talent,” and occasional craft fairs and concerts, hence it was the nucleus where we felt most “at home” in the Valley.

One of the first activities performed by communities starting an ecomuseum is to delimit a territory. For Codroy Valley, what I thought would be a straightforward endeavour (the 15 communities) turned out to be not so straightforward depending on whom I asked. For instance, the 15-year-old I interviewed, Brooklynn Cormier, who was born and raised in the Valley, was unsure. “The second you go in, when you’re driving down the Trans-Canada Highway and you turn into Doyles, that’s when it starts for me. Because we live in like Doyles, Upper Ferry, so I’d say it starts more in Doyles.” But as she continued to ponder the question, she broadened her boundaries. “Codroy Valley, to me, it’s huge. There’s St. Andrew’s, there’s O’Regan’s, there’s... South Branch, too. Yeah, I still classify it as the Valley... There’s Coal Brook... But, what’s like home to me, more so, is Doyles, where it starts.” But when I posed the question of whether McDougalls belongs in Codroy Valley, her mother, Melissa Musseau Cormier, who grew up in Port aux Basques but married into the Valley 22 years ago, was adamant.

Mm-mm, no. No, if my husband was here he’d say absolutely not. No, it’s not, it’s not. That’s its own community. There’s McDougalls, there’s Red Rocks, and the Codroy Valley is this. If you ask me where’s Codroy Valley, it’s this loop. It’s here, it’s St. Andrew’s, it’s O’Regan’s, it’s Codroy, it’s this loop. Like I don’t consider South Branch part of the Codroy Valley. But it is, it’s included because we have our Winter Carnival, right? Like this is the Valley to me, and Red Rocks is definitely not part of the Codroy Valley, and McDougalls is not either. It’s not, it’s really not. Like, if you look at the communities in the Codroy Valley, it’s like Loch Lomond, St. Andrew’s, Searston, Upper Ferry, Millville, Woodville, Cape Anguille... I feel like McDougalls is more like a summer... like it’s not real liveyers,⁵⁷ it’s more just

⁵⁷ A liveyer is someone who resides full-time in Newfoundland or Labrador, as opposed to a migratory resident. The term came about in the 1860s to distinguish permanent residents from migratory fishermen from England.

people there with summer homes and cottages. It's not really a community of people that's been there for years and years. Like my husband's been here all his life, his family's been here all their lives, they know everybody's birthdays, funerals, anniversaries, right? That's what I consider a community, right?

It was intriguing to see a question about the geographical boundaries of Codroy Valley bring the discussion organically to the definition of community. In the beginning of our conversation, she defined a community as people with deep roots, who know each other's birthdays, anniversaries, and funerals. Seasonal residents, like most McDougalls folks, are not "real liveyers." But when I mentioned newcomers, like myself and Lana, or herself 22 years ago, she shifted perspectives: "Oh, no I actually consider it anyone who lives here. Even it's people that's not interested, like there's people you don't see a lot but they're still, you know, their kids are in the school, so they're part of the community, right?" But reflecting on her own experience, she compared herself to her husband, Gerard Cormier, whose grandfather, the Gaelic speaker Allan MacArthur, came from Scotland: "I've been here 22 years and nobody considers me a Codroy Valleyer. I'm not considered a Codroy Valleyer. People say you're from Port aux Basques. Nobody looks at me and says you're from Codroy Valley." I interjected that, as someone even newer to the Valley, *I* consider her to be a real Codroy Valleyer.

One resident had the same question about Codroy Valley's boundaries and posed it to Facebook in 2018, which generated varied responses. When I posed the question to Anne Meaney, whose ancestors lived on Indian Hill, she felt McDougalls should be included in the Valley for its cultural connections and legacies, such as legends like Lockie MacDougall. Her husband, Phil, on the other hand, thought not due to its geological positioning outside of the Valley. Even ideas of geology clash, however. Another friend whom I interviewed, Patsy Brownrigg, claimed that the Valley's geographic boundaries technically start at Red Rocks and end up at North Branch or Codroy Pond. She decided that the easiest way to settle it would be to

look at their postal codes. Ultimately, what is significant in these conversations is not settling on official boundaries, but the conversations that emerge around the idea of boundaries in the first place. Who decides who and what is included, and why? How is that sense of entitlement and power distributed, and what does that portend for those who are excluded, like the McDougalls children who attend school in Codroy Valley?

In my two-hour conversation with Patsy, and later with the addition of her husband, Sean Downey, I learned that Patsy's relatives go back several generations in the Valley, though she herself grew up in Corner Brook with seasonal residence in the Valley before moving there permanently in 1972. When I suggested that Codroy Valley has always been connected to the outside world, Patsy immediately started talking about the significance of the shoreline. For instance, she described how people in her neighbourhood of Woodville or Codroy "were closer physically and otherwise to people, say, from Highlands and Robinson's⁵⁸ than to St. Andrew's."

Well, the water was everything here. Like I mean, say this house here. When the original house was built, it would have been what they would call the winter home. And then they had like a summer home. Yeah, so they were very nomadic. So they'd pack up everything and then they'd go back in the woods for the winter, up here in Codroy anyway because it was so harsh. So they'd just pack everything up and go back by horseback or oxen. So you know they had all their supplies, they would have big gardens here and in the summertime they'd take all that with them, and then they'd go back there in the winter, and then they would have a summer house. They were there for fishing. And then they would barter that fish, you know, for vegetables from people that had farms. So water here was everything. It was the good, bad, and the ugly because lots of time, people didn't have the equipment or I guess know-how in a lot of ways, they would just follow the weather patterns. If it's not looking good out there today, we won't go out, right? But we were very aqua-based, yeah.

Her talk of being aqua-based brings up the concept of the aquapelago, defined by environmental humanities scholar Philip Hayward (2012, 5) as "an assemblage of the marine and land spaces of

⁵⁸ Highlands and Robinson's are communities far north of what people consider to be Codroy Valley's borders, but they are settlements along St. George's Bay, just like Codroy, so for water-based peoples they were actually much more accessible. St. Andrew's, by contrast, is considered by most to be situated firmly within the Valley.

a group of islands and their adjacent waters.” Hayward conceptualized it as a reassertion of aquatic spaces into the term “archipelago,” which he critiques for its hegemonic assumption of the primacy of land-based practices and identities. He further refines his concept by identifying aquapelagic society as “a social unit existing in a location in which the aquatic spaces between and around a group of islands are utilised and navigated in a manner that is fundamentally interconnected with and essential to the social group’s habitation of land and their senses of identity and belonging” (Ibid.). Based on Patsy’s description of everyday and seasonal life in and around Woodville, Codroy, and Cape Anguille, these societies may be classified as aquapelagic. Moreover, the stories that are produced in these communities are uniquely water-based, as are the identities that form around them. For example, there is a story about pirates that has been passed down from her great-grandmother.

My mom would talk about what her grandparents would talk about living up here. She used to tell a story, so it would have been her grandmother, which would have been the Lomond and the Reid, and her grandmother would tell a story about pirates. They would be careful about pirates coming on through because they’d follow the brooks because they knew if there was a brook there’s people that live by brooks because it was a water source. So her grandmother told stories of that. Because my mom was born in 1924, so you’re talking about back in the 1800s, you know? And so you had to be careful, you had to keep a watch out for pirates looting your place, or the bit that you had. So apparently her grandmother caught one on the step and hit him with a cast-iron frying pan and knocked him out. Well, you’d do anything to protect what you got, right?

Stories about pirates are common in Newfoundland and Labrador’s fishing communities, but never had I heard of their presence in Codroy Valley, which, in my regional conception, is far more agricultural than aquatic. But the more I spoke with people and did my research, the more I learned about the significance of boatbuilding, water-based tourism, fish trades, winter homes, and pirates—all revolving around the waters in and around Codroy Valley. Patsy reminded me of a grim reality dealt to many who dwelled along the shores, including the original owners of her

home, who lived there before Sean’s grandparents: a woman and her two children died of a plague. “It was some sort of a plague that was moving through. And again, being by the ocean, they were probably more susceptible to that over in this area than they were in other areas of Codroy Valley, because there were ships that would come in, right? They’d come in with supplies and one thing or another, so they were probably more susceptible to that.” This is part of “the ugly” Patsy was referring to when describing aqua-based cultures like her ancestral society in Codroy and Woodville. Needless to say, those communities have never been isolated.

Finally, when contemplating geographical narratives, the subject of maps often arises. Mapping, while a useful tool for mediating conversations and layering discrete aspects of a place in one frame, is shown time and again to be a powerful instrument for subjugating the Other. Discourses and practices surrounding the map, including regional planning and environmental assessment, which I discuss below, were noted by de Certeau (1984, 93) to echo the “voyeur-god” who “must disentangle himself from the murky intertwining daily behaviors and make himself alien to them.” Similarly, Powell (2012, 47) asserts that “[t]he map’s pretense to timelessness is methodologically incapable of accounting for the movements, activities, and subjectivities of the populations; a landscape superficially, at least, devoid of history is also a landscape devoid of sociality, of lived experience.” In other words, a map’s two- or three-dimensionality leaves it severely limited in its ability to capture the diachronic nuances, socialities, and contingencies of place.⁵⁹ Those considerations lacking, the imposition of a map may have grave consequences for the self-determining capacity of a community.

⁵⁹ Grasseni’s “skilled landscape,” which captures the four-dimensional and phenomenological aspects of place through community mapping, is a possible antidote to the limitations posed by conventional maps, and is one of the subjects I take up in Chapter 5. I also describe, in Chapter 6, based on my fieldwork at a Saskatchewan ecomuseum, how paper maps may spark lively and nuanced conversations about place, history, and memory.

Rather than seek absolute, objective truths in maps and geographical texts deemed official and authoritative, Herr (1996, 8) suggests that communities unsettle hegemonies disguised as universal truths in “the space-between, interbeing, dialogism, difference, nomadic space, intertextuality, hybridity, the assemblage,” that is, in the anomalous space “where unexpected and unmapped things can occur.” It is my contention that such third space encounters are rendered possible in dialogue, and that the ethnographic interview is ideally suited to open up that space to alter commonsense narratives related to history, geography, and other themes whose truths are taken for granted by inhabitants of a place. It is also my contention that through these dialogues, where interlocutors see themselves from the others’ point of view, notions of localness are ripe for contestation. Shuman (1993, 360–361) has argued for the dismantling of discursive treatment of local culture, suggesting that we study “larger-than-local categories [which] foreclose any possibility of examining the appropriation of unstable, unmarked, or appropriated cultural categories” and that we “trace the construction of unmarked natural categories, for example, in narratives that invent prior undisrupted homogeneity.” She further warns that “when we fail to attend to contested local categories, our concept of local culture is not local enough” (Ibid., 356). The next section thus looks at how we might disrupt homogeneity around exclusionary binaries, such as insider/outsider, through ethnography.

3.3 Eco- narratives and posthuman discourse

As newcomers to the Valley engage in dialogue with more established folks, while “seeking to understand places ‘from within’ [we] generate at the same time, a new vantage point from which our interlocutors can imagine the same place” (Hufford 2002, 74). By sharing my own opinion about what a “real” Codroy Valleyer looks like, i.e., anyone already living there by the time I

arrived in 2016, I offered my interlocutor a new perspective, perhaps beginning to level a field dominated by those perspectives that persist in casting her as one who will never truly belong.

Furthermore, by opening up spaces for the negotiation of identity and belonging, fieldwork and dialogue bring to the fore issues of personhood. Hufford (2016, 641) defines “deep commoning” as “world-making from within that also reflects on those worlds, the rules for making them and the meanings for all participants,” a methodology that is consonant with the goals of a critical regionalist ecomuseum. Through our dialogue and questioning regarding local knowledge and sense of place, we co-create a “middle ground,” much like Herr’s “space-between,” and are thereby implicated in world-making, wherein place-names for topographical features, their etymologies, and related customs are pronounced and valorized. Moreover, as I argue in Chapter 8, reflexivity establishes “a dialogue between a personal ‘I’ and a social ‘me’” (Babcock 1980, 1). In an ecomuseum, the social “me” is displayed for the personal “I” just as the social “we” of Codroy Valleyers is displayed to public outsiders. In a rapidly changing world, the ecomuseum helps anchor a core identity while permitting flexibility for change, as visitors are invited to reflect on that world *in situ*.

Disrupting the binaries of subject and object paves the way for the subversion of other dualisms taken for granted in rational and linear narratives of progress. For instance, hegemonic standards of what constitutes “success,” which artificially pit “high” against “low” standards of living, do not constitute “a gradation in the quality of life but a difference between ‘complex’ vs. ‘simple’ material standards where ‘complex’ ones are artificially created by the market and tend to undermine sufficiency and autonomy” (Gerber 2020, 246–247). Already in 1936 colonial India, Joseph Kumarappa, founder of “Gandhian economics,” was arguing that the state and capitalist élites “shape for their own benefits normative ideals of what constitutes the ‘good life’,”

ideals that one has to question radically” (Ibid., 247). Rather than blindly accept market value as the golden standard, he proposed economic valuation at a deeper level, in the moral economy (Kumarappa 1936). 40 years later, novelist Edward Abbey (1977, 183) recognized the harrowing consequences of accepting growth as truth when he proclaimed, “Growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell.”

Economistic discourse that naturalizes a rational ideology of linear growth as commonsense and frames it always in relation to capital, referred to by economic geographers J.K. Gibson-Graham (1996) as *capitalocentrism*, has since at least the second world war insinuated itself into prevailing conceptions of “the economy” (Mitchell 1998), for which commons are deemed unprofitable, undesirable, or untenable (Hardin 1968). Capitalocentric discourse uses the logic of enclosure that Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago (2015), drawing on Ernesto Laclau’s notion of “equivalential chains” (Laclau 2005, 74), refers to as “universal territorial equivalent.” Such logic, he avers, negates a spatiality of difference shaped by practices of commoning “on a local, use-value-oriented basis” in order to “make the widest possible scope of those diverse social spaces commensurable... rendering them legible for state administration and market mechanisms” (Sevilla-Buitrago 2015, 1000–1001).

Dualisms work to polarize differences and minimize shared characteristics, in effect working to “drop the middle ground—thereby disappearing the most interesting and constitutive parts of nature and our natural being” (Reid & Taylor 2010, 21). Localized dialogue abetted by the larger-than-local perspective of the ethnographer, can disrupt monologues around “economic progress” and “resource development,” which destroy “the social aspects of soil, forest, water, air, and other ‘resources’ by eliminating all but one perspective” (Hufford 2002, 73). Rather than accept etic regionalizations that reproduce chronotopes of economic progress, which reflect the

universal territorial equivalents scripted by hegemonic powers for ease of controllability of disparate places, we can encourage self-regionalizations through performance of place-based knowledge in song, anecdote, place names, legends, or the sharing of foraging techniques, recipes, knowledge about tides, cycles, Wreckhouse winds, and so forth. So doing, we take stock of “the substantive goods that enable the turning of the wheel of... ‘biocultural regeneration’” (Reid & Taylor 2010, 25), goods that inhabit the commons.

Thinking with commons means prefiguring a sustainable future for all, rather than for a privileged few. Hufford (2016, 639) postulates the commons as “a continually emergent vernacular socio-ecological system that, for its reproduction, relies on customs of everyday life. The constituency of the commons is *collective*—not individual—being, and the time frame exceeds the span of one generation.” In contemporary academic discourse, commons may be characterized as “an instrument of the people for containing the abuses associated with property and the market” (Bollier 2001, 30). They may constitute “ideas, formations, images, knowledges, codes, languages, social relationships, affects and the like” (Hardt & Negri 2009, 134–5) produced independently from or on the margins of capital, but constantly enclosed by capital. Early twentieth-century commons, such as those portrayed below and in the next chapter, have undergone a series of enclosures in the ensuing decades. Broadly, enclosure denotes the “disciplining of social life through market expansion” (Valle 2021, 1260). In Codroy Valley, rational, economic narratives have enclosed commons by promoting growth-oriented values that lead to industry closures, decline of social services, ruptures with traditional lifeworlds, environmental apathy, outmigration, and depopulation.

Commons are ignored by energy companies and advocates through reductionist research methods and colonialist narratives in environmental review whose primary motivation is profit.

Mario Blaser and Marisol de la Cadena define “neoextractivism” as a “model of development primarily based in the large-scale extraction of natural resources for export” (Blaser & de la Cadena 2017, 85), which is precisely what would happen if Codroy Valley’s territory were to be enclosed and exploited, and liquid ammonia exported to Germany. Governments and private businesses in such regimes depict resource commons (in this case, fresh waters and lands on which myriad humans and more-than-humans socialize and thrive) as “common goods” to be appropriated in pursuit of the national “common good.” The “myth of emptiness” (Sluyter 1999) is “motivated in part by an imperative to subordinate non-Western forms of knowing and being to Western forms of rationality” (Hufford 2016, 644). In the case of the windfarm, it is not uncommon to hear or read desperate pleas like this one posted by a friend on Facebook in response to a chart published by World Energy GH2:

OMG !!!! Look at the amount of land each area is going to be cleared for this useless project 🙄🙄🙄 it’s so sad 🙄🙄 if Newfoundland was getting green energy from this , I would perhaps reconsider , but we are getting nothing out of this , just loss of major land mass , runoff in our rivers and lakes for years , animals relocating to quieter and treed areas , etc etc ... how , dear god , how is this a good thing for our province 🙄🙄 (Facebook, September 2, 2024)

Because neoextractivist discourse is unable or unwilling to recognize commons in Codroy Valley, particularly within those vast expanses cordoned off for windmill infrastructure, it is altering our commonsense so as to project its own narratives about “economic growth” and “environmentalism” as inevitable, desirable, and rational. What is discarded from view are the materialities and social relations forged over time in those very spaces. Simultaneously, however, neoextractivist threats are cause to reflect on the value of commons. The problem may in fact be furnishing a solution; ethnographers are well positioned to project this conversation.

While the growth paradigm is nearly axiomatic in global political and economic discourse, rural sociologist Karen Foster (2017, 633) reveals ethnographically that most of her rural

research participants in Atlantic Canada espouse a work ethic exemplifying how “vibrant, meaningful human life can continue in the absence of constant economic growth.” Putting those localized narratives in conversation with counterhegemonic currents at a broader—synchronic and diachronic—scale is a fruitful endeavour the critical regionalist ecomuseum is ideally placed to enact. For instance, ethnographic work in the ecomuseum may consider deep commoning and critical nostalgia as antidotes to the myth of emptiness. Conjuring memories and structures of feeling in conversation is a critical and collaborative measure we can take to queer temporalities of progress and development. Moreover, ethnographers and interlocutors may offer a fresh and inquisitive perspective that privileges diverse economic activities that ratify more-than-human relations as primary sites of identity building while undermining hegemonic market structures.

Again, Hufford is instructive here:

How do dialogically-wrought narratives constitute relationships among collectivities? Just as dialogue is a formative medium, enabling two who are subjects to themselves to know themselves as objects from the other’s point of view, the collaboratively wrought story absorbs us as subjects in an alternate world, which we inhabit as we inhabit our lived bodies. When this alternate world is the same as our locality, our *place*, the story can open a gap between a locality’s lived and object status to complete its identity in relation to other localities. The land ethic, constituted through narratives that undermine class distinction by entangling human and more-than-human being, is key. (Hufford 2019, 15)

The more we draw out the vernacular land ethic from people’s latent memories and structures of feeling, the less room there is for intolerance of otherness, because the subtext of those affective pleasures is connectedness and reciprocity. My conversation with Eric Hillier, a 73-year-old who grew up in Codroy, brought up memories around the commons of his childhood and adolescence. Prodded by my eagerness to hear and record his stories, his vivid memories from the 1950s and 1960s poured forth for three hours. Toward the end of our conversation, he expressed gratitude for the opportunity to verbalize to a new audience his childhood wintertime activities such as

playing outdoors and helping his father stack ice boxes before refrigeration rendered them obsolete.

Funny thing, all of them are chores and all of them now are good memories. Making hay, planting potatoes. It was physical work but it was just good memories. I look at life in the sense of I think the hard work made good memories. We're not making good memories anymore... You were outdoors. You were out. Unless it was too cold or something. But you were out. You were making snowmen, you were making snow houses, you were helping... Ice, big boxes. Ice from the ponds, we'd haul them down to his fish shack and put the stuff over it, the sawdust over it and then the ice would last until August, September. He was a salmon fisherman so he'd build boxes and he'd put his layer of ice, layer of salmon, layer of ice, layer of salmon, until he'd fill up the box.

In my experience, seemingly simple inquiries may unleash powerful interviews and an opportunity to reach what folklorist Emily Hilliard describes as “a common understanding... [about] something an insider might take for granted or has never fully explained before... Like the process of making rosettes and the dialogic evolution of tradition constantly negotiated by communities, collaborative ethnographic interviews and fieldwork are informal conversations, discussed and moderated at each step” (Hilliard 2022, 95). She reminds us of the usefulness of “anticipatory heritage,” described by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2021) as the necessity to collect folklore as it unfolds in the present “in anticipation of the future when the present will be past.” Or of the relevance of Audre Lorde’s “future-building... a collective and creative project that in turn lends hope to the present, making it more enduring” (Hilliard 2022, 211). In Chapter 8, I will consider performances, such as communal ice harvests and storytelling events, which are conducive to the ecomuseum space given ample community involvement, which Codroy Valley is doubtless capable of furnishing.

Hufford’s work on commons in Appalachia contrasts the national and rational chronotopes of progress and preservation, which naturalize economic discourse as logical and inevitable, with the chronotopes that reproduce commons in local narratives, which are relatable and steeped

in stories carried over generations in specific places. In *The Last Stronghold*, Allan MacArthur's reminiscence about his mother epitomizes a chronotope of commons.

She never milked a cow without singing a song, and the cow would know her, and she had to be very careful when she'd go in the cow-yard because the cows knowed her so well. And she'd be singing a song for every cow she'd milk. And the cows would come to the gate, you see, and the best ones would [be milked first]. The rest would have [to wait]... my mother had to milk that one first, you see. (Bennett 1989, 90)

Local narratives, exemplified in the above quote, invite the listener to contemplate another world—in this case, one in which women milked the cows, a laborious task on which Codroy Valley folks depended heavily—with recourse to a dialogical feature Bakhtin (1981) termed “addressivity.” Unlike top-down, official, monologic discourses, which “assume a silent addressee, sustaining a single consciousness and a fixed, irreversible perspective,” dialogic genres, using addressivity, “multiply consciousness through quotation, double voicing, parody, and carnivalization of official genres” (Hufford 2002, 63). Allan's vivid descriptions along with his repetition of “you see” invite his interlocutor to witness his mother, her voice, the cow-yard, and her relationships with the sheep, while also welcoming Bennett's own impressions of the visceral recollection.

Moreover, Hufford (2019, 11) points to the ecological implications for dialogues in which relationships, verbally depicted as such, “confer a place not only on human participants but on our historical, biological, and geological others, with whom perceptual activity entangles us. In speech we find enunciated directions for participating in these entanglements,” sensibilities that exemplify posthuman discourse. “When characters in the story are biological and geological others, as in the scriptural allusion,” Hufford tells us, “there is an exchange of human and more-than-human points of view... Seeing ourselves as rocks and trees might see us, we fleetingly grasp something of what it is to be *their* environment” (Ibid., 16).

From a diverse economies perspective, Gibson-Graham, Hill, and Law (2016) argue that by attending to posthuman narratives, and thus eschewing capitalocentric discourse, a world of economic possibility is revealed, centred on communities of care, which include our more-than-human cohabitants. Given the current climate crisis and other crises of modernity related to economic injustices and social exclusions, the authors propose a reframing of economy/ecology relations where diverse economies are recognized as existing alongside, against, and within capitalist ones and where nonhumans are resituated within a shared community via ongoing ethical negotiations with humans rather than commonsense, ad-hoc, market determinations. By positioning human economies within ecologies, resilience is reframed to include the flourishing of the more-than-human world amid an accommodating built environment. Neighbourhood-based economies in Indonesia and Cambodia, which they cite as examples, illustrate how the interdependence of human and more-than-human economies/ecologies and the negotiation of ethics allow for the co-construction of community resilience in precarious environments.

The archives are replete with posthuman and diverse economic instantiations in Codroy Valley, if only we read them as such. MUNFLA is a rich source of information about everyday life in the Valley since the last century. For instance, in 1976, Joseph O'Quinn deposited a folklore assignment for which he interviewed his grandparents, who likely were born around the turn of the 20th century. His transcription of their words brings to life a world where "we didn't bother with money" but where they had "better times than you ever had now." His grandmother, Mrs. Gale, describes communal plantings in the spring, when

you'd all get together all the men of the community... and you'd do your planting all in one day, plant one man's house today and another man's house tomorrow... and there'd be, and then there'd be big meals cooked for that you know, the men come in for their dinner and their supper and there'd always be a card game and, eh, good prize put up, perhaps a wool sweater or, or, eh, five dollars, might be five dollars put up, have a card game or sometimes a brace of rabbits... Whoever got the planting

done had to fill the, give the gifts... And then there'd be, you know, a card game in the night for the, get these prizes. (O'Quinn 1976)

In this world of generalized reciprocity, communalism and hard work, rather than money making and individual profit, were the prevailing structures of feeling. Mrs. Gale also describes a typical milling, in which men and women would "all flock there" and two men "would sit on either end of the plank and pass the goods, pass the women material and each one, and then they'd sing any songs, songs and you'd beat to the rhythm." In the transcription notes, she then sings a song in Scots Gaelic, which O'Quinn is unable to transcribe or translate. She continues, "Now you'd keep that up for hours, and hours, and hours... Everybody would have different songs, and different tunes." Reading the transcription notes, one is struck by the laughter, nearly audible, of the Gales as they reminisce about brewing beer, walking 12 miles to Codroy and back every Saturday for a party, and fearing the priest at confession.

O'Quinn, the ethnographer, provides a concluding essay, which is poignant for its reflection on the transformative effect of the interview on his own identity and values. By 1976, Codroy Valley was undergoing rapid modernization. Activities essential in his grandparents' lives, like chopping sprees and millings, were absent in his own lifeworld "because the necessities they provided for are now at our fingertips." But, he reflects, "it also was a form of socializing, the only way they could and get the work done at the same time." He continues: "These event were a shared thing and depended upon everybody to succeed; sure we depended [sic] upon other people today when we are doing things but I think it is a much different dependence and feeling than my Grandparents ever had." His conclusion is particularly noteworthy for its avowed appreciation of traditional ways of life, and the relevance of that intergenerational knowledge transmission in "today's instant world."

My grandparents also knew what it was to be completely dependent upon their own resources for the things they needed, they grew their own food, made their own clothing, cut their own wood and built their houses out of it themselves. How many people can do that today in today's instant world, or know the pleasure derived from being able to do such things. I can remember wanting a new pair of leather gloves because my friends at school made fun of my home-made mittens, today I know the chain of events from the shearing of the sheep to the spinning of the wool, until you get the finished product, how much work went into those mitts and realize they were a lot warmer than any pair of leather gloves, little did I know at the time. (O'Quinn 1976)

Hard, productive work is inspiring, as O'Quinn points out in his assignment. Undoubtedly, he mourns for an outdated way of life where pleasure was derived from using one's knowledge, physical strength, and socializing skills to accomplish everyday tasks. Similarly, Geoffrey Aucoin, who contributed an assignment to MUNFLA two decades later, performed ethnography on his grandfather, who was known locally as "the barber." According to Aucoin, people would stop in for a haircut but the barber never accepted money. Rather,

it could be assumed that the recipient of the haircut would help my grandfather in some way in the future. Perhaps the recipient had mechanical skills so he could have helped fix my grandfather's truck sometime in the future. But the basic premise of 'you scratch my back then I will scratch yours' was widely accepted. Most of the time, the returned favour was something like a drink or a meal. Having someone over for a drink could be the framework for a social visit where a few people get together to talk and have a good time. (Aucoin 1994)

The economic narratives espoused by both Aucoin and his grandfather are roughly the same. Generalized reciprocity was the rule of his grandfather's world, which must have been in stark contrast to Codroy Valley of the 1990s in which Aucoin finds himself, otherwise he would not have been compelled to write about it. Yet, the tone of his assignment is nostalgic. Aucoin's implicit desire for a simpler time where social relations were "democratic" and the "principle of reciprocity was always at hand" is hard to miss. The question, then, remains as to what prevents the democratic principle of reciprocity and rules governing the commons from being more broadly assumed in social relations, in the 1990s as today.

Critical regionalism is not antithetical to nostalgic musings, though it does seek to avoid a romantic nostalgia that blindly asserts that everything was better before. Rather, structures of feeling that are evoked may take into account glocal forces that laid the groundwork for destruction of the commons, so as to locate necessary counterhegemonic tools for reclaiming those commons thus avoiding future enclosures. Because hegemony is always needing to renew and defend itself, the possibility of resistance is always present. Third space, where symbols, narratives, and mythologies (all tools of hegemonic control) can be challenged and modified, and which the ethnographic interview may provoke, is where counterhegemony necessarily occurs. Critical nostalgia fits the critical regionalist mandate insofar as it is a discourse found in rapidly modernizing places around the world “that articulates a topical cultural critique which tries to resist late capitalism as a hegemonic (i.e. naturalized) order” (Lösch & Paul 2016, 4). In the next chapter, critical nostalgia meets queerness in Codroy Valley’s commons, an emancipatory encounter I strongly suggest we learn to acknowledge and endorse.

CHAPTER 4: CRUISING CODROY VALLEY'S COMMONS

I argued in the last chapter that Codroy Valley's customs and narratives are bursting with counterhegemonic potential. In this chapter, I turn to Codroy Valley's commons, and particularly its foodways. After positing a connection between commons and queerness as an antidote to prevailing heteronormative discourses and practices, I put forth three arguments. First, enhanced visibility of queerness in a specifically rural context that attends to the nonbinary inherence of commons and foodways might stop racism, homophobia, or xenophobia in its tracks. Second, posthuman sensibilities with the power to forestall anthropocentric and ecophobic discourse lay dormant in structures of feeling that emerge through conversations and practice around Codroy Valley foodways. Third, moments of crisis, such as the extractive behemoth threatening Codroy Valley's residents, open up ripe opportunities to revalue traditional foodways with a nod toward futurity. Chronotopes related to rural foodways, which reveal themselves in the ubiquity of commons, are inhabited by a queer strand. Therefore, given the centrality of foodways to Codroy Valley identity, residents are well positioned for a queer intervention into those local economic discourses I argue are critical to the Valley's future. Moreover, as I demonstrate in Chapter 8, queered narratives around foodways, and folklore generally, might be mobilized in ecomuseum spaces so as to incorporate and empower queer-identifying community members and visitors.

I suggest that we cruise utopia in Codroy Valley's commons so as to encounter "an ideality that can be distilled from the past [and present] and used to imagine a future" (Muñoz 2009, 1). One academic goal of this method is to advance interdisciplinarity between queer studies and rural studies, on the one hand, and social sciences with a public bent on the other, so that more research and collaborative projects prioritize community building that seeks to queer rural economies and subjectivities. I hope to subvert, by inverting, dominant narratives that map

journeys of “coming out” onto a necessary migration from the country (or the bay) to the metropole (Bell & Valentine 1995; Gray 2009; Gray, Johnson, & Gilley 2016; Halberstam 2005; Weston 1995), so that new narratives of a rural imaginary as refuge for the queered body may occupy their stead. Indeed, the narrative that situates queerness within the metropolis is not neutral, but rather forms a hierarchical opposition between rural and urban space, where rural is devalued and rural queers are rendered “out of place” or “stuck” (Gray 2009).

This is not, however, merely a pushback against narratives of outmigration to urban spaces where queers may flourish. 2SLGBTQIA+-identifying individuals are increasingly accepted in rural places, though there is still much work to be done. The neoliberal propulsion toward hetero/homonormative work and play (whether pulling into consumeristic environments or encroaching on agrarian lifeworlds) is among my main concerns. The outmigration of bodies, queer or not, is largely being fuelled by heteronormative greed and desire, which mask a world of rural possibility by framing rurality as a space that is empty and devoid of a future, if not as a playground for urban cottagers. In a sense, my project urges for a recognition of “the dangers of neoliberal co-optation of queer desire... while simultaneously exploring whether queering identity and new forms of queer sociality may subvert neoliberalism’s logics of individualized interests and profits” (Dhawan et al. 2015, 9). In another sense, it attempts to draw attention to the already pervasive queering of unstable binaries (self/other, subject/object, human/nonhuman, heterosexual/homosexual, economy/ecology, culture/nature, urban/rural) encountered in narratives of foodways and commons in Codroy Valley. My main argument is that rural places like Codroy Valley hold the key to a queer revival of place, if only we revalue the commons that have always queerly, quietly, and contingently informed chronotopes of co-becoming. I propose

a method of “reading for queerness” in Codroy Valley’s commons so as to highlight everyday practices and relations that counter mythologies of rural heteronormativity and homogeneity.

In their MA thesis about rural queers in Western Newfoundland, Ky Pearce rues a “lack of queer cultural narratives that render a happy queer life in rural Newfoundland intelligible or imaginable” (Pearce 2018, 120). My contention is that in order to render a happy queer life conceivable, we need first to acknowledge that rural Newfoundland has always been queer; we just lack the tools to read it. I therefore first posit a deep interconnectedness of queerness and commons, which remain salient in Codroy Valley relations despite being constantly threatened by enclosure via heteronormative discourse, yet are positively positioned for an intervention via customs and foodways. Inspired by Gibson-Graham’s (2006) project of “reading for difference” in economic discourse, I next employ ethnography, discourse analysis, and queer theory to read for queerness in a range of archival and ethnographic references to historic and contemporary commons, especially regarding Codroy Valley foodways. I argue that by opening up spaces and discourses around commons, structures of feeling in opposition to corporate greed, consumerism, and alienation are reanimated and made available for a queer subversion of commonsense heteronormativity. I then position these findings as a counterforce to the myth of emptiness that pervades neoextractivist chronotopes of development. Finally, I present an autoethnography of being queer and vegan in Codroy Valley, and some concluding remarks on the potentialities of queer visibility and co-becoming in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

4.1 Commons and rural queerness

For centuries, folks of the Codroy Valley have dwelled, toiled, played, made, and eaten together in the fertile expanse hollowed out by millennia of glacial activity around the Long Range Mountains, the northern stretch of the formidable Appalachian Mountain Range. Caribou, bear,

fox, coyote, moose, rabbit, lynx, and mink thrive in the Valley's forests and meadows, as do the tens of thousands of waterfowl, songbirds, and birds of prey who call Codroy Valley home for some segment of each year. Beaver, seal, mollusk, salmon, char, cod, eel, and trout dip and spawn in the estuaries and rivers that snake down from the mountains and replenish the Valley's lush banks. Mushrooms, berries, fruits, herbs, pulses, grains, ramps, wildflowers, ferns, shrubs, mosses, trees, and seaweeds feed the nutrient-rich soils in one of the few regions of the province that, owing to its particular climate, geology, and settlement patterns, has a deep cultural and economic legacy of agriculture and pastoralism. Countless songs and stories transmitted through the ages depict and respond to the backbreaking farmwork and bountiful harvests, the sheep sheering, carding, milling, and spinning, the fishing, eating, drinking, and communing.

Margaret Bennett recorded some of these folkloric texts in *The Last Stronghold*. Her vivid descriptions of the Valley's calendrical customs, occupational lore, timeworn recipes, and oral histories reflect on how a cluster of agrarian settlements, and hunter-gatherer groupings before them, have been shaped over the generations by an enduring culture of commoning. Common, as a verb, most accurately captures the structure of feeling I explore in this chapter. Scholars insist on the operational nature of commons, "not to be construed... as a particular kind of thing, asset or even social process, but as an unstable and malleable social relation between a particular self-defined social group and those aspects of its actually existing or yet-to-be-created social and/or physical environment deemed crucial to its life and livelihood" (Harvey 2012, 73). As I discuss below, through commons of the past and present involving fishing, farming, foraging, and food sharing, Codroy Valley folks consistently demonstrate what Silvia Federici (2007, 7) calls "a principle of cooperation and of responsibility to each other and to the earth."

Commons are intrinsically queer. Chronotopes of commons subvert heteronormative conceptions of time and space. For instance, Mikhail Bakhtin demonstrated how medieval carnivalesque culture—exemplary commons replete with ludic and grandiose profanity—was “opposed to all that is finished and polished, to all pomposity” and to “the official and serious tone of medieval ecclesiastical and feudal culture” (Bakhtin 1984, 3–4). Reading queerly the sixteenth-century satires of François Rabelais, Bakhtin examined the various feast days (e.g., feast of fools, feast of the ass) and carnivals presided over by every echelon of society over three months of the year. His analysis reveals how the overt focus on the grotesque during carnival stood in stark contrast to everyday emphasis on reproductive labour and the soul. At Carnival, to degrade the body was seen not to demand disgust or shame, but “to bury, to sow, and to kill simultaneously, in order to bring forth something more and better” (Ibid., 21). The bodily principle reduced the spiritual, noble body to its material functions and served to equalize bodies through their need to eat, defecate, and fornicate. Straight time, which associated continuity with the nuclear family, heterosexual reproduction, childbearing, and childrearing (Freeman 2010), contrasted with carnival time, which queered ontologies of growth and renewal by prioritizing ecstatic moments of bodies commingling amidst a repressively square society.

Attending to the actually lived heterogeneity of enclosed social spaces, a process Gibson-Graham (2006) refers to as “reading for difference rather than dominance” as a tool to “queer economy,” provides an opportunity for a concerted critique of universal territorial equivalents discussed in the previous chapter. Such a critique “can re-signify ‘equivalential chains’ around the shared experience of a seized commons” (Sevilla-Buitrago 2015, 1002). It is my contention that priviness to the queerness of Codroy Valley’s foodways, which, in my estimation, structure a dynamic chronotope of identity formation and socialization among the Valley’s inhabitants,

may open up new spaces for commoners, 2SLGBTQIA+ or otherwise, to link “present tribulations to a longer narrative of past deprivation” (Ibid.) while ratifying those structures of feeling that may pre-empt the predatory enclosures of the Valley’s commons.

In her timely book, *A Queer History of Newfoundland* (Rollmann 2022), St. John’s-based journalist Rhea Rollmann distils much of the queer activism and queer shame that have jostled with the homophobia dominating many of Newfoundland and Labrador’s communities over the past century and a half. The experiences of one of her correspondents, Walt Chaisson, typifies a “narrative of past deprivation” faced by countless 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals in the province’s rural milieus. Seeing no future for himself growing up in Codroy Valley in the 1970s, Chaisson seized the opportunity to work and study, first in the province’s metropolises of Corner Brook and St. John’s, and ultimately in Toronto, where he was stupefied to encounter a flourishing queer scene. In 2024, Chaisson shared his childhood trauma on a radio interview with CBC’s *The Signal with Adam Walsh*:

There was no real chance to grow as a gay kid in Codroy Valley. It was something that had to be hidden, squashed, changed. You were educated at a very early age that if you were different in any kind of a way, especially with a queer fact or queer tendencies, that it was a danger to you, that you were an aberration, that you were not accepted, that you were not normal, and if you didn’t kind of try to hide, or you didn’t hide, then it was not a great thing for you. There was a lot of ridicule... you were ostracized. There was nothing to be made to feel like you were welcome. Lot of jokes, lot of pointing fingers, a lot of just harassment.... It was like, you are not going to be queer, there are no queers, there are no fags, there are no fruits, as members of my family would often say... It was a time of hiding, cloaking, and leaving, for a lot of it. It was like, if you were gay, then you got out of town pretty quickly, as soon as you could kind of thing. (CBC 2024)

Queerness has always existed in the Valley, though it remains elusive and shameful even today. One neighbour told me her cousin was shamed by his family for being gay and fled the Valley in the 1980s. Lowering her voice, she added that she sometimes wonders if she herself might be gay. “I likes my dog more than my husband,” she snickered, then laughed for having articulated

that notion aloud. In one conversation, Eric Hillier, who identifies as queer and bisexual, recounted the “psychological damage left behind” by a local pedophile in the 1950s and 1960s.⁶⁰ He recalled how the Catholic priest “had complete control. He covered pedophilia, everything that was happening in Codroy Valley, he’d cover it.” Like Walt, Eric moved out of the Valley as a teenager and encountered other worlds more accommodating toward his sexuality, first in Corner Brook and then in Toronto.

Still, even Eric discounts certain elements of queerness. When I posited society’s growing tolerance, he showed reserve, remarking, “I think they’ve gone too far the other way. I’m him and I’m he. I’m a man, I got all the markers. Why should I all of a sudden want to be considered a feminine pronoun? Why should I go from he to her? I think what’s happening is people got too much time on their hands. That’s what happened. People got way too much time.”

Momentarily leaving aside the issue of idle time, Eric’s avowed ill regard toward transgenderism reflects the homonormative privileging of cisgendered homosexuality and natural binaries of gender and sexuality (Warner 1993) that are partly a result of the “disciplining of social life” effected by enclosure of the commons. One prominent debate about capitalism’s role in reproducing heteronormativity features social theorists Nancy Fraser and Judith Butler. For Fraser (1997), gay and lesbian struggles, including homophobia, are rooted in culture and recognition, rather than political economy, which in her estimation is more directly implicated in class struggle. In an essay titled “Merely Cultural,” Butler (1997, 274) countered that the separation of cultural and economic spheres, itself “the consequence of an operation of abstraction initiated by capital itself,” is responsible for the naturalization of the nuclear family as ideal, the dehistoricization of sexuality, the privatization of reproductive labour, and the sex

⁶⁰ I am by no means insinuating causality between queerness and pedophilia. Eric understands his experience as a result of his abuser’s sexual frustration, toxic power, and shame.

and gender divisions of labour. Butler's rebuttal thus castigates the insidious enclosure of liberal sex cultures by modernist discourses whose development was only made possible by capital.

Bakhtin (1984, 33) described the domestication of ritual, spectacle, and carnival forms of folk culture beginning in seventeenth century Europe, with the state converting festival into parade and capitalism containing it within the private, nuclear family sphere. Butler (1997, 274) argues that the "abstraction initiated by capital itself" of the cultural and economic spheres is largely responsible for the domestication of public and private life, i.e. the household. Yet, in our conversation, Eric is transported back to a world before such enclosures had taken a firm grip on social and economic lives in Codroy Valley, where a visit to a neighbouring home would be received with "Come in, have a meal, sit down, tell us all the news'... There was always a storytelling element. Time to exchange pleasantries. So when the day was finished and the visit was finished, you did feel fulfilled, you know?" He talked about how, in the 1950s and 1960s, his mother, an exceptional pastry cook, would habitually prepare extra for visitors:

Every Sunday, around 2 o'clock, 2:30 in the afternoon, they'd start filing in. She'd set sometimes two, three tables... My father's old friend, he said, "I don't come here to see you. I comes here for Ethel's baking"... She'd make pies and biscuits and everything, everything. Every Saturday for Sunday, every Saturday. I think she enjoyed what she put out, too, because everyone was pretty happy. Sometimes 20 extra. But she always had enough to feed all of us, too. Every day she was baking, baking, baking. Like food shortages, we never did experience that because she was such a good cook and very talented with taking supplies and making something beautiful out of it... She would say, "It's all right. We've got lots of food left over. We're living well. These people maybe didn't get any biscuits or any pie this morning." And next Sunday it'd be the same crowd all over again.

In this world, kinship implicated a collectivity of family and neighbours who, by virtue of an interdependence that transcended social, economic, and cultural bounds, were empowered and fulfilled while working to uphold the integrity of the commons. But it is also clear that, even in this apparent utopia, "aberrations" like queers or fruits were habitually ignored, denied, or

expelled from the commons. Heteronormative enclosures were already creeping into the fabric of Codroy Valley society, fuelled perhaps most visibly by the Church,⁶¹ and mythologizing social qualifications for inclusion in kinship circles.⁶² Social myths of acceptability may seem to run an insurmountable course, but just how deep is it? Given their social constructedness, I contend that homo- and heteronormativity are also deconstructable, needing “anxiously, repeatedly, and persistently [to] set about trying to affirm [themselves]” (Yep 2003, 13). As Turner (2019) has argued about race and witch, gender and sexuality, too, are floating signifiers that appear to be similarly intractable in certain spatiotemporal junctures. Yet, as their semantic underpinnings are structured on chronotopes of normative success and its moralistic outcrops, and reproduced in social relations, their significations are always subject to appropriation.

Queer theorist Jack Halberstam argues that the metronormative narrative maps a coming-out narrative onto a unidirectional migration from rural to urban, rendering the rural a repressive and heteronormative closet of sorts. He calls for a disruption of metronormative discourse, claiming that although the “distinction between rural repression and urban indulgence makes a lot of sense... in actuality, as recent research has shown, we might find that rural and small-town environments nurture elaborate sexual cultures even while sustaining surface social and political conformity” (Halberstam 2005, 35). Indeed, dozens of studies speak to the topic of queer rurality.⁶³ One relevant phenomenon in Newfoundland and Labrador is Rollmann’s discussion of

⁶¹ Silvia Federici (2004, 58) describes the public, collective sexuality prevalent throughout medieval Europe until the official promulgation of Church ordinances against non-procreative sex, even in places like Florence, where homosexuality attracted males of any age, class, or marital status and prostitutes wore male clothes to attract customers. The witch-hunt later criminalized all activities that threatened procreation, familial transmission of property, or time and energy from the workplace. Federici observes that the persecution of homosexuals is even sedimented in language: “faggots” were the kindling for the stakes upon which witches were burned, while *finocchio* (Italian for fennel, also slang for faggot) invokes the scattering of aromatic vegetables on the stakes to mask the stench of burning flesh (Federici 2004, 219).

⁶² Of course, not all clergy are homophobic. In *A Queer History of Newfoundland*, Rollmann (2023) describes a Catholic priest in rural Newfoundland who allied himself with queer rights well before queer rights was mainstream.

⁶³ See Gorman-Murray, Pini, and Bryant (2013) for an extensive, though slightly outdated, overview.

“buddies helping buddies” (Rollmann 2023, 25). The term refers to same-sex sexual activity, typically among heterosexual-identifying men in predominantly male environs, such as logging camps or fishing expeditions. For many participants, buddies helping buddies is perceived as distinct from gay or even queer activity.

Mary Gray (2009, 22), in *Out in the Country*, asks, “If access to a visible community of sexual and gender difference is central to the story of urban queer cultural formation, how do the exactions and experiences of prosaic familiarity, central to the organization of rural communities, produce and articulate queerness differently?” I submit commons and specifically foodways as central to the organization of rural communities, and I wish to argue for the profound queerness of their temporalities, spatialities, and socialities, given the right perspectival tools. Attending to marginal (non-heteronormative) realities of such spaces may even create queer counterpublics, or “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs” (Fraser 1990, 67). Rewriting connotations of queerness and inscribing them in the commons, we may seek a positive affective link with those signifiers and identities deemed illegitimate in heteronormative discourse. To change the rural-as-heteronormative narrative is to reveal “the ways in which heterosexism is an *incomplete, incongruous, nonhegemonic*, and spatially diffuse set of social relations and practices full of possibilities for subversion and reconfiguration, rather than how it is a coherent, complete, spatially fixed, and hegemonic one” (Knopp & Brown 2003, 413). How, then, to read for queerness in rural commons?

4.2 Reading for queerness in Codroy Valley’s foodways

It has been suggested that the very act of eating is queer. Writing about the nineteenth century United States, Kyla Wazana Tompkins (2012, 3) argues that eating “threatened the foundational

fantasy of a contained autonomous self... because, as a function of its basic mechanics, eating transcended the gap between self and other, blurring the lines between subject and object as food turned into tissue, muscle, and nerve and then provided the energy that drives them all.” On the other hand, she also defines eating as “a social practice that confirms and delineates difference, demarcating social barriers and affirming group formations” (Ibid., 4).

Shifting our focus from the individual act of eating to the broader socialities surrounding it, we encounter a similar blurring of boundaries between subject and object. Codroy Valley’s traditional foodways, including the storytelling and skill sharing that accompany them, are governed entirely by the ethic of sharing. I am always astounded at the ease with which stories emerge when Codroy Valley folks plant, harvest, cook, and eat together. Throughout the fall of 2023, I delivered vegetable boxes to friends and neighbours from two plots that were volunteered for Codroy Valley Commons. It was a joy to stop in for a chat, or to leave a box on the stoop only to be phoned asking to return for a cup of tea. Sometimes, commoners would stop in to help with a harvest before taking some vegetables home (Figure 4.1). We organized group harvests as well, such as our garlic blitz in September 2023 (Figure 4.2).

“It’s a shame you’re not making any money on all this food,” Carina Hynes said one day as we picked juicy Golden Nuggets from our geodesic dome for her to try Lana’s tomato jam recipe. “Not directly,” I replied, “but look how much I’m saving by not going to the grocery store!” She and her two friends agreed. “And when you share with people, they’re more likely to share with you,” one added. “That’s right,” mused the other, “what goes around comes around.” Carina swiftly launched into a story about how her father would regularly share his crop with an elderly neighbor who reciprocated by knitting socks for his eight children. “That’s the way it always was. You helped one another.”



Figure 4.1: Three commoners collecting garlic from a commoned plot, with Carina in the middle. Photo by author.

Over a steaming cup of tea following a blustery afternoon of planting potatoes, Eric recalled when men would strap ropes around a house to move it a kilometre away. He then related how, when his father was hospitalized with tuberculosis for a year, neighbours performed taxing labour for his family. Everyone was surprised when the Catholic priest decided one day uncharacteristically to hand-deliver a potent curative, a remarkable gesture in his community:

All of our neighbours hauled our wood home. All of our neighbours cut it up. All of our neighbours packed it away. People came in, made our hay. Because we had twelve sheep, a horse. When he came home, there was no money lost, and as soon as he came home, a Catholic—that really amazed the whole community—a Catholic priest came up and brought him a 24 pack of cod liver oil, must have been the worst thing you’ve ever tasted in your life, and told him that this is a really good toward the cure of TB. And everyone, “There’s a Catholic priest come up?” They were all amazed because it was a Protestant community and he came and he delivered that. But if I were to go to a sanatorium now, no one is going to lock this house up, and when I came back, I’d be the first person back in. They might be able to come and take care of your house and help your family if I were married. They’re not doing that anymore. But they did do that.



Figure 4.2: Commoners harvest garlic and plant cover crop on a CVC plot. Photo by author.

According to Eric, he would be denied neighbourly assistance in part for his failure to adhere to requisite marriage rites. His comment also speaks to heteronormativity branded into the psyche of society-at-large, which is compelled to follow strictures of straight time while denying perceived detractors the normative perks of living a decent life. Regarding cod liver oil, although I lack any authority to speak convincingly to its health benefits, Eric's anecdote was not the first I heard about the substance's curative potential. A putrid but rich resource abundantly available to most fishers, what used to be a cure-all across the province is considered superfluous by most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians today. Although it is impossible to attribute it to cod liver oil, Eric's father did eventually recover from a dangerous illness, possibly helping mend religious tensions along the way. Dialogues like these harken memories and affective pleasures around near moribund foodways, a resurgence of which is not impossible to envision.

Carina grew up in the Valley in the 1960s and worked as a science teacher in the local K-12 for 40 years. In our two-hour conversation over a pot of tea and plate of muffins, she remained vigilant about not romanticizing the past, frequently saying things like, “I don’t know if it’s better or worse now, just different.” However, she serenely recalled some of her childhood commons, from haymaking to “hauling sprees” to communal roof repairs.

If you didn’t have enough family members to do your own [haymaking], people came and helped. And if you needed wood for the winter, the men would get together and have a hauling spree... One person would have one thing that another person didn’t have and you’d get a crew into the woods to get the wood out, and then you’d do the same thing for the next person... If you needed a roof done, you didn’t hire a company to come do your roof, you called around your friends and they stripped the roof and put the roof back on. Like, it was a lot of community stuff like that used to go on. People used to help. Now it’s like okay you hire a roofer, hire a contractor.

What would a “restructuring of feeling” look like amid drastically different contingencies, socialities, and economic relations? How to reassemble an ethic of care when so many of its building blocks are absent from contemporary lifeworlds? Thinking with the diverse economies framework, we can start with what we do have. Codroy folk still engage in quotidian, albeit underrepresented, economies of care. A visit to a neighbour’s house is invariably incomplete without an exchange of food, recipes, gifts, stories, or favours. Eric, who recently returned to the region after living away for most of his adult life, habitually mows his elderly neighbour’s lawn in exchange for knitted mitts and home-baked goods. My neighbours organize annual cleanups. They meet up, divvy out trash bags, gloves, and water, and are allotted segments of road and stream to remediate. During haymaking week, an annual custom that has likely been recurrent since white settlers first entered the Valley, men and women toil from dusk to dawn to arrange hundreds of haybales for local ranchers’ cows and horses. They socialize, transmit knowledge, and receive food, drink, and a quarter cow each as compensation. My neighbour, Wayne MacIsaac, shared some of his memories of haymaking during his adolescence in the 1980s:

Hard work. In the summer, you had to wear long-sleeved shirts because that hay, believe it or not, would puncture your skin. So it could be hot. I remember when I was doing it with my grandfather they used to have these plastic milk jugs and they'd fill them up with water and put them in the freezer, so they were frozen and they'd leave them all around the edge of the field, so as you were going around it was slowly melting so there'd be ice cold water. You'd be following along behind the wagon or the truck and you could have a glass of water. Then when you're finished there'd be a big meal and probably drink your face off and listen to some tunes.

Perhaps a tactic of forestalling the enclosure and erasure of collectivity is to revalue those diverse economic activities that mainstream capitalocentric narratives tend to ignore, particularly those that actually and potentially queer dichotomies underpinning hegemonic strategies to insinuate heteronormative identities into our everyday lives. Indeed, for feminist economist Karin Schönflug (2021, 19), "From a posthumanist perspective the key to recreating another version of economics lies with a transgression of all established dualistic thinking (such as mind/body, human/animal) and overcoming of those dichotomies which provide the basis (and legitimization) for modern capitalism, nation states, and many other unequal/exploitative relationships." Heeding Botkin's advice and taking the time to listen, with a critical ear and open heart, to the stories told by Codroy Valley elders, one is struck by the prominence of narratives related to communalism, hard work, and reciprocity. The dissociation of self and other, mind and body, nature and culture, and other commonsense dichotomies promulgated in media recedes into the background. Centre stage gets occupied by particularities of a place that is overflowing with queer, posthuman, and sensual relationships with the surrounding environment.

Queer theory's relationship to desire may further our project toward a restructuring of feeling related to diverse economies and the collective identifications that adhere to them. For Antke Engel (2010, 8), queer theory reads desire, not "as something inherent to a *subject* and directed towards an *object*, [but rather] it is conceptualized as a process or movement, productive in the sense that it constitutes and designs social relationships and relations. Far from being an

individualized psychic capacity, fantasy is made up of historically shaped, publicly available, and biographically gained imagery.” In Codroy Valley, one senses that psychic contingencies are indeed guided by a common sense of place, rooted in collective memory and familiar institutional infrastructure. In many ways, there is a deep and steady flow of the past into the present. For instance, until relatively recently, temporalities and socialities revolved chiefly around solar and lunar cycles, which determined when to sow seeds, build fenceposts, churn butter, shear sheep, and slaughter pigs (Gale 1971). Nowadays, temporalities, socialities, and spatialities in Codroy Valley are decidedly modern, but still dictated by such local and regional particularities as prolonged power outages, blizzards, Wreckhouse winds, precarious highway conditions, and ferry interruptions, which sometimes leave grocery shelves all but bare.

For Raymond Williams, structures of feeling should not be reductively conceived. Most pertinent are “elements of social and material (physical or natural) experience which may lie beyond, or be uncovered or imperfectly covered by, the elsewhere recognizable systematic elements” (Williams 1977, 18). He further posits that we can acknowledge elements borne of specific feelings and rhythms, while learning to recognize “their specific kinds of sociality, thus preventing that extraction from social experience which is conceivable only when social experience itself has been categorically (and at root historically) reduced” (Ibid.). With a similar precautionary note about the dangers of overdetermination, Gibson-Graham (1999, 83) tell us that queering economy means “calling into question the very idea of norms and normality, calling attention to the violence entailed by normalising impulses, including the impulse to theorise a social site as subsumed to a hegemonic order.”

It is not enough, therefore, to attribute commons, and related customs, to poverty, nor can we reduce poverty simply to a predictable outcome of enclosure. Rather, while recognizing

contingencies around, for instance, subsistence farming as lifestyle and wood as local building material, we may read Carina's anecdote about a tragic pigsty fire and ensuing acknowledgement of empathy toward nonhumans with an idiosyncratic lens, while remaining privy to equivalent chains vis-à-vis distinct lifeworlds whose human-animal binaries are similarly blurred:

The pigs were born and you had them in the house around the stove to keep them warm. No wonder I liked animals, they always needed to be tended to. The moms had just had a brood of piglets. We had a stove in the pig house to keep them warm... [whispers] but the house burned down. Only one survived... We found a mother pig laying over her babies to try and protect them. Sometimes you think that animals are just animals... but mother's instinct is pretty strong, even in the animal kingdom.

While not objectifying "animal rights" as an ideology or identity, Carina's reflections hint at a vernacular trans-speciesism that finds kinship among mammalian mothers. If coaxed to apply her memory-driven sensibilities to a more concrete cause, she likely has the tools to do so. Similarly, she elaborated on an environmental ethic cultivated over the years, from a strong, albeit ungrounded feeling to a definite stance backed by science, and a desire for change.

I've always respected the environment, thought it was important. I remember long before I retired we talked about the environment and climate, we talked about how you don't have to have plastic bottles, you can have containers. It was a thing. So it's time for people to realize, no, you don't need to have a plastic bottle for everything. And when getting rid of things, recycle it. To me, wasting anything is just stupid.

In a study looking at food sharing economies among subsistence farmers in India and peasant-*cum*-proletariat Italian Americans in Brooklyn, I differentiate "sharing in" from "sharing out" (Caputo-Nimbark 2021). Whereas sharing out is akin to gifting and "commodity exchange and involves giving outside the boundaries separating self and other," sharing in is done "for the sake of shared enjoyment of something perceived as commonly owned, is often ritualized, and typically involves sharing with neighbours, relatives," and kin (Ibid., 45). Sharing in betokens an "aggregate extended self" (Belk 2010, 725) merging with equal members of a community, thereby "extending the circle of people who can enjoy the benefits of a shared resource" (Widlök

2004, 61). While the boundaries between subject and object remain stark in situations of sharing out, such as soup kitchens, food banks, and emergency relief, they are conspicuously blurred in the act of sharing in. Just as the Brooklyn doctor in my 2021 study regularly exchanged his services for cookies or fruit from his patients, Margaret Bennett describes a typical transaction between the dry-goods store merchant and his clients in the 1950s:

In the late autumn of each year the winter supplies were bought from the store, and these had to last at least until May, when spring came. Although the store remained open all winter, there were several reasons for 'buying in for the winter'. First of all, the autumn brought extra earning potential to the people of the Valley with the harvesting of blueberries, partridgeberries, marshberries and bakeapples, which could be sold to the merchant or, more likely, used for credit on purchases made. For this same purpose, the merchant also accepted vegetable crops, and Mrs. MacArthur mentioned that many families, including her own, exchanged butter and eggs along with knitted mitts and socks. (Bennett 1989, 85)

Preindustrial agricultural traditions in Codroy Valley involved extensive sharing in of food. Many of the residents I have interacted with over the past eight years are able to recall with ease everyday life before the introduction of electricity into the Valley in 1962, and therefore before refrigeration and electrical implements for farming, cooking, and food storage. One friend, Joe Bruce, who grew up in the Valley in the 1940s and 1950s, is always delighted to share memories about the foodways with which he grew up. He seems pleased whenever Lana or I appeal to him for stories, ruing the erosion of old values and the lack of interest among younger generations in the Valley in storytelling, hard work, and reciprocity. "In the summer," he told me one day as I pulled out my recorder, "you'd round up your stock and you'd kill a lamb. You couldn't keep the meat for any length of time, so we'd kill a lamb and we'd end up taking maybe a side of it, and the other side would go to your neighbour here or there or wherever, and a few months later they'd kill an animal and they'd return, you know?"

Employing phrases like “you know?” and “you see,” like Allan MacArthur, Joe regularly uses addressivity to invite his interlocutor into his memories while also eliciting a response. Gesturing out his window to the shoreline, he recounted how he and other children would engage in diverse food economies that involved reciprocity and opportunism: “You’d see someone come up along the coast go out and you’d watch them, and watch them when they’d come in. When they’d come in, as kids, we scooted over along the bank and went down the shore, and okay give them our little bit of strength to haul the boat up. But see, you were doing something, so you came home with a couple of codfish in your hand.” His childhood activities that resulted in extra food on the table entailed attentiveness to others’ movements. It was a chronotope of acute awareness of one’s surroundings, patience regarding seafaring temporalities, and anticipation of a tasty, fresh, and well-earned meal.

Joe’s stories are sensitive and expressive, with generous space for his interlocutor to collect her own thoughts and engage in dialogue. He uses ample visual cues to conjure vivid images of foodways, whether he is invoking memories of kelp piles, iceboxes, his excitement at relishing a block of Good Luck butter,⁶⁴ or his coming to terms with nonhuman animacy and suffering. During our conversation about his family’s occasional consumption of seabirds, grilse,⁶⁵ and seal, Joe used his hands to describe a salmon’s beating heart: “I can see in my mind’s eye taking the salmon and ripping him open and cutting his throat and taking his intestines and whatnot and putting it out on the rock and seeing the heart. It was still beating.” He then told me about his first and last time eating dolphin.

⁶⁴ Joe’s family, as most families in Codroy Valley for the better half of the last century, produced their own milk, cream, and butter. There was usually a short period in the spring before the cows would calf, however, that the reserves of salt butter would run out, and his family would purchase a block of unsalted Good Luck butter while waiting for their cows to calf: “Oh my God, that was a treat!”

⁶⁵ Grilse are young, small salmon that have spent only one winter at sea.

I ate dolphin over here at Cyril Ford's. He caught one in their salmon net. They were having it for breakfast, I was working in the barn at the time, and I think I was enjoying it. And the missus says, "Do you know what you're eating?" I said yes, I said beef. "No," she said, "it's not beef," she said, "it's dolphin." Oh, oh, oh, oh. Dropped what I had in my mouth, it got bigger and bigger, I couldn't chew it, I couldn't swallow it. But they're lovely, lovely, lovely cuts of meat and you'd almost call it meat rather than fish. But I couldn't get anymore down.

Moreover, Joe's rhetoric exemplifies Cashman's concept of critical nostalgia, wherein actors use visual and verbal techniques critically to articulate structures of feeling rooted in sense of place and reciprocity. It bears traces likewise of what Muñoz (2009, 35) refers to as "utopian longing," or "the workings of queer utopian memory and the structure of feeling that is adjacent to such a reconstructed notion of utopia and memory." When he tells me, "My mother used to always figure it doesn't cost any more to cook the whole pot than a half pot," Joe is commenting as much on happy memories of sharing in as on the weathering of communal values he has been witnessing over his lifetime. Similarly, Bennett describes a temporal reasoning among Codroy Valley housewives in the past, which considered the preservation of food not just for one's own family but for visitors later in the year. She recounts, "In the autumn, when all the housewives were busy bottling fruit, vegetables and meat for the winter, they took into account when calculating the amounts to bottle that they would need a substantial amount to set aside for the Twelve Days alone, when they could expect to feed many extra visitors during the days of the festivities" (Bennett 1989, 103).

Carina's musings reimagine a utopian time and place not yet dominated by the separation of means of production from labour, or by enclosures via consumer capitalism and convenience culture, replacing physical, time-consuming labour and reusable materials. During our chat, she was transported to those arduous days just by the smell of hay:

I loved working on a farm and being on a farm. There was always something to do. I liked the outdoors work, gardening, haymaking, looking after the animals, that kind

of stuff. And we had, once our chores were done, free time. I was always outside playing, just games, didn't have any real game materials.... Skating in the winter down by the river, swimming sometimes daylight to dark in summer. Looking back, it was a really good balance of work and play and family. Even now, when I smell the grass being cut, it just brings me right back to my childhood. That beautiful smell of fresh-cut hay, right? Like you can't describe it but it just brings me right back.

Personal narratives like these often compel me to rue complicity in the status quo. But then I find myself overlooking Codroy Valley's Winter Carnival.⁶⁶ A carnivalesque ritual packed with community suppers, boil ups, ice fishing derbies, scavenger hunts, snow sculptures, and sardonic skits, it is an entire community's queering of straight time, where the *jouissance* of communitas over a week that feels like one party is the primary agent of cultural reproduction. Folks cross-dress or enact role reversals, lampooning infamous or outrageous local characters while employing ludic language and gestures. At the final potluck, somebody inevitably contributes a quirky or sexualized hot dog dish, and the meal is incomplete without a Jell-O mould.

Present throughout these events is laughter. Hufford (2010, 576), writing against enclosure of the commons, argues that "laughter functions as a spatial practice, a means of producing and occupying social space." I perceive Codroy Valley's Winter Carnival, with its bawdy humour, as an embodiment of camp. Ann Pellegrini (2007, 184) notes that camp is "both 'anticipatory,' in its ability to imagine different social worlds, *and* a form of historical memory, in its willful retention of despised or devalued love objects." By creatively recycling the past, Winter Carnival embodies camp to produce "a different relation to the present and future... [an] ethical horizon: what might be" (Ibid.). Fiske's argument about the counterhegemonic pleasure that inheres in popular laughter is also instructive here.

So popular culture is full of puns whose meanings multiply and escape the norms of the social order and overflow their discipline; its excess offers opportunities for parody, subversion, or inversion; it is obvious and superficial, refusing to produce the

⁶⁶ See Gabbert (2011) for a folkloristic study of Winter Carnival in a rural Idaho village.

deep, complexly crafted texts that narrow down their audiences and social meanings; it is tasteless and vulgar, for taste is social control and class interest masquerading as a naturally finer sensibility; it is shot through with contradictions, for contradictions require the productivity of the reader to make his or her sense out of them. It often centers on the body and its sensations rather than on the mind and its sense, for the bodily pleasures offer carnivalesque, evasive, liberating practices—they constitute the popular terrain where hegemony is weakest, a terrain that may possibly lie beyond its reach. (Fiske 1989, 4–5)

The humorous stories produced in and around Codroy Valley's commons, while subverting universal strictures of social order, contribute immensely to sense of place and belonging. By invoking specific personalities, historic events, places, and customs, these anecdotes act as a collectivized counterforce to monologic attempts to erase or deny the cultural significance of a place. While chatting with my neighbour, Wayne, in his kitchen one afternoon, a smile suddenly brightened his face as he gestured toward the Little Codroy River.

I was thinking about a story about cutting ice there. I wish I could remember the name of the guy. I can't remember who told me, my dad or my aunt. They were walking up the river and back then they used to have a kind of saw called a pit saw, which was like a saw on both handles. You'd have a big pit and a big log and there'd be one guy down below pushing and pulling and one guy back on top pushing and pulling, and they'd cut the log down in the middle. It was called a pit saw because there was one man down on the bottom and one guy on the top. Anyway, they're walking up and there was a guy cutting ice down on the river, and he pretended he didn't see them coming and he was like, "Okay, Joe, move over now!" like there was somebody down under the ice on the other end of it.

In one fell swoop, this witty anecdote revives memories of an outdated but highly impactful and cooperative tool in Codroy Valley's history; harkens to a time when work was strenuous but rewarding; merges the past into the present by invoking a nearby geographical feature; multiplies consciousness through quotation;⁶⁷ and brings hearty laughter into the dialogue. Absent personal experiences growing up in the Valley, simply having the story narrated to me enhanced my own

⁶⁷ The quotation in this anecdote is exemplary as the speaker employs his own form of consciousness multiplication by dialoging with an invisible work partner.

sense of place because it brought me closer to local sensibilities and collective consciousness. Moreover, his combined speech and gesture participate in what phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty identifies as a “mute dialogue of perception” (1969, 155). As Hufford (2019, 9) explains, this dual action “illuminates the region in which we find a third dialogue, a dialogue that anticipates and connects the conversations of humans and the more-than-human dialogues surrounding us.” The Little Codroy River, the valuable ice it produced, and the multiple interactions between humans and more-than-humans that are invoked in both the story and the act of telling effectively unify subject and object in a process that “deposits and renews a lining of visibility” (Ibid.) between perceiver and perceived. The result is the subtle grounding of all dialogic participants in this shared place.

Learning about food customs in Codroy Valley during Halloween likewise expands my understanding of the Valley’s prank culture, which despite its nominative cynicism retains an ethos of reciprocity. Through conversations and archival research, I came to know that, following an intense harvest season, Halloween offered a time to let loose, in carnivalesque fashion. While perusing MUNFLA’s archives, I learned in Barbara Bruce’s folklore assignment from 1971 about the Halloween “sing-song and scoff” that occurred in the evening during her parents’ generation.

The fascinating aspect of this particular “scoff” was that each and every guest knew it would be at least partially at his own expense. While offers to donate to the scoff were refused, Mr. O’Quinn knew full well that if chicken were on the menu then one would be swiped from his coop—likewise the cabbage found their way from Mr. Bruce’s patch—the turnips from Mr. Downey’s cellar etc. etc. But it was always taken in good part and each Mr. in turn was sure to praise more than any other dish that which he suspected came from his own garden or green house! (Bruce 1971, 15–16)

Donald Gale (1971, 5), another MUNFLA contributor, corroborates Bruce’s description: “The most popular thing was to go in a gang to somebody’s farm and steal chickens and vegetables.

My mother told me it was not a sin to steal those things on Hallowe'en. When they had the food the people would go to one of the member's houses and have a scoff, with singing and dancing while the food was being cooked and after it was eaten." Singing and dancing, laughter and food, it seems, were around every corner in Codroy Valley.

4.3 Queering nostalgia

Dialogues in and around the commons catalyze critical nostalgia and a muffled desire for change. Codroy Valleyers I spoke with were careful not to abandon themselves wholeheartedly to any romantic image of the past. They remained firm that life was hard, but also rewarding in many ways; that it was not necessarily better than today, but many positive elements, such as hard work and sense of purpose, are dwindling in today's world. Through these dialogues, we enable ourselves to cruise utopia in Codroy Valley's foodways so as to encounter "an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future... Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing... an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (Muñoz 2009, 1). Take for example Carina's vision for a better world where neighbours produce food and socialize:

Community coming together and making friendships. Having somebody to talk to. Like instead of sitting with your phone texting, with your garden now you discuss what you're doing, even what your day plan was, anything. Like if you're in the garden with a crowd of people and you got somebody next to you planting something, doing work with you, you're talking about something. Because you can't bring out your texting device... And teach it to your children. Say, "This is how you plant a potato. Stick that in here, now let's come back." I'd say a lot of people now don't realize where things come from, it's just, oh you get that at the supermarket, right? Ridiculous. And there's some things we can't do nothing about. Like we're never gonna make flour, chances are. But there's no reason why we can't plant vegetables. Meat and vegetables, right? Families could get together and, like some people do it now, they could buy, say, two or three pigs, they could raise them, share the cost of raising them, and then you got your pork for the winter.

We might conceive of “queering” as querying or relinquishing notions of universality and rigid identities. In this process, where common sense is questioned and narratives are revised, a form of “resubjection” necessarily occurs, which Gibson-Graham define as “the mobilization and transformation of desires, the cultivation of capacities, and the making of new identifications” (2006, xxxvi). Jean-Luc Nancy’s notion of “being-in-common” (Nancy 1991) captures the lived reality of much of Codroy Valley’s historical structures of feeling, when diverse food economies existed alongside one another, sometimes overlapping and conflicting but always co-becoming. Indeed, for Engel (2010, 3), such practices “create space for difference, for a potentially conflictual heterogeneity defined by complex interdependencies” and, more to the point, “the project of diverse economies is always already and inherently intertwined with working, reworking, and transforming multiple relations of power and domination, including racist, sexist, and heteronormative regimes.”

This brings us back to the heart of the matter: rural queerness. Through dialogue in and around the commons, we create third spaces wherein we chew the cud regarding economic, cultural, and political narratives and remould them based on reconceived identifications and desires. Dialogues about traditional or unconventional resource use have the potential to queer the capitalocentric myth of emptiness and discourse around the so-called common good. For Engel (2010, 3), “to counter the phantasmic whole of capitalism does not necessarily mean to present a singular alternative, but to engage in ongoing struggles over recognition and resources, over truth defined by contingency.” Truth defined by contingency is malleable and shifting. It defies universalism and is therefore always unstable. It is queer.

Preindustrial Codroy Valley was expansive. Households were large and extended well beyond the nuclear family. Aunts, uncles, cousins, neighbours, and visitors could all be included

in spheres of kinship. Food could not be wasted, so it was commoned within those circles⁶⁸.

Bennett (1989, 93) describes how turnip greens were distributed: “Within a short period of time the turnip fields yielded far more greens than could be eaten by one family; consequently, it was not uncommon for people who had no turnip crop to be invited to help themselves to the greens. This also helped the farmer, for the person picking the turnip greens for his own use also thinned out a portion of the farmer’s turnip field.”

Subsistence work was strenuous and involved concerted efforts by large numbers of people. Millings and spinning bees are all but imprinted on Codroy Valley’s collective memory. For most of its settlement history, Codroy Valleyers produced their own wool for clothing, blankets, and everyday items. Numerous oral and written testimonials recount how spinning bees were as much about spinning wool as eating and socializing (Figure 4.3). Bennett tells us:

At midday the lady of the house provided food and drink for all her friends who helped. At the end of the day’s work, around six o’clock, the men would all return to her house. The wool and the wheels would all be put away, and all the women, with their husbands, would sit in the kitchen where the housewife (as a token of her gratitude) would serve them all a hot, cooked meal of roasted meat and home-grown vegetables followed by an assortment of pies, bottled berries and tea. The company usually returned home after the meal, although occasionally they would stay on for a *ceilidh*.⁶⁹ (Bennett 1989, 152)

Millings were all-day affairs that involved men and women working together. The work was rhythmic and accompanied by song sung in a combination of Scottish Gaelic, English, and French (Ibid., 177). Bennett describes events following the milling of wool:

When the actual work of the evening was over, the roll of cloth and the boards were cleared away. The women took off their aprons and people who wished to do so quickly washed and tidied themselves in preparation for the *ceilidh* that followed. The hostess set the table with a prepared feast of their own roast pork or chicken, homegrown potatoes, carrots and turnips, along with pickles, a variety of preserved

⁶⁸ Spheres of kinship might also involve nonhuman animals. For instance, Joe spent several minutes describing how they would leave fish guts on a rock for the gulls and crows to consume.

⁶⁹ A *ceilidh* is a traditional Scottish social visit, usually accompanied by music, dancing, food, and drink. The word was commonly used in Codroy Valley for much of its settler history, owing to its rich Scottish heritage.

local berries, homebaked breads, *bonnoch* and cakes. The host, in the meantime, offered a glass to everyone—whisky, rum, homemade beer, wine, or moonshine... The rest of the evening (which continued well into the night) was spent eating, drinking, singing, playing music, and dancing. (Bennett 1989, 177–178)



Figure 4.3: A spinning bee in Codroy Valley, 1935. Image from The ICH Blog.

Similarly, Donald Gale (1971) speaks to “a spirit of co-operation among the people that is still in evidence,” such as communal butchering, threshing, chopping sprees, and feasting:

When someone butchers an animal there are always a half dozen men around to help. They help each other to make hay, and the publicly owned threshing machine still goes from farm to farm to thresh the oats, with all the farmers around to help. I don’t think there are chopping sprees any more, but I can remember them quite well. In late November or early December, depending on how early there was enough frost to freeze the bogs, all the men around would go to each farm in turn to cut wood. The wood would be cut down, hauled out, and sawed up. A whole winter’s wood would be cut in one day. There would be two or three chopping sprees a week until every one had his supply of firewood. While the men worked at the wood, the women went to the house to help with the cooking. Two big meals were served, and after supper there’d be a card game and a keg of beer. (Gale 1971, 44)

Even Gerard Cormier, proprietor of the Valley’s most lucrative business, in our conversation hinted at nostalgia for a time when “there was nobody rich but... nobody went hungry.” For Gerard, who was born in the early 1950s and lived in the Valley all his life, “back in, especially the ‘60s and ‘70s, they were two great decades... and even the ‘80s was pretty good, too. But

after the '80s then technology started to change.” His implicit nostalgia for those “great decades” before the encroachment of modern technology into everyday life contradicts a propensity for accumulation of wealth, land, and status. As our conversation continued, he painted an elaborate picture of his childhood commons, from communal harvests to handling of the “big machines”:

That was the way things had to be done back then. People went around, you know, and helped each other, right? That’s how they had to survive. I remember, back when I was only a kid, when most everybody were farmers, you know, mixed farm, so they would plant probably a couple of acres of vegetables. So in the fall of the year, I can remember when my father would leave and go and help his neighbour, you know, get the turnips out of the ground and the potatoes, and then the next day they’d go to the next guy. And that’s how they got all their crop out. I remember years ago, too, they would grow grain, like they’d grow barley and oats and that, and each community had we used to call the big machines, like a threshing machine and you threshed the oats. So then, a bunch of guys would get together and, say, they went to our farm today and then... it took them a couple days... We never had the technology that we have today. So, you know, it was moving it with a horse and raked up and with the forks then it was pitched up onto the wagons, and then it was hauled to the barn and then it was fed by hand into the big threshing machines, and then you got your oats and your straw. So the oats were for the grain for the sheep and the animals, and the straw they used to keep for bedding. So, you know, that was very popular back in the '40s and '50s. Coming on the end of the '60s, that pretty much changed.

How, then, to harness Codroy Valley’s diverse food economies that eschew heteronormative inclinations toward boundless consumerism and rational individualism, so as to remake it into a place that nurtures all bodies, including 2SLGBTQIA+ ones? In the final section, I turn to my own experiences as a perceived queer, racialized, nonrural, educated vegan with no familial ties to Codroy Valley before deciding to make a life there. Through this autoethnographic vignette, I hope to bridge the queerness of Codroy Valley’s foodways with other aspects of rural queerness, as a way to prefigure a queer valley for all.

4.4 Vegan and queer in the Valley: an autoethnography

When Lana and I bought our Codroy Valley home in 2016, we inquired at one of the two grocery stores whether they would consider ordering tofu. The cashier took a moment to register the odd

word, then eyed us knowingly. “You’re vegetarians, aren’t you? I knew a vegetarian once.” She then launched into this vegetarian’s life story, her relocation to Australia, her job, her family, and so on. Lana and I were happy to learn about this distant figure, but also reminded of just how unfamiliar, how very queer, our veganism really was. Rather than instruct the cashier on the differences between vegetarian and vegan, we bought an expired can of coconut milk and left.

Veganism can take many forms and motivations, though the simplest catchall definition is omission of animal products from one’s diet. Initially, Lana and I were strict vegans. We had watched *Cowspiracy* in 2015 and taken the ethical vegan oath directly after. Like many vegans in their honeymoon phase of veganism, we were eager to engage in conversations about the many breaches of environmental and animal ethics intrinsic to the industrial food complex. Whereas in St. John’s we knew dozens of vegans who regularly hosted vegan potlucks and shared our ethical disposition, the absolute dearth of vegans, or even vegetarians, in Codroy Valley was a radically new terrain for us. Though we avoided coming off as self-righteous in our vegan discourse, our singularity at times left us feeling isolated, defensive, and othered.

After a few years, we softened our stance. We moved from hardline vegans to “vegans who occasionally eat game.”⁷⁰ As mentioned, a visit to someone’s home inevitably involves the exchange of food, and sometimes we were offered bottled moose, fresh cod, or bear jerky. For a variety of reasons, game fit snugly into our diet, which consisted primarily of homegrown fruits, vegetables, herbs, legumes, beans, and seeds, foraged berries and mushrooms, and a yearly bulk supply of flours, lentils, dried fruits, nuts, oils, and soybeans for making milk and tempeh. We

⁷⁰ Another transgression we espouse is the use of animal fibres, primarily sheep’s wool, for clothing. We have a deep respect for the pastoral heritage of Codroy Valley and regard the lives of grazing sheep as non-violent when they are not subjected to harm. Moreover, Lana is a textile artist who uses local and regional wool for spinning, knitting, darning, and weaving. Her latest obsession is linen, arguably the most sustainable fibre on the planet as it requires no irrigation and every part of the flax plant (which we successfully grew in Codroy Valley) can be used.

welcomed the free and local sources of vitamin B-12, which felt ethical since the beasts had prospered on their own terms before being slaughtered for food. In our final two years in the Valley, we even ate locally sourced free-range eggs a few times, either purchased from friends or exchanged for food or favours. Though honey has never featured prominently in either of our diets, we were not averse to Codroy Valley honey if it manifested in our cupboard.

For sake of expressing our disinclination to eat industrial meat and dairy, when asked, we call ourselves vegan. Our occasional game- and egg-supplemented veganism may be conceived as a queer version of veganism. Many contemporaries uphold their veganism by purchasing vegan processed foods, supplements, and other products online or elsewhere, lifestyle choices I argue are heteronormative as they fit squarely into neoliberal identity politics and consumption patterns. My own vegan ethics are upheld by relationality, decoloniality, and empowerment through creativity and resourcefulness, a politic that eschews the simplistic ethical/nonethical binary that frames much vegan discourse. Indeed, for Alissa Overend (2019, 88), such a binary “is anything but queer and dangerously resurrects the many pitfalls of identity politics that overstate the differences between omnivore and vegan subjectivities in advanced capitalist food systems.” Rather, we might embrace a “relational food framing to better contextualize ethical eating practices within the broader conditions in which we live” (Ibid., 89). We can start by shifting our thinking “from the *what* of food to the *how*” of consumption (Tompkins 2012, 11), including the relations sustained while gathering ingredients, cooking and sharing meals, and recycling food waste back into the food cycle by composting.⁷¹

Lana and I are performing a world we would like to see: where humans and nonhumans live freely and respect one another, and consume each other only when necessary. Using

⁷¹ Or, as Joe and other Codroy Valley farmers do, leaving food scraps for birds and other animals.

chemical fertilizers and pesticides, discarding food in landfills, and subjecting animals to slavery are unsustainable practices that we steadfastly avoid. Using natural fertilizers, which Codroy Valley has in abundance, building compost piles, and consuming wild meat are practices we espouse, and share freely with anyone who expresses interest. For instance, we mindfully composted our own excrement⁷² for eight years, a practice known as humanure, which saves thousands of gallons of water every year, replenishes the food cycle, and reaps endless rewards because humanure is *rich*. Today, we know of at least three households in Codroy Valley who have come to embrace humanure, and we hope to see that number expand.

For Overend (2019, 88), queerness and veganism “occupy similar discursive positions: they challenge masculinist paradigms and resist dominant patriarchal, heterosexist, colonial, and medicalized power structures.” We might say the same for other food practices we queerly espoused: humanure, fermentation, permaculture, seed saving, recycling, sharing, “employment” of worker-helpers for room and board rather than a salary, and minimal capitalist consumption. Through workshops, potlucks, free schools, and a commoning project, Lana and I tried to involve community members in our personally cultivated foodways, just as we tried to involve ourselves in theirs. Engaging dialogues in and around food commons, we constantly sought a queer revival of Codroy Valley’s relationship to food. In recent years, we avoided labeling ourselves as vegans, preferring to demonstrate our food ethics relationally, by way of example. Indeed, the only other vegan we know in the Valley, also queer, is quiet about their veganism, but happy to have allies close by.

⁷² In colder climates like Newfoundland and Labrador, a safe method is to keep three separate humanure piles, which are used in consecutive years to avoid cross-contamination. After three years, humanure is free of pathogens and ready to be used as fertilizer in the garden. Humanure may be conceived as a queer act, as our excrement is deliberately cycled back into the soil system to produce crops to be ingested.

As with veganism, Codroy Valley queers tend not to wear their queer identity on their sleeve. When we first arrived in Codroy Valley, we were told we were the first couple, let alone the first same-sex couple, to move into the Valley with no prior ties to it. Although neither of us thinks of ourselves as lesbian, we implicitly accepted the imposition of the label, especially given the very rarity of two women living together. Over the past eight years, three cis-hetero women have confided in me their same-sex attractions and/or experiences. We have witnessed the immigration of at least nine other individuals, albeit with some familial ties to the Valley, who quietly identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. While machismo and homo/transphobia are still evident in the Valley, recent instances of young people coming out as transgender have forced otherwise politically conservative elders to question their normative politics. Although no pronounced queer movement exists, an influx of queers (back) into the Valley compels us to reconsider the metronormative narrative so familiar in dominant discourses. Might Codroy Valley hold the key for queer utopia?

Conversations with other 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals in Codroy Valley indicate a relationship to queer visibility and fitting in that has been documented in other studies on queer rurality in North America (Baker 2016; Gray 2009; Herring 2010; Hoffelmeyer 2021; Pearce 2018; Schweighofer 2016; Thomsen 2016; Whitten 2023). Most identify as members of some other community first and foremost, whether Codroy Valley as a whole, a village within the Valley, a workplace, or a social clique. Like mine and Lana's, their queerness is typically a less prominent emic identifier. Their desire to fit in, maintain familiarity with kin and neighbours, and thrive in one of the most stunning and fertile places in the region is reason enough to stay put. Kelly Baker (2016) has made similar observations among 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals living in rural Nova Scotia, who tend to exhibit what Scott Herring (2010) refers to as "queer anti-

urbanism,” a relational identity whereby one positions oneself in staunch opposition to metronormativity, preferring the rural, “never met a stranger” structure of feeling to the metronormative chronotopes of anonymity, promiscuity, and consumerism.

Certainly, some Codroy Valley queers continue to emigrate because of feelings of ostracization or desire for a faster pace of life, and countless more live closeted lives.⁷³ Some partnerships, including mine and Lana’s, are trivialized by those community members who see cis-male counterparts as requisite for an authentic relationship. If a male in the Valley were to “come out” as vegan or vegetarian, he would likely be emasculated by those who adhere to the common trope that “real men eat meat.” Parallel to our gentle but emphatic, and contingently successful,⁷⁴ efforts to queer Codroy Valley by normalizing queer food practices like humanure, permaculture, and veganism through collaborative projects and nonjudgmental dialogue, Lana and I learned that our perceived identity as lesbians has been transformative as well. For example, Lana recounted to me a story from 2022.

There was one time when we had left [for several months] and then we came back and this person that we had known before, we went to their place for a party and he came up to us and basically he just said that at first he wasn’t sure about us because of us being together [in a lesbian relationship], but then he came around to it or maybe he reflected about it, and he decided that we were pretty cool. He was like, “Oh, you guys came back. You guys are great. You’re always doing stuff.”

Certainly, I am not condoning judgment of anyone based on their sexual orientation, as the person in this anecdote admitted to doing. The interesting element here is that, lesbian or not, he came to respect and even admire us because of our commitment to being part of the community.

It is plausible that, because of our perceived sexuality and lack of family history in the Valley,

⁷³ Eric informed me that there are several closeted men in the area who pass for heterosexual through marriage and lifestyle, or else remain alone most of the time.

⁷⁴ Contingently successful in the sense that the pace of transformation is slow in Codroy Valley. Transformations move to the rhythm of trust- and relationship-building, which for complex reasons can take decades. We are pleased to see more households embracing humanure, composting, and permaculture techniques.

we had to put in greater effort or wait longer to be accepted than if we had been in a heterosexual relationship. In any case, our autoethnography demonstrates the potential of deep transformation in places like Codroy Valley, where difference may be perceived initially with caution and skepticism. Or maybe, as I have taken pains to proffer, our queerness is not actually all that different to folks in Codroy Valley. Maybe Codroy Valley's commons are already a queer assemblage of relations that we queerly had to nuzzle our way into. As it turned out, we were a fairly good fit. The grocery store now even carries almond milk.

As Joe and I sat in his living room one evening drinking tea, he got to talking about memories of Allan MacArthur. Joe's memories are sharp, and his words effortlessly transport me to Codroy Valley of the 1940s, '50s, and '60s. At one point he said something that struck me as particularly poignant for its transformative potential:

We can remember that in the evening, just before sunset, up at Allan's place, he'd be up on the hills behind the house with his bagpipes. To little gaffers at the time, well, that meant something. And then, when he'd come down off of the hill, well, he got a skirt on. You know? But see, that was a part of his heritage, the Scottish bagpipes. And just about every evening, whenever he could, he got out and that was- that was as essential to him as our rosary was to us. It was all part of the building together. You'd do what you can to help your neighbour.

For Joe and the other "little gaffers" in that time and place, a man in a skirt was a queer assemblage indeed. Yet, they were privy to the relationality of that apparent queerness, which, in Scottish custom was anything but queer. In fact, Joe and his friends recognized it as a critical part of Allan's identity, which configured the latter's community-building actions until his death in 1971. Not only did Allan's evening ritual of playing bagpipes on a hill while wearing a kilt imprint itself on the collective memory of anyone who bore witness, but moreover, through its complex entanglement with temporalities, spatialities, and socialities, it provisioned a third space

wherein commonsense expectations of gender performativity could be questioned and potentially upended. “To queer things,” writes Shannon Winnubst (2006, 139), “is to transform them, in ways that we cannot anticipate: to queer is to foil anticipation and its temporality of a future-anterior,” where the “future anterior” is the space where things “will have been,” the same space requisite for heteronormativity’s predictable view of the future.

By enacting ethnography and community building through foodways, we can safeguard and nurture commons while eschewing hegemonic forces that threaten to enclose them. Then may we begin to link “present tribulations to a longer narrative of past deprivation” (Sevilla-Buitrago 2015, 1002) between commoners whose livelihoods, relations, or identities pertaining to race, sexuality, class, appearance, provenance, occupation, gender, or ability are senselessly dishonoured. Such a strategy may obviate Hardin’s (1968) “tragedy of the commons” thesis on the inevitable perishing of commons to greed and self-interest. Queer temporalities, spatialities, and socialities in and around foodways offer a prime laboratory for transforming intolerance into a commonsense of belonging and solidarity. By reclaiming structures of feeling produced through historic commons centred on hard work, care, and cooperation, while rendering inequities like racism, speciesism, and untenable narratives of economic progress irrelevant amid a queerly revamped sense of place, we can re-story Codroy Valley with memories, songs, humour, foodways, excrement, and skirts that make this place uniquely queer. In the next chapter, I illustrate a creative platform for such a re-storying of commons: the ecomuseum.

CHAPTER 5: ECOMUSEUMS: AN OVERVIEW

Simple characterization of nearly eight years living in Codroy Valley is a wayward endeavour. What merits emphasis? The insurmountable frustrations, or the sporadic pleasures? The daily backbreaking toil, or the vast stretches of quietude hitherto unsought by my gregarious inclinations? My admiration for the camaraderie of a tight-knit community, or my indignation at choral diatribes that resort to racist, sexist, and homophobic language? My appreciation of a seemingly primordial history and heritage, or my aspiration to be woven into the unfinished story? As a perceived Other and newcomer to what I read as a primarily white, heteronormative pocket of Newfoundland, I often felt compelled to vent frustrations and exchange views with fellow community members but repelled by a dearth of space to do so.

More broadly, conversations with friends, neighbours, and acquaintances about aspects of local development⁷⁵ recognized as desirable and necessary in the foreseeable future have led me to identify three broad areas of improvement in Codroy Valley: enhanced visibility for local businesses and activities, including more third places for socializing; an organizing platform for preserving and performing tangible and intangible heritage; and more widespread dialogue and critical awareness about threats to social, economic, and ecological sustainability. Preliminary investigations thus revealed a regrettable absence of deliberate and concerted spaces for safeguarding a dynamic culture at risk. Marrying the postcolonial concept of third space with creative ethnography and public folklore produces a plausible scenario to satisfy the heritage desires of the Valley, my personal and ideological desire to be included in heritage discourses,

⁷⁵ The word development is wrought with conflict and tension, steeped in colonialist logics that imagines all cultures as evolving in a unilineal trajectory with Western, capitalist civilization at its pinnacle and that promotes neoliberal economic policies as agents of progress. However, the word predates this common understanding, as in the Latin American context (*desarrollo*), and should be reclaimed.

and the folkloristic prerogative to foment dialogues that amplify marginalized voices and counter exclusionary cultural reproductions in order to forge decolonial futures.

In this chapter, I suggest that the ecomuseum—a decentralized and multivocal “museum without walls”—is a space for parsing through many of these issues. I first provide an overview of museological trajectories since the 19th century. My historiography brings us to the “new museology,” including an explication of the ecomuseological concept. Referencing case studies spanning the globe, I then defend my choice of ecomuseum as cultural mediator and facilitator of third space production for its demonstrable adaptability to diverse environments and community needs, and its basic principles of reflexive articulation and representation of a plural and emergent heritage, processes I argue can be achieved through sustained ethnography.

5.1 From cabinets of curiosities to the *nouvelle muséologie*

Renaissance cabinets of curiosities were typically private collections, amassed by traveling merchants and explorers, filled with assorted objects extracted from places perceived as foreign and exotic. Visitors were invited to these quiet, private studies to peruse the jumbled objects while simultaneously speaking and hearing about them. Sociologist Tony Bennett (1998) argues that, owing to their lack of texts, labels, and formal arrangement, and to their conduciveness to imaginative conversation, Renaissance cabinets of curiosities precluded the crystallization of formal narratives regarding the objects’ histories and cultural associations. It was not until the Enlightenment museums of the 18th and 19th centuries, Bennett avers, that narratives became cemented in public consciousness through the incorporation of labels and texts, and systematic classifications by professionals of large, public, organized collections. The eye, previously free to peruse and wonder, was now instructed on how to read the facts, the professed truth behind things. This expert ascription of official narratives to objects within public institutions for

didactic purposes largely displaced the experiential learning of centuries prior, bestowing onto objects, and accompanying texts, an unprecedented role in the representation and formal classification of knowledge. Thenceforth, museums continued to fracture into variably sized institutions of formal knowledge related to a wide range of specialized subjects from African art to zoology.

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault (1970) developed the concept of *episteme*, a meme-like currency of taken-for-granted ideas that creates order in our lives. Using a dialectical materialist framework, he investigated how dominant forms of knowledge are constructed, performed, and mobilized as building blocks to establish scientific theories and ideologies. He explained how epistemes have governed received truths throughout Western history since antiquity, illustrating his point with examples from the Renaissance, Classical, and Modern eras. For instance, he cited a painting by Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*, as a historical text that reveals an epistemic turning point between the Classical and Modern eras for its inaugural inclusion of the artist's image in his own work. For Foucault, this form of auto-representation inaugurated the advent of "man" as an object of inquiry, an invention that would shape the rationalist paradigms of the successive centuries. Foucault also prefigured Bennett (1998) in his analysis of the radical shift in Classical representation characterized by its novel classificatory schema taken for granted in modern galleries and through which official strands of knowledge dominate and structure our processes of learning and perceiving.

Along with tasking themselves to represent ethnological knowledge, heritage institutions tend to insinuate their authoritative stance in the representation of place itself. National and regional park systems, nature conservatories, and heritage foundations, using the rhetoric of land "protection" and "conservation," take it upon themselves to assert the historically and naturally

significant status of sites with the use of visitor centres, guided trails, signposts, labels, and supporting documentation. However, as museums scholar Peter Davis (2009, 2) points out, “The ‘meanings’ of these sites have largely been constructed by ‘experts’, not the local people or visitors who experience them; until recently only rarely have local needs or interests been considered.” Signaling a sea change in the politics of representation, Stuart Hall (1999) argued that the only way to address problems inherent in discourses on “heritage” is to bring the apparent naturalness, timelessness, and objective truth of their governing assumptions into focus so as to provoke dialogue. Thus, for Hall, while heritage discourse is “always inflected by the power and authority of those whose versions of history matter... it only takes the passage of time, the shift of circumstances, the reversals of history, to reveal those assumptions as time- and context-bound, historically specific, and thus open to contestation, and revision” (Hall 1999, 15).

Ushered in by a wave of social and ecological movements of the 1960s, a museological revolution took off in the early 1970s, championed by the *nouvelle muséologie* paradigm, when French museologists and curators began to challenge established norms about the museum’s colonialist and elitist approach to knowledge and its detached relations with public life. This “new museology” sought to break with the old paradigm of favouring end products and objects over purpose and process, as well as to weave history into the present rather than focus exclusively on the past (Vergo 1997). It experimented with methods to establish museums as community centres with a more engaged civic role in their lived environments. As the movement gained traction, communication of knowledge shifted to become less monologic and more of a collaborative exchange. Curators began devising progressive education models through interactive exhibitions, workshops, and activities.

For instance, museums scholar Viv Golding (2016, 5) suggests that multisensory, deep, embodied learning experiences are both more pleasurable and memorable than conventional exhibits. She cites District Six Museum in Cape Town, South Africa, a community “inreach” museum, as an example of “liberatory praxis.” Located in a district that was forcefully broken up by the apartheid system, the museum opened as a temporary exhibition to welcome back and hear testimonies from the ex-residents in 1994, the year of the country’s first democratic elections. It has remained open to the public ever since. Led by community members and staff, who collectively make decisions about meetings, workshops, activities, and the sprawling territory of the wider district, District Six provides a forum for previously excluded residents and their descendants to talk about their memories and symbolically reclaim their identities and sense of ownership of the territory. Although the museum is the central hub, through oral testimonies and information visitors are encouraged to find meaning beyond its walls.

While we might admire critical work that has emerged since the *nouvelle muséologie* paradigm took shape in the 1970s, it is worth mentioning that a fixation on new theories, critical approaches, and techniques tends to ignore much of what the non-English-speaking world had been proposing since at least the UNESCO-ICOM⁷⁶ roundtable meeting in Santiago de Chile in 1972 about the nature and purpose of museums, agreed upon by roundtable participants as encompassing sustainable community development, particularly in disadvantaged areas of Latin America (Davis 2008). That meeting focused on the role of the newly coined “integral museum” in assisting marginalized, often Indigenous groups to reflect and protect their local environments, stimulate economic benefits for communities, advance education in those areas, and integrate

⁷⁶ International Council of Museums

those stated goals with the promotion of self-esteem, personal development, and sense of belonging among individuals (Teruggi 1973).

The seminal 1972 roundtable marked a radical departure from the traditional role of museums in society. Geologist Mario Teruggi (1973, 129) would reflect upon his and his colleagues' shock at hearing new perspectives on the role of museums, declaring "it had been made obvious to us at one stroke that the existence, sorrows, longings and hopes of mankind were not getting into the museums." He admitted that, until then, Latin American museums were not seeking to unite the citizen with her natural and human environment, nor to confront societal ills, but that it was becoming increasingly apparent that state organizations were remiss in their duties and that museums should fill the gap. The roundtable concluded that the "integral museum" would provide a much needed answer to the crises in Latin America and elsewhere. Whereas before, the assembling, cataloguing, conserving, and exhibiting of the historical object were accepted as the museum's *raison d'être* and ends in themselves, the new focus on social, economic, and cultural development required that the object be used for the purpose of community self-awareness and an understanding of its heritage.

Davis (2008) reminds us that the community museum, which asserts an intrinsic role in assisting disadvantaged communities from within, was also born at the Santiago meeting. Moreover, he points out that the term "new museology" is inherently community centred among museologists in Latin America, especially given the special recognition by UNESCO that the implementation of these newly articulated practices best occur within a defined place or territory using heritage resources. On the other hand, Vergo (1997) and many Western museologists list community museology as merely one of several elements under the umbrella term "new museology" along with other postmodern concerns that question "traditional museum approaches

to issues of value, meaning, control, interpretation, authority, and authenticity” (Davis 2008, 400), a blending which sometimes forgoes direct community engagement in order to meet other postmodern demands. In Canadian museology, for instance, a host of historic exhibitions (e.g., Indians of Canada Pavilion at Expo 67, *From the Four Quarters*, *The Spirit Sings*, and *Into the Heart of Africa*), in their attempts to fulfill numerous lofty and even decolonial goals, failed to engage meaningfully with the communities being represented, resulting in unforeseen suffering and controversy (Phillips 2011).

The term *ecomusée* was coined by French museologist Hugh de Varine in 1971, after which its ideas quickly spread through Europe and outwards. The concept of ecomuseum as it relates to decoloniality and/or decentralization of power underwent three major stages, the earliest of which emanated from the environmental movements of the 1970s and consequently had a bias towards ecology, hence the prefix eco- (Davis 2011). De Varine’s second variation, in 1978, stressed the intrinsic role of the proximate community in the museum’s functioning. The third definition, devised by Georges Rivière (1985), most fully depicts our current understanding of its key concepts, including local identity, territory, landscape, sense of history and continuity, and how these help create a sense of belonging. While de Varine’s definitions stressed the natural environment to an even greater extent, Rivière (1985, 182) envisions the ecomuseum as portraying “nature in its wildness, but also as adapted by traditional and industrial society in their own image,” thus giving flexibility to the environmental prerogative, particularly in an urban context.

Moreover, his suggestion that the ecomuseum offer temporal interpretations that “reach back before the appearance of man, ascend the course of the prehistoric and historical times in which he lived and arrive finally at man’s present” (Ibid.) is not adhered to by all ecomuseums,

many of which lack such a far-reaching timeline. He further defines the ecomuseum as an interpretation of space: a laboratory, a conservation centre, and a school, which he calls a “triad” that both gives and receives. Possibly the most iconic statement in his definition is that the ecomuseum “is a mirror that the local population holds up to its visitors so that it may be better understood and so that its industry, customs and identity may command respect” (Ibid., 183). This metaphor speaks to the reflexivity that inheres in self-presentation for oneself, one’s community, and visitors. Of note in Rivière’s 1985 definition is the emphasis on flexibility and boundless diversity, local selection of natural and cultural resources as per the community’s interpretation of heritage, and local strategizing of display techniques. Though not defined by Rivière, heritage has been loosely described in subsequent publications, conferences, and proclamations as a mosaic of tangible and intangible elements, including landscapes, geology, wildlife, memories, buildings, material culture, music, skills, behaviour patterns, social structures, and traditions (Davis 2011).

One useful heuristic proposed by Canadian museologist René Rivard (1988), contrasting the conventional museum and the ecomuseum, is to imagine the former as comprising a building, collections, experts, and the public, and the latter as comprising territory, heritage, memory, and population. The final item indicates the localized dimension for whom the ecomuseum is primarily intended. Davis (2008, 403) succinctly captures the ecomuseum’s overarchingly processual nature when he describes it as “a mechanism that would enable the conservation of cultural and natural heritage and the maintenance of local cultural identity, the democratization of the museum and the empowerment of local people,” who simultaneously benefit from accrual of social and cultural capital. He depicts the ecomuseum as the thread of a necklace containing as its pearls the varied sites, songs, traditions, memories, etc. of a place, all of which are fastened

together by a clasp, representative of the visionaries, strategists, activists, and local residents who manage and direct the museum's operations. According to Davis (2009, 3), some key features of ecomuseums are:

- The adoption of a territory that may be defined, for example, by landscape, dialect, a specific industry, or musical tradition.
- The identification of specific heritage resources within that territory, and the celebration of these “cultural touchstones” using in-situ conservation and interpretation.
- The conservation and interpretation of individual sites within the territory is carried out via liaison and co-operation with other organisations.
- The empowerment of local communities—the ecomuseum is established and managed by local people. Local people decide what aspects of their “place” are important to them.
- The local community benefits from the establishment of the ecomuseum. Benefits may be intangible, such as greater self-awareness or pride in place, tangible (the rescue of a fragment of the local heritage, for example) or economic. There are often significant benefits for those individuals in the local community most closely associated with ecomuseum development.

As per Davis's principles, “heritage” is continuously articulated by community members through ongoing ethnographic research, then continually mapped and enacted in a shifting bricolage of exhibits, demonstrations, performances, events, workshops, and other initiatives. This conceptualization of heritage as process rather than bounded entity is consonant with Bendix's (2009) notion of heritagization. While she warns that attempts to chart, measure, describe, and market “patrimony” inevitably lead to capitalist appropriation by vested interests, the ecomuseum idea is that objectification of heritage is in perpetual flux with diverse inputs, preventing its wholesale commodification. The collaboration and co-production of knowledge

among a diversity of local actors entails the creation of third spaces where identities are constantly negotiated as cultural narratives are questioned, recontextualized, and reimagined.

While its basic principles are democratic management, *in situ* conservation and interpretation, educative practices, the development of an inclusive museology, and the fostering of progressive notions of heritage and identity based on tangible and intangible elements of a jointly defined territory (Montanari 2015), its contingent, place-based nature means that no two ecomuseums are alike. Describing the nuances of place, Susan Clifford and Angela King (1993, 7) draw attention to local distinctiveness as being “essentially about places and our relationships with them. It is as much about the commonplace as about the rare, about the everyday as much as the endangered, and about the ordinary as much as the spectacular... many of us have strong allegiances to places, complex and compound application of them, and we recognize that nature, identity and place have strong bonds.” Because place is experienced differently by everyone and as much local input is sought as possible, the dangers posed by Kodish (1991) with regard to occasional attempts by curators and folklorists to manipulate folk art to represent a pure, essential, or natural past free of controversy, are steadfastly averted within the ecomuseum.

Depending on a region’s familiarity with ecomuseums, initial conceptualizations may come from local inhabitants, a town board, or an external researcher or agency. Early actions involve meetings in public spaces (in our case, Codroy Valley Wetland Centre) where all residents are invited to negotiate and map out ideas about community, territory, and heritage. Over time, residents collaborate on various modes of representing their diverse understandings of heritage to each other and to outsiders. The primary motivation is not economic in the capitalistic sense but rather a strengthening of sense of place and quality of life, for and by locals. While governance models vary depending on size and scope of territory, population, objectives, and so

on, as a general rule local residents are the managers and organizers. Long-term or ad-hoc partnerships with outside agencies and researchers may be an outcome of the various initiatives that crop up.

5.2 Ecomuseological praxis

In his foundational text on ecomuseums, *Ecomuseums: A Sense of Place*, Peter Davis (2011) surveys hundreds of ecomuseums on all five inhabited continents, most prominently in Latin America and Europe. While sometimes using different names in the local language or a term such as “culture house,” “cultural village,” or community museum, those he surveys adhere to the basic ecomuseological principles. Though developed in a multitude of contexts, Davis finds that ecomuseums tend to emerge in places where communities feel threatened, often due to low employment, decline of traditional industries, or depopulation (2011, 276). Consequences of these glocal processes include loss of cultural identity and sense of place, which often result in a degraded natural environment. A new ecomuseum begins with some local articulation of territory, determined by topography, dialect, architecture, history, economy, or customs, rather than by artificial or political boundaries. Community members typically ask one another about the valuable local resources that contribute to their unique heritage. “Demonstrating and celebrating the individuality of communities undoubtedly leads to a heightened perception of identity from which the community gains strength, leading to sustainability” (Ibid.). Indeed, as historian Nina Archabal avers, “When people feel a part of a story, they have a stake in the future” (quoted in Davis 2011, 276).

Territory may be defined as a single site, as in the Hemp Ecomuseum in Campagnola, Italy, which is dedicated to conserving one site related to a past industry. Ekomuseum Bergslagen in central Sweden, on the other hand, at 750 square kilometres is the world’s largest

ecomuseum. It comprises 68 sites run by volunteers who demonstrate theatrically how humans have used the region's natural resources from 400 BC to the present. Professional staff and volunteers are involved in all its activities through education days, seminars, lectures, and meetings. The Hemp Museum too is completely reliant on the practical craft skills or knowledge of industrial technologies held by volunteers to interpret sites to the public. According to Davis (2011), volunteer commitment is indispensable to the success of ecomuseums, which tend to close when it is lacking.

Donatella Murtas and Peter Davis (2009) recall the early developmental stages of an ecomuseum in Cortemilia, a town of 2,200 residents in the northwest of Italy. Once a booming agricultural export town, Cortemilia suffered a series of setbacks from emigration, pollution from a nearby chemical factory, and a disastrous flood in 1994 that largely eroded its iconic and productive terraced landscape. After several years of lobbying by residents, the factory closed in 1996; it was at that time that Murtas, an outside researcher, was heard giving a talk on ecomuseums nearby and put in touch with representatives of Cortemilia's local government.

The ecomuseum idea quickly spread throughout the community. Cortemilia residents ranging from children to the elderly took part in initial meetings and consultations, which largely revolved around articulations of local distinctiveness and planning of thematic exhibits via the contribution of local artifacts, narratives, and ideas. The small exhibitions "resulted in the breakdown of boundaries between individuals, families, different age groups and between the local associations. Every contributor had the chance to see their own object or story adjacent to those of others, to make comparisons but also to recognize a common story" (Murtas & Davis 2009, 156). New friendships and alliances have been forged with "terrace" communities in other parts of the world, who occasionally collaborate on exhibitions "in order to make comparisons

with the experiences of others but also to demonstrate shared values, problems and ways of life” (Ibid.).

Testimonials by Cortemilia residents speak to the empowering effects the ecomuseum has brought to their lives. The town has witnessed renewed interest in intangible heritage from local knowledge and craft skills to festivals, dance, and music. Importantly, residents report on the social and cultural capital that leads to strengthened sense of place and belonging rather than mere economic benefits in terms of capital profits or tourism. For instance, one resident reported, “I remember the time when bonfires were lit near the farms to celebrate Midsummer night. It is a real pleasure to see them again and more than that to come to a place for the pleasure of meeting other people, and not for tourism performance” (quoted in Murtas & Davis 2009, 158). In addition, several structures have been restored, including an old stone building in the historic centre of town that now hosts the ecomuseum’s headquarters, interpretation centre, library, venue for temporary exhibitions, video projections, and meetings. The town square itself has been restored from a tarmac car park to “a charming pedestrian area, paved with stone and used for exhibits, theatre and film projection” (Ibid., 157).

A farm building and surrounding vineyard and orchards have also been renovated and opened for public use, the vineyard now used to produce wine for the ecomuseum cooperative. There is renewed interest in the conservation and cultivation of rare varieties of vegetable in the restored terraced fields. A local expert⁷⁷ in dry stone technique restored an old building used for drying chestnuts and its inauguration was attended by nearly everyone in the village. Residents have commented on the significance of that event in creating a sense of unity and pride. A year

⁷⁷ Locals have formed flexible working groups featuring expertise in different areas such as dry stone walling, bread making, and orchard pruning. According to Murtas and Davis (2009), reactions among members to these new group identifications have been extremely positive. Similarly, local producers have since formed successful agricultural cooperatives around the restored terraced landscape.

later, the ecomuseum worked with elderly people in the village to utilize their knowledge to put the chestnut hut to work, which has since resulted in the packaging and sale of dried chestnuts to niche markets.⁷⁸ In his discussion about the ecomuseum in Cortemilla, Davis (2009, 498) stresses that the “terraces were built by the community and not by an architect or engineer [and that they] have no individual signature but are a collective enterprise.”

Nunzia Borrelli and Peter Davis develop a Bourdieusian framework to theorize how community ethnographers might reconsider behaviours and develop new practices toward their environment through shifts in sense of place and “reflexive habitus.” Habitus, they claim, is “a set of structures and habitual ways of understanding characteristic and constitutive of a society or a group [that] can be changed by new experience, education or training” (Borrelli & Davis 2012, 36). Thus, even as habitus reproduces itself, it is always subject to transformation. They cite an example in an aging Italian village where an ecomuseum helped renew interest in stagnating local economies based in forestry and woodland management, particularly the harvesting of sweet chestnuts. Sustained and patient work among ecomuseum activists and local inhabitants led to the reestablishment of old wood trails and the renovation of an ancient stone dryer; chestnuts, chestnut flour, and chestnut wood chips are now sold locally, the latter also used as a source of alternative energy in the village. A restaurant was established and young adults interested in local heritage have moved in, bringing new social structures and renewed vitality to the village (Ibid., 39).

In her 20 years of experience working with the vast ecomuseum networks of northern Italy, Cristina Grasseni sees the community map as a powerful tool for subverting institutional

⁷⁸ I always mention the Cortemilla ecomuseum when discussing ecomuseum prospects with folks in Codroy Valley. Despite disparate histories and cultures, the two communities share familiar woes. Their populations are very similar, both have experienced emigration and an extreme downturn in a booming agricultural past, and both were introduced to the ecomuseum concept by an academic researcher.

rhetoric of “protection” in favour of empowering emerging voices to identify local dimensions of the landscape as quotidian, lived in, and in common. With ecomuseums, community mapping incorporates a plurality of voices representing the same landscape. Grasseni (2004, 700) uses the term “skilled landscape” to denote cartographic representations of “different capacities to envision the landscape” based on “a multiplicity of phenomenological experiences” and competencies with it. Mapped landscapes are not only culturally, historically, or intangibly situated, but mean and feel like entirely different scenarios to different individuals and groups. Descriptions of a landscape and ideas regarding its use, conservation, improvement, history, future, and identity necessarily vary widely, and may be articulated in the mapping project.

Grasseni also recalls tensions around the drawing of a trail map: “The map became a tool for managing local political conflicts and to mediate between different interpretations of what is ‘central,’ ‘scenic,’ or ‘typical’ in the valley. In a sense, this ethnography is a narrative of conflicts and negotiations that emerged during the making of the map and became inscribed to some extent in the final product” (Ibid., 712). This result ended up surprising all involved. She describes the completed map as a “cartographic memoir” revealing underlying power relations: “The goal of the enterprise was to produce an ethnographic portrait of the locality through a complex exercise of self-presentation, a potential dialogue where the interlocutor is imagined, evoked, and hoped for. Naturally, this amounted to the construction not only of the object—the landscape—but also of the referent of this pedagogical project: the imagined tourist” (Ibid., 713). Citing an external gaze, be it by tourist, visitor, newcomer, or agency, speaks to a central component of ecomuseological praxis, namely the reflexive multiplicity of perceptions. Ultimately, the trail map described by Grasseni was published separately from a booklet that served to capture the many dialogues and tensions played out during the mapping project in a

sort of “cumulative ethnography” (Ibid., 173). This result is a fine example of reciprocal ethnography, where ongoing negotiations over an idiosyncratic topic by ethnographic subjects are captured in writing for the future reader to ponder.

Another promising example is the Elvo & Serra Valley Ecomuseum in northern Italy. This initiative emerged in 1997 in an area already bursting with local interest in conserving the Valley’s unique heritage so that it was a straightforward endeavour to identify potential locations for interpretive and conservation projects. A local ecomuseum association was readily created and volunteers posted at a number of heritage sites nested inside the “parent” ecomuseum where a Trappist monastery, identified by locals as the most important cultural element in the territory, served as the meeting point. It now also forms part of a regional ecomuseum network that helps secure funding and professional support for its projects. The ecomuseum regularly produces academic output, works on renovation and conservation projects, and documents craft skills and intangible heritage through oral and video recordings that are captured in a community mapping project. This project is then used by schools to promote dialogue between craftspeople and students, who have gone on to develop their own regional heritage maps, workshops, and dramatized performances, which attract large audiences to relatively remote locations. Staff have reported that, overall, the ecomuseum has “helped people develop a sense of what might be possible in the future by building on the past” (Davis 2008, 410).

Fresnes, a suburb of Paris, because of its steady flow of migrants and concomitant shifting multiculturalisms, presents new challenges to the paradigm. Indeed, despite Rivière’s vision of the ecomuseum as an outstanding social agent and operative contact zone, more often than not, it is addressed to an area’s longstanding native population (Montanari 2015). Écomusée du Val de Bièvre explicitly seeks to acknowledge controversial social issues, recognize relations

between different cultures, enhance intersubjective dialogue between residents and visitors, and stimulate mutual understanding and social cohesion among its diverse residents; in short, it vehemently avoids exclusionary practice (Delgado 2001). Spurred by the new museology of the 1970s, it started out in 1979 as a farm converted to a cultural centre, adhering to the principles of local community engagement and celebration of local heritage through a permanent display. In the late 1990s, however, it deliberately embraced the ecomuseological philosophy by replacing the permanent exhibition with participative workshops and shifting exhibits on a wide range of contemporary urban issues. It also initiated a regular shuffling of cultural events and activities reflecting the area's diverse population and appealing to a variety of audiences, thereby providing conditions for more engaged cultural encounters⁷⁹ (Montanari 2015).

According to sociologist Coral Delgado (2001), Écomusée du Val de Bièvre is interested in conserving, presenting, and explaining the territory and its developmental problems related to modernity, as well as giving voice to those traditionally silenced or overlooked. She describes it as a research-based museum in which residents and outside experts collaborate regularly in training programs, courses, ad-hoc activities, book and catalogue publications, conferences, symposia, seminars, and temporary exhibitions. She cites several examples of community-led initiatives to denounce racism and exclusion, such as an exhibition on laundresses and ironing-women, which represented their daily struggles and know-how as reflected in their folklore. As the prison in Fresnes is France's largest, both prisoners and warders wanted the ecomuseum to reveal to locals the "hell of confinement" and the difficulties of working there, so an "open house" exhibition revealed those perspectives, as well as a historic representation of the prison

⁷⁹ In 2019-2020 it chose to focus on the suburban aspect of gardens, particularly their intangible heritage dimensions. Using surveys, interviews, and the establishment of a collaborative herbarium, the exhibition explored residents' feelings toward their gardens. It also mapped gardeners' emotional ties to decorative objects such as gnomes and wheelbarrows.

throughout wartime and occupation. Other exhibitions have included protest hip-hop from the perspective of young migrants condemning racism, exclusion, violence, inhuman urban planning, and identity issues; worker conditions in the 2008 economic crisis; self-build housing organizations; and unavoidable, no-go places frequented by unemployed youngsters.⁸⁰

Since 2000, staff and volunteers have also been developing “participative collective practices” in which they put out open calls for objects and accompanying biographies related to their history, social value, technical use, and anthropological meaning, so as “to reconstruct and present the collective material memory of the territory” (Montanari 2015, 376) and to promote intercultural dialogue. Some of these objects are featured on their Facebook page (Écomusée du Val de Bièvre 2022). Through these and other initiatives, the écomusée is building toward Rivière’s vision of “a mirror in which the local population views itself to discover its own image” (1985, 183).

Shan-Dany community museum is located in the Valley town of Santa Ana del Valle, population 2,000, one of a handful of Zapotec communities specializing in the production of *tapetes*, or woven goods. Ellen Hoobler (2006) notes how the social structures of Oaxacan societies are highly conducive to community museum projects. In particular, their *cargo* system ensures compulsory volunteering by every community member for the benefit of the greater good; promotion of equal rights and horizontal leadership; support for local Indigenous groups; and a remarkable ethos of cultural and political sovereignty. Shan-Dany, meaning “at the foot of the hill” in Zapotec, which is spoken by 90% of the local population, was initiated in 1984 by the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), a state authority created in 1983 with

⁸⁰ I was planning to visit Écomusée du Val de Bièvre in Fresnes during my research trip in July and August 2024; however, the Olympic Games were happening in Paris at that time so I avoided the entire area and focused instead on ecomuseums in the United Kingdom.

the intention to build local museums for safeguarding regional heritage. Shan-Dany community museum was spurred by the excavation of a pre-Hispanic burial ground in the town's main square and the desire to use the site as a catalyst for community action. Then, in spite of its institutional origin, the museum was immediately appropriated by locals and its purpose expanded to include direct social and economic benefits to the community through the development of oral history projects, education programs, and the promotion of cultural tourism around its unique tangible and intangible heritage via "rug tours," archaeological exhibits, workshops, and religious festivals.

Hoobler notes how most Oaxacan community museums often centre on archaeological finds and allow locals to take control of those important relics of their shared past, the display of which serves to legitimate and empower its contents. She also describes the mirror effect of showcasing traditions to outsiders, an act that affirms their value vis-à-vis positive responses from visitors. Community museums reap financial benefits in the form of entrance fees and the possibility of increased funds for new projects from regional or national agencies. They provide a didactic function for outsiders, emigrants, and residents, who often report a renewed sense of pride and cultural identity. In colonial spaces in which conquistadors plundered the New World for boastful display in their cabinets of curiosities, rendering them as "mere curiosities" rather than valuable works of art and cultural significance, the resurgence of Indigenous heritage is all the more significant. Befitting their decolonial aspirations, Hoobler stresses the democratic decision-making process in community museums and how residents hold town meetings for approval and careful planning pending the commencement of any cultural project.

Drawing on ethnographic research at Shan-Dany, curator Patricia Erikson (1996) sought to understand why the local Indigenous peoples, Santaneros, would care to appropriate a Western

institution like a museum when most of them had never visited one prior to establishing their own. What she found was that they directly linked the central issues of pueblo survival, self-determination, and development to the community museum. Unlike the INAH, Oaxaca's Indigenous communities make a clear distinction between national patrimony and cultural patrimony, a distinction which, against a long colonial history of cultural appropriation and violence, has contributed to the latter's insistence on presiding over their unique patrimony. According to Erikson, more than half of Shan-Dany's exhibits deal with the 500-year struggle to defend their territory and their attendant vigilance as stewards of their land, culture, and economy. Exhibits are mostly directed toward expatriate Santaneros, children, and tourists, while crafts are sold in shops to supplement funding from national and regional agencies. Through intercommunal networking, residents and staff build a regional web of community museums reflexively engaged in solidarity against the ever-encroaching dominant culture.

* * *

Within an ecomuseum, dialogical encounters with a visitor or newcomer who, for instance, resembles a so-called Paki may trouble the us/them binary, especially since the newcomer is now being dialogically woven into the fabric of the de-essentialized heritage being performed. If the tenet of local and democratic management is adhered to and dialogue is open and ongoing, racial diversity becomes an open question fraught with friction and possibly even pride rather than one of vengeful anxiety, the cultural narrative is continually reworked, identities are understood as shifting and multiple, and new meanings are formulated and contested. All community members from across the demographic spectrum are empowered to contribute to the unique story of their shared territory through a spirited dialogue of teaching, learning, and border crossing. Fresnes is not a harmonious melting pot, nor may it ever be one, but it is evident that the Écomusée is

effectively confronting historic and current frictions and exclusions by promoting intercultural dialogue and shared embodied experiences within a third space.

Because the ecomuseum aims to emphasize and perpetuate the unique characteristics of a place, including its landscape, natural world, and historic sites, environmental stewardship is intrinsic to its philosophy. As individual and collective memories are storied into the natural environment, it is up to community members to agree to safeguard it. A Codroy Valleyer would undoubtedly be crestfallen to see his landscape, inhabited by the stories, songs, and memories of his ancestors, degrade into a wasteland, and if the ecomuseum were to enlist his guidance to avert such a catastrophic fate, he would likely salute the task. Workshops and exhibitions may conceivably crop up in the Valley region, where residents co-construct their skills, pleasures, arts, memories, anxieties in the present, and dreams for the future.

Apart from Fresnes, all the preceding examples demonstrate the potential of ecomuseum practices even in relatively homogeneous areas in terms of a distinct, multigenerational cultural heritage. That of course is not to imply that local populations are static; all individuals, groups, and societies are diverse, plural, and emergent. Yet, problems persist. Montanari admits that it is “rare to detect the progressive involvement of youngsters (i.e. the new generations) and minority groups (e.g. migrants, refugees, etc.)” in the running of ecomuseums, implying most of them “seem unable to ‘mirror’ the mutation of present-day societies and, therefore, miss the opportunity to enhance their sustainable and harmonious development” (2015, 372). It is also the case that “[w]omen, children, poverty, crime, health and medicine, disasters, colonialism, class and dominance are frequently the ‘missing stories’ and ‘missing histories’ in traditional museums, and—perhaps to a lesser extent—are also missing in [several] ecomuseums” (Davis 2009, 10). My research at ecomuseums in Saskatchewan and the United Kingdom demonstrates,

however, a deep interest in experimentation and the innovating of practices for engaging with a growing plurality of stories, voices, and identities as integral to the educative and participative activities being performed. These findings are the subject of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 6: POSTHUMANISM AND CRITICAL REGIONALISM IN SASKATCHEWAN

In many ways, this thesis is a meta study of folklore. It is a study of the creative ways the depth and breadth of folklore is mobilized and represented in times of crisis. The thread linking the case studies in this and the next chapter is the reflexive medium by which folklore is used. Apart from the basic premise of core community involvement and empowerment, these four case studies vary drastically from one another. While a critical regionalist approach is never explicitly espoused, I observe its welcome presence in some more than others. However, engaging my own critical regionalist approach, it becomes apparent that other critical and unexpected aspects of culture and narrative are present and being put to good use in the communities of practice. Moreover, each in its own way emphasizes the importance of conserving the commons while forging a more sustainable future.

This chapter examines two case studies, both in Saskatchewan. The first is Calling Lakes EcoMuseum in the Qu-Appelle River system of southern Saskatchewan. Over a two-hour recorded conversation with its managing director, Aura Lee MacPherson, my notion of territory expanded and I was pleasantly refreshed to find a strong posthuman discourse permeating her discussion. The second, Prairie Wind & Silver Sage, also in southern Saskatchewan, in concert with the adjacent Grasslands National Park illustrates a critical regionalist understanding of connection and disjuncture. The next chapter looks at two more case studies, one in North Wales and the other on the border with England and Scotland. These diverse case studies illustrate the dynamism and boundless creativity of the ecomuseum model, as well as its effectiveness in critically engaging community members, visitors, partners, advocates, and even antagonists in response to perceived threats of enclosure.

6.1 Calling Lakes Ecomuseum

Before turning to the Calling Lakes EcoMuseum, it is worth mentioning the work that has gone into creating a network of ecomuseums in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan. Unparalleled in Canada, and heralded globally as a positive contribution to regional ecomuseum development, the Saskatchewan Ecomuseum Initiative (SEI) is a consortium of ecomuseums and affiliates that was established in 2012, once the concept had gained traction in the province. Glenn Sutter, Curator of Human Ecology at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum in Regina, is usually credited with galvanizing regional support in 2011, when he sent an inquiry around the province and received positive responses from over 15 communities and regions. A year later, a steering committee consisting of seven provincial or federal cultural organizations,⁸¹ one First Nations consultant association,⁸² and two researchers launched SEI (Czakoff & Fitch 2015, 6). Today, there are about a dozen active ecomuseums across the province and linked through the network, which provides guidance and expertise to municipalities and local organizations. SEI has been instrumental in bridging academic and lay perspectives, a connection that has been pivotal in helping communities identify and realize their own goals using unique, locally crafted, place-based methods.

One of the regions that has embraced the SEI model is the Qu'Appelle River system of southern Saskatchewan. Glenn, who has been extremely supportive and responsive to my questions via email, put me in touch with Aura Lee Macpherson, Chair of the Calling Lakes Ecomuseum (CLEM), who was gracious to meet me over coffee for a two-hour interview in Regina. Aura Lee reminded me of the environmental activist Erin Brockovich with her quick and

⁸¹ The seven provincial or federal organizations are: Royal Saskatchewan Museum; Heritage Saskatchewan; Museums Association of Saskatchewan; SaskCulture; Nature Saskatchewan; The Saskatchewan-United Nations Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development; and Heritage Canada The National Trust.

⁸² Raven Consortium, Inc.

lucid recall of names, organizations, treaties, and concepts connected with the river system, and admirable zeal to fight for the integrity of the water and communities that depend on it. A retired nurse, co-owner of a mechanical engineering company with her husband, proactive volunteer in several local and regional organizations, and self-declared “connector” who depends on the lake’s health for the cultural and spiritual sustenance of her and her community, Aura Lee was an exceptional interlocutor and wealth of knowledge about CLEM’s struggles, victories, and goals.

CLEM is a museum without walls. It has no buildings, no archive, and, apart from a Facebook page and newsletter, no digital infrastructure. And yet, of all the ecomuseums I visited, CLEM is the most passionately engaged in struggles for environmental justice and cultural continuity. Based on my conversation with Aura Lee, CLEM’s constituents embody what Reid and Taylor (2010, 171) describe as “participatory reason,” or “the ability to hold fast to particular beings within the flow of mortal time, using whatever cognitive, symbolic, ethical, affective, machinal, or sensory means are necessary to keep self and world in a relationship of mutual apparency.” Specifically, they mobilize cultural sensibilities and environmental ethics to fight for the health of the Qu’Appelle watershed and all the life forms and communities that depend on it. CLEM’s members care deeply about the interconnectivity of water and culture. And because it is concerned primarily with its expansive water system, CLEM is compelled to think further afield at the processes and players that affect their water.

Aura Lee told me that CLEM “formed out of crisis.” A stalled rain event, which unloaded five to seven inches of water into the Qu’Appelle Valley in 24 hours, occurred on June 30th, 2014, just one day before the Valley’s cherished July 1st celebration. “That’s when we bust out and we have our barbecue, we have parades, little boat parties, it’s the start of swimming lessons, you greet everybody with hugs, it’s the beginning of summer.” That year, however, Aura Lee

told me that “all the signs went up saying that the lake was sick and it was high in E. coli... so they closed 28 beaches in the Qu’Appelle Valley, saying, ‘Do not go in the water. It is not safe to swim.’” The community was appalled. Not only were they appalled that their celebrations were disrupted, but perhaps more importantly, that the City of Regina discharged raw sewage from 52 overflowing lagoons, all pointed at the Qu’Appelle Valley. Aura Lee recalls being ridden first with grief, and then anger. “I had this really sad energy, because you have dreams of your kids and your grandkids and it’s like, we’re ruining it, we’re destroying it, we’re shitting in our own little nests. And I just had this terrible energy and I was mad.”

With a reputation as a community organizer, she was contacted by the Muskowpetung First Nation Director of Health, who offered to lend out the Treaty 4 governance centre in Fort Qu’Appelle for a community meeting. “We thought we would get maybe 60 people out. It was like 260. It was just crazy. Everybody just showed up. Pasqua, Echo, Mission, Katepwa, they were all there. So were the First Nations.” They also invited two presenters, Chief Todd Peigan of the Pasqua First Nation, and Dr. Peter Leavitt, a biologist with 30 years of experience with the water quality of the Qu’Appelle River system. Glenn Sutter was also present at that meeting. That was when the ecomuseum idea was pitched, and Aura Lee described it as a strong forward-moving momentum that was sorely needed to address the multifaceted challenges plaguing the communities being affected by the water crisis. Glenn organized for university students, who had taken a course on ecomuseums, to do some ethnographic work in the community. Aura Lee remembers compiling lists of community members from across the demographic spectrum for the students to work with, “and they did an incredible job.” But, during the assessment period, rather than tell the communities they needed exorbitant sums of money, which was fully expected, the students told them to build a “communication strategy... you’ve got to build

relationships, you've got to connect, you've got to work with people, stop being angry." Their advice led to the founding of CLEM alongside the launching of two successful projects.

One, working with the City of Regina that if they'd discharge, they'd phone us, whereas before they'd just kind of put it in the paper and hope we didn't see it. So now, they invested in a call system so that if they discharge anything into that water, it flashes out to all the communities. That's part of an ecomuseum, that partnership, working together. Nowhere does it say lawyer up and get mad. It's about working together. But sometimes you have to have some really hard, messy conversations. And we did have to, with the city, kind of fight them in the media for a bit. Because they had been doing this for 40 years, probably 50 years. Because that's how most cities roll, right? Like Chicago did that. There's so many cities that just flip the valve and let it go downstream... But we said, "If you have to discharge, do not surprise us. Please tell us." I think their last discharge was 2021, but they think long and hard before they flip that.

A corollary to that victory was building a working relationship with the Co-op Refinery Complex's NewGrade Upgrader in Regina. An upgrader is a facility that "upgrades" heavy bitumen into synthetic crude oil, and discharge of sewage can be disastrous. In 2020, the Qu'Appelle communities received news that the upgrader had discharged benzopyrene into the river system. Peter Leavitt told Aura Lee, "It's bad, super bad, super carcinogenic. Get on it, Aura Lee." She admitted that initiating a conversation and having "to duke it out on social media" was very difficult, because the upgrader provides many jobs and nobody wanted to be perceived as putting those jobs in jeopardy. When the upgrader refused to meet with them, as a coercion tactic, CLEM used a photograph taken by a local resident showing evidence of hydrocarbons, which was shared 1,000 times. "And they were scared. And the CEO came to that meeting and she looked me in the eye and she said, 'It won't happen again. I promise it won't happen again.' And it hasn't. So they had to improve their lagoons."⁸³

⁸³ According to a recent news article (Salloum 2023), the Co-op Refinery settled the matter of the effluent spill in 2023 with a \$4.6 million payment to the City of Regina.

CLEM's other major success came in 2018. In 2015 and 2017, there was major flooding of the Quill Lakes, Canada's largest saline lake, due to a high volume of rain, causing farmers to lose ranch land. In response, the farmers hired a private drainage company to cut a ditch to divert the saltwater into Last Mountain Lake, a freshwater lake that is part of the Qu'Appelle River system. Alarmed, Chief Todd Peigan and Peter, the biologist, phoned Aura Lee to ask for CLEM's help. The provincial government was not planning to do an environmental assessment and was fully prepared to allow the ditch to be cut.

Fortunately, CLEM took advantage of free access to documents via the Access to Information Act just before the 2018 provincial election, when they began charging for access to information. "They started charging in 2018, and we don't have money. So we got this incredible pile of emails that just, they were like gut punches. Like we couldn't believe the tones and we couldn't believe the recklessness. So we gave that to Chief Todd Peigan, who had launched a lawsuit, and we gave it to an investigative reporter at CBC." A CBC article was published at 8:00 am on a Monday and the project was pulled three hours later. "The next day, the person who was in charge of the project resigned." That same year, Chief Todd Peigan won a lawsuit, which made it illegal to drain without an environmental assessment. "And so," said Aura Lee, "that's how an ecomuseum helps you. Because you're working from the 17 goals,⁸⁴ it gives you the opportunity to ask the good questions. Because you want to partner, you want to work together, you know that you have to have development, but let's make sure the development is the best that it can be."

⁸⁴ CLEM has adopted the United Nations 17 sustainable development goals to guide their actions. Aura Lee admits that "not everybody likes the United Nations, and they have done some dumb things, but I love the 17 goals because it addresses equity, it addresses poverty, it addresses partnership... When we make decisions based off the 17 goals, we make really good decisions. We ask really good questions." She also described the 17 goals as aligning with the values of the First Nations she works with. "That took me like four or five years to figure out," she told me.

I drew some parallels between the Quills Lake conflict and the windmill project in Codroy Valley. World Energy GH2, the corporation in charge of the project, had already begun laying infrastructure before publishing an environmental assessment. After demanding an assessment, and feeling uncertain about the intents and purposes of the project, as well as the cultural and economic impacts linked to possible disturbances to wildlife and the ecosystems that support them, the communities requested public consultations. A public consultation session did finally occur in Codroy Valley in June 2023, but it was noted by many residents that the meeting took place in the middle of the day on a weekday, thus preventing many concerned people from attending. A 4,000-page environmental assessment was finally released in August 2023 and the public granted 45 days to provide comments. Residents noted a lack of clarity with regard to the area's population and its trails, beaches, and businesses that operate there. A petition was submitted along with hundreds of supporting letters, and a public rally was held in Codroy Valley against the project.⁸⁵

Aura Lee is very familiar with the corporate strategies used in the murky language of environmental assessments (Hufford 2016) and during consultation sessions.

Oh, they know how to do it. That's one thing we stumbled on was consultation. So when we go into consultation, we try to bust up the power. So if, say, they ask us to sit at a table, we say, 'No, no, no. Our community likes to sit in a circle.' And we always put us, one of them, us, one of them. And that's First Nations. So everybody is equal around the table. So we bust that up. And we always put our strongest speaker close to us. Like we always invite the university or First Nations, we always try to get our strongest speaker below, so there's synergy coming from them. We work really close with the university... It's basically to build community confidence. That is the goal. It doesn't come from the politicians. It comes from the university.

⁸⁵ From the appeal submitted by the grassroots group Codroy Valley United: "The Codroy Valley area is an important tourist attraction. It is surrounded by the Grand Codroy Estuary, the province's most important wetland. It has a high concentration of birds, and attracts bird watchers from all over. The lack of comprehensive and detailed studies on migratory birds, flora and fauna, moose and other wildlife directly in our territory is a significant oversight that could lead to irreversible consequences. Our residents depend on tourism jobs to provide for their basic needs and put food on their tables. Our livelihoods and our dependence on wildlife and tourism has been totally disregarded" (Forsey 2024).

Partnership with the University of Regina has been crucial for CLEM. The students invited for ethnographic consultations in 2014, by asking about stories related to culture and environment, brought renewed interest to the community of the importance of these narratives. They translated these renewed sensibilities to their action plans. “We reframed everything. So rather than having a water conference that is kind of like hunched over, it’s like, we’re having a water festival.” They foregrounded the local custom of bathing in the lake to communicate the importance of small actions like using phosphate-free shampoos, which they convinced local pharmacies to add to their shelves. One of her mentors from the university, who helped her understand the role an ecomuseum could play in the Qu’Appelle River system, warned her that rather than accept the label of activist, to describe herself as a “connector.” “Now I say I’m just a connector. I find amazing people and other amazing people, and we just come together to try to do a little better.”

When I asked about plans to develop infrastructure like existing trails or heritage sites, she replied, “We’ve been dealing with crisis after crisis after crisis that we haven’t had the luxury to do fun stuff like that.” Rather, while they do promote local businesses, use their services, and provide volunteers for local projects, their most pressing issue at the moment is to develop a wetland conservation policy in Saskatchewan, which is the only province lacking one. Here, she touched upon a classic case of misleading rhetoric used by the government to deny any sense of urgency to remediate the wetlands while also encouraging their further drainage or degradation, and CLEM’s subversive tactic to counter it.

The provincial government is spending a great deal of money advertising what a good job Water Security is doing and that we have 86% of the wetlands intact. And so this group of us got together and we said, “Okay, we’re going to counter this.” But the provincial government’s budget was hundreds of thousands, ours is like ten thousand. But what we did is we used local rural papers where we can do three ads for eighteen hundred bucks. And in there, we asked for donations. Donations are flying in. And Water Security, the President of Water Security phoned one of our

members and said, “What are you guys doing?” Very worried. So it doesn’t take money to create the conversation that’s balanced.

To raise awareness about the delicate state of much more than 14% of Saskatchewan’s wetlands, CLEM puts cards in coffee shops. “We’d use it to educate but also to create a conversation, and the businesses were totally on board. Because the businesses know that when the water’s clear, they make more money.” They also handed out a thousand trees at their July 1st celebration in 2024 along with information about actions to protect the water (Figure 6.1). “So, because we create this buzz of hope and empowering, we’ve made relations, and so we’ve got more people following us on Facebook, more people want to join us... The reason we don’t have a website to store this stuff is we don’t have the money to maintain it, and all our energy has gone into stopping a lot of criminal activity.”

Throughout our conversation, I noticed the agency Aura Lee’s words bestowed on the more-than-human world. As noted above, she described the water as “sick” when it was high in *E. coli*. She repeatedly commented that the community may not have noticed had the stalled rain event occurred any other time of the year. The fact that it occurred just before their planned celebration was read as a sign that the waters were trying to communicate their failing health.

It was almost like the lakes were saying, “Hey, we need help.” So we’ve done all these little shifts. We’re not bathing in the lake. We’re trying to get our railway ties off. We’re looking at our septic tanks. City of Regina’s doing a way better job. The lake has never been clearer. Usually we have clarity of about two feet. This past weekend it was 15 feet. So it’s sort of like the lake is saying, “Keep going. It’s working. We’ll help you if you help us.”

Her sensuous depiction of the water conveys a posthuman sensibility that challenges commonsense understandings of “natural resources” as goods to be commodified and exploited. Articulating his idea of the land ethic, Aldo Leopold (1989, viii) described the Eurocentric propensity to “abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us,” but that

“[w]hen we see land as a *community* to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.” Similarly, Hufford (2016) identifies common vernacular expressions like “robbing the land” that endow land with agency and subjectivity. The land ethic Aura Lee and her CLEM team espouse, which attends to the watershed’s needs and requests,⁸⁶ stands in stark contrast to that of cottage country folks, whom she described as “still in the mindset of green lawns, lots of chemicals on it. And for the last eight years I’ve been saying to them—but they can’t hear my words—that you can either have clean water or a nice lawn, but you can’t have both, so pick.”



Figure 6.1: CLEM tree giveaway at Fort Qu’Appelle’s July 1st celebration. Photo by Aura Lee MacPherson.

Folklore has been drawn upon by CLEM with regard to farmers mourning for lost ways of life and the lands and waters that supported them. Farmers, who are widely perceived as the

⁸⁶ The agency attributed to water in Aura Lee’s discourse is reminiscent of the agentic qualities bestowed on the Earth by K’iche Maya in their cosmogenic myth, *Popol Vuh*. Stefan Permanto (2019, 76) points out that at the very beginning, right after the gods created the earth, they *asked* the earth to rise from beneath the primordial water, indicating the earth’s ability to hear and act. Only then, with the spirit essence (*nawal*) and miraculous power (*pus*) of the gods, could mountains, valleys, and forests be *conceived*, to separate the sky-earth, yet another indication of personhood.

backbone of Saskatchewan's economy, sometimes call CLEM, distressed because they can no longer drink water from their fourth or fifth generation farm, and Aura Lee has noted that the folklore is what ties them to the land. These are the farmers who are located downstream of the destructive fertilizers that are killing land and cattle. CLEM will listen to the farmers' stories and bring them into their circle. Then, at media releases on important environmental holidays, to raise awareness about water health, they invite the farmers to tell their story. "We found that if we go, the media's okay to us. But if we go with a farmer who has been treated poorly, man, they're almost putting the mics right up their nose." Thus, listening to people's stories is a huge part of the effective communication component used by CLEM to make positive change. They have assumed a critical regionalist perspective by learning to read complex issues from different perspectives and different scales. Only then can dialogue be proactive.

What we've learned is there's no bad guy. We're conditioned that there's a bad guy. Well, the Bible is like, good guy, bad guy. But even when we started, we were mad at the City of Regina. But when you start talking, they have a back story. And so it's like, okay, you're not the bad guy. So there's no bad guy, but there are different opinions. And it's how can we come together to set the community up for success? Because your company is not going to be successful if you send hydrocarbons down. You think that's gonna work for you? And so, that's the whole idea, is to come together, to connect, to work together, so there is no bad guy, with the goal of the community. And so it's a real big shift from the me-me-me that we've kind of grown up with, to the us-us-us.

I left the conversation with Aura Lee feeling inspired to bring more nuance to the complex issues facing Codroy Valley. It is tempting to take a polarized view on megaprojects that threaten to destroy the fabric of life. And yet, these ruptures open up spaces for remembrance of inclusivity and "us-us-us." I stressed time and again during our conversation that CLEM should consider archiving their stories and local resistances to "development" for futurity. It is worth devising some sort of mitigation archive as an antidote to the official archives that house the murky rhetoric and universalizing discourses of environmental assessments. While sometimes useful for

holding corporations and governments accountable, according to Hufford (2016, 646), these archives are largely “missing at least some of the key data needed by communities as they set about calculating the true costs of post-fossil fuel ecological restoration and economic transition.” How can they not be, when they are commissioned by the very corporations who wish to see their projects succeed?

Hufford suggests that, in order to “mitigate the routinised exclusion of cultural and ecological values from consideration in environmental reviews conducted for [extractive] permits” (Ibid.), socio-ecological customs, materials, and narratives should be documented and deployed by grassroots organizations faced with otherwise untenable battles. In her experiences in Appalachia, such an archive proved to be an invaluable resource for a local organization’s efforts to prevent a mountaintop removal project from going forward. While their efforts ultimately failed to end the project, “they helped to bring the value of the forest commons to public attention” (Ibid., 647), which is the first step in revaluing those commons for reclamation. Moreover, Hufford sees potential of the mitigation archive in reclamation planning efforts. In contrast to the official discourses of emptiness in places like the Anguille Mountains, it could be used “to initiate a baseline description of the socio-ecological *res* needed for post-coal cultural and economic sustainability” (Ibid.).

6.2 Prairie Wind & Silver Sage

Prairie Wind & Silver Sage – Friends of Grasslands (PWSS) is a non-profit organization and ecomuseum in Val Marie, a village of 120 people located 30 kilometers north of the US border within a region of rolling hills centred on the Frenchman River Valley at the northern extension of the Great Plains. The Grasslands National Park - West Block Visitor Centre is just up the road. PWSS is housed within Val Marie’s historic schoolhouse, constructed in 1927, when the

town was incorporated, and affectionally known as “Little Brick Schoolhouse” (Figure 6.2). Today, it contains an espresso bar, gift shop, independent bookstore, and rotating art gallery, and has hosted diverse events, including a reception for Canadian writers Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson during their tour of community pastures in 2013. It also offers a self-guided heritage tour starting at the ecomuseum site and meandering through the village, touching upon eight sites that describe the important local and larger-than-local connections that have contributed to the place known today as Val Marie, as well as its regionalization in media.

In contrast to the national park’s visitor centre on that blustery day in late June, upon entering the PWSS hub I was met with a hive of activity in the ecomuseum’s espresso bar. I first noticed at the top of the stairs a large community quilt (Figure 6.3) depicting residents’ disparate perceptions of Val Marie.⁸⁷ Next, I entered the “Cloakroom Gallery” (Figure 7.4), the closet where the schoolchildren used to hang their cloaks before class, where I was able to view the 2024 edition of their annual rotation of art exhibitions. Titled *Small Works from a Big Land*, the exhibit featured 40 artworks submitted from all over the province after PWSS put out a call in early 2024 to all Saskatchewan artists of all experience levels to represent their province visually using a medium not to exceed 16x20 inches. The result is a tremendous visual whirlwind of vast open spaces, big skies, prairie flowers, woodlands, and various animal species. Past exhibitions have included *Textured Landscapes: The Grasslands in Fabric and Fibre* in 2018, *The Last Cowboy and a New Generation* in 2015, and diverse exhibitions by artists in residence.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ In 2004, a local resident put out a call to residents in the area around Val Marie to reflect on their sense of home, belonging, and special place, and to transcribe it onto a 12” x 12” quilt block. Today, a commemorative group artwork of 40 handmade quilt blocks is displayed in the schoolhouse. In 2012, community members designed and published a book, *Homescapes: A Community Quilt*, through PWSS. Over 98 pages, each block is accompanied by a family story written by the artist.

⁸⁸ In *The Lure of the Local*, Lucy Lippard (1997, 19) speaks to the phenomenological power of place-based art like the quilt and the gallery at PWSS: “An art that is in place, or on site, can create a different (not necessarily better) relationship between the viewer and the place. It too frames, but in collaboration with the place itself, and with the looker, both of which are always changing.”



Figure 6.2: “Little Brick Schoolhouse,” PWSS’s main hub. Photo by author.

I sat down in a comfortable and well-lit room with Norine Leibel, PWSS’s executive director and a yoga instructor based in Val Marie, who had agreed via email to meet me for an informal interview. Norine told me about Val Marie’s central role in helping to protect prairie flora and fauna, not least by teaming up with the national park to share resources and visibility. She showed me photos of the building before and after a group of volunteers from Friends of the Grasslands intervened in a plan to demolish the schoolhouse several years after it closed in 1985, refurbishing the building and having it declared a Municipal Heritage site before converting it into a museum. In hindsight, Norine is very pleased with their decision to rescue the building, which offers “an epic view and you can see the weather coming.” When I asked her about the new school that was built to replace it, just down the road, she described it as too large for the number of students (two graduated last year) and teachers (“one or two”), despite that fact that

students travel there from very long distances. “Farms are big, and getting bigger, too,” she told me. “So there was kind of the classic rural decline of, you know, moving off the farm. A lot of people went to Alberta, that was a Saskatchewan thing. And then the 1980s was a big drought, lots of grasshoppers. It was not a good time.”



Figure 6.3: A community quilt featured at the ecomuseum in Val Marie. Photo by author.

It is noteworthy that Norine described the mass exodus to Alberta a “Saskatchewan thing,” given the similar epithet commonly attributed to Newfoundland and Labrador due to the high volume of migrants to Alberta, mostly to work in the oil sands. The outmigration of farmers and fishers to seek work in an entirely different industry in Alberta is a cultural and economic connection with Saskatchewan many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians may not be aware of. Of course, it makes sense for Saskatchewan folks to move to the province next door. But there, as Codroy Valley, communities have witnessed a distinctly *agrarian* disruption resulting from the consolidation of farmland and general trends toward urbanization and modernization. Nonetheless, hearing about the trend from a Saskatchewan perspective was impactful. It

demonstrates the diverse but equally troubling causes and effects that accompany nearly identical migration patterns, in this case migration to Alberta.



Figure 6.4: The Cloakroom Gallery, featuring the *Small Works from a Big Land* exhibit. Photo by author.

PWSS, while tasked with conserving the grasslands, is equally engaged with cultural empowerment amidst a period of “rural decline” where a once bustling agricultural hub now has an average of two high school graduates a year, and where increasing numbers of young people are attracted to the “successes” promised in Alberta’s urban and suburban regions. PWSS is in the business of understanding connections between development and migration. Just as they note on their website, “The birth of the village of Val Marie could only have been made possible with the linkage of the region to the rest of the country by rail” (Prairie Wind & Silver Sage 2025), they are equally aware that outmigration to urban regions and the concomitant loss of traditional, land-based values are contributing to the endangerment of important native habitats like the

grasslands. It is incumbent on the people of southern Saskatchewan to make those connections more explicit, and work together to alter the commonsense narratives about economic development so that the beating hearts along Val Marie's heritage trail are not relegated to the dustbins of history, a distant yet romantic memory for urbanites of the future to ponder.

During our conversation, Norine's husband Lee, who had been socializing with visitors, offered to take me on a "wonderful, windblown tour" of the gardens surrounding the building, which is maintained by staff and volunteers and features Indigenous grasses, flaxes, legumes, shrubs, composites, buttercups, herbs, flowers, cactuses, and more, including several species once widespread in the prairies but now critically endangered and geographically limited. Lee was knowledgeable about the medicinal and customary uses of the plants and interspersed his teachings with humorous anecdotes about life in Val Marie. At a certain point, a dapper young man approached and joined our banter. The young man then proposed I accompany him on a tour of the grain elevator just up the road (Figure 6.5), one of the town's heritage sites. I was instantly and pleasantly surprised by my luck at encountering this charming person, Alex McPhee, who is also a local politician, community organizer, and Vice President of the Canadian Cartographic Association. I purchased his attractive and refreshingly critical 36" x 66" laminated map of Saskatchewan⁸⁹ for my mother-in-law at the end of our conversation, as did a tourist who joined us. With Alex's approval, I recorded our three-hour conversation.

Alex's story is the reverse of most. Born and raised outside Edmonton, Alberta, disillusioned by reckless development patterns in his hometown,⁹⁰ and drawn to the relatively

⁸⁹ Alex specializes in reference maps, which are intended to offer a general overview of everything in the area being depicted. His map of Saskatchewan includes, for example, every grain elevator from the past and present of the province's history. Other unorthodox facets in his maps are treaty boundaries, irrigation canals, airfields, the flooded Quill Lakes, ghost towns, Hutterite colonies, fire towers, traplines, major industrial projects, community pastures, and the mean centre of population for the entire province.

⁹⁰ Ardrossan, Alberta has been, according to Alex, "totally absorbed by ex-urbanization." He finds it ironic that, as a "professional ghost town-ologist," his hometown is "the opposite of a ghost town."

inexpensive land and cultural wealth of rural Saskatchewan, in 2020, still in his early 20s he decided to make a home for himself in Val Marie. Quick witted, eloquent, and passionate about social history, he soon became Director of the Heritage, Culture, and Youth Elevator Committee of Val Marie and the principal interpreter for the elevator, which now, besides guided tours, hosts movie nights, school tours, and concerts. A folk concert in 2024 saw the elevator reach its maximum capacity of 90 people. During our conversation, he demonstrated a deep and nuanced understanding of the interplay between small town and regional politics, social and cultural dynamics, statistical versus anecdotal evidence, and overall a ripe appreciation of a critical regionalist framework. Sometimes, mid sentence, he would seamlessly insert an analogy from Newfoundland and Labrador geography or demographics to broaden his argument. I left thinking Val Marie very fortunate to have Alex as their interpreter for their grain elevator, which has become, with the hard work and support of Alex and allies, a Municipal Heritage Property and museum.

Alex had no interest in romantically or nostalgically representing the region or town. He explained to me that all settler towns in Saskatchewan were located at an astonishingly regular seven mile interval from one another “because that’s how far a steam locomotive travels between water towers.” Val Marie is no different.

This is an especially dry area, it has a unique natural history, and that’s what led to the creation of the park, which is one of a kind. The elevator is exactly the opposite. Literally every town had an elevator. If there was nothing else, if there was no store, if there were no private businesses, if there were no houses, there were still hundreds of dots on the map in Saskatchewan that had a station, a water tower, and an elevator. So, in a sense, this is totally not unique at all. But, because this is a successful, like, conservation story, it’s become unique because more and more of these fall over because they’re abandoned, unloved, difficult to maintain, and extremely flammable. And so we’re kind of upwardly mobile, like we’ve actually become a heritage attraction, and that means we have fewer and fewer peers in Saskatchewan. Like there are lots of elevators that are being kept, they have a sympathetic handover that

never really wanted to take it down, but without support it never really becomes a museum, it's just kind of an awkward footnote in the annals of history.



Figure 6.5: The Val Marie elevator. Photo by author.

When I asked him about a comment made by a woman I had met in Moose Jaw who told me there was a general trend in Saskatchewan of people moving out of the cities and into the country, he used his census background to weigh the perspectives. “People in Saskatchewan get optimistic about like the return to rural. In practice, yes, every town has a couple weirdos. But once you take it away from the anecdote level and get to the spreadsheet level... It’s enough that the anecdotes touch and reach everybody. But there is just no substitute.” Even though the housing market in Val Marie appears to be booming, most are occupied by seasonal residents. Yet, nostalgia is real. His cartography business has capitalized on it. “People buy them for their family history connection,” he informed me. “And in Saskatchewan it’s been super popular

because, again, everywhere is the same. All of these towns were built 100 years ago under a different economic system and their decline has been terminal, and there's just a huge groundswell of nostalgia everywhere here.”

In terms of nostalgia, he described the resurgence of socialism in Saskatchewan after the Depression as a “crisis response...Everything, like the railway was corporate, town planning was corporate, the grain companies were private. And, just as farm society tried to rebuild desperately, a lot of what was built then were co-ops, collectives, and that created such a lasting impact in Saskatchewan that it took until just about this decade to finish like screwing it all back up again.” Indeed, he described to me some of the progressive political currents in Saskatchewan that were embraced by farming communities 100 years ago and radical movements in Canada that were their offshoot, such as the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and Social Credit. “And I think part of it is just being like a massive immigration sink, like there were a lot of tendencies that came home here. There were a lot of Americans who grew up in the US and came to Saskatchewan. And so a lot of ideas, a lot of ideologies that were considered characteristically American 100 years ago caught on in the prairies first.” He also told me that, although it may appear that all remnants of socialism have disappeared, certain elements, such as utilities, are still publicly owned. Yet, he acknowledges his own difficulties reviving socialist sensibilities, as a community member and NDP party member. He rued that “Saskatchewan is such a nostalgic place” but “you would not know it if you looked at the election results.

The idea that there should be a greater public share of the economy is off the table, as is the case in the western world at large. And that's just history. I mean, it's the kind of history that becomes politics once you get a little too close to the present... People love the idea of the small family farm and this web of like co-op institutions that were like the economic matrix that supported it. But it's nostalgia. People remember milking the cows and churning the butter, in my opinion, but in terms of like, oh that was possible because of massive political effort... And in a lot of ways, and I shouldn't say people have just lost their way. Because the NDP was never able to,

similar to Newfoundland, I think, really. Nothing the NDP did was ever able to fight against economic geography. Farms will always get bigger. Technology has always improved continuously, and no one would turn that down. So just as long as mechanization is happening in the farm sector, which is a continual process... As long as one person can work more land in a day, the number of farms will decrease. And so, in Saskatchewan, it's just like the outports. The number is out of 10 farms 100 years ago, one of them is still operating today, and probably they bought out their nine acres. So Val Marie, again, the town site is down from 600 to 120, but in the district it's just as bad. It's gone from like 3,000 to 400.

We did eventually get around to the grain elevator tour, a delayed start "just because," as Alex confessed, "I have so much to say about current society." He began with an analogy to Atlantic Canada, a critical regionalist tactic to link distant regions with similar struggles: "Canada is a big export economy with a weak little industrial sector, and this is something that we have right in common with the Atlantic. Saskatchewan exports commodities and that's it. The grain elevator is the majestic symbol of an export economy. Water tower, train station, grain elevator, the holy trinity. Anything else is optional. A lot of towns never developed past that point." While wooden grain elevators are considered to be iconically Canadian and of the prairies, always built within walking distance from grain wagons since roads were notoriously poor, Alex is careful (albeit good-naturedly regretful) to thank British Columbia for the lumber, which, together with the railroad, made their construction possible in the first place.

At the end of our tour, a couple from La Ronge in northern Saskatchewan joined our conversation. Both the man and the woman were fascinated by grain elevators and had wanted to visit the one in Val Marie for a long time. While the man went back to the car with their dog, the woman stayed with us for at least another hour. She was captivated by Alex's willingness to spout his wisdom, and was herself extremely knowledgeable about Saskatchewan's geography, particularly the north where she was raised. As an Indigenous woman who grew up living largely off the land, she was giddy when Alex took out his large map of Saskatchewan, and it was very

entertaining for me to observe their fast-paced back-and-forth chatter about tiny communities, lakes, and landforms in the norther portions of the province (Figure 6.6). The stories that poured from her memory flowed like the Saskatchewan River. It was fascinating to hear about off-grid living in the extreme north with her family, life on the reserves, Indigenous politics, and ongoing dispossessions by the Canadian State. At one point, she pointed to a miniscule point on the map and informed Alex that he had mistaken the name of one of the lakes in the north. She and I were dumbfounded when Alex nodded knowingly and pulled out an updated version he had made with the lake, and similar revisions, in mind. Alex made two \$70 sales that afternoon.

I left Val Marie with a much more intimate understanding of the complexities of rural life in that part of the world. Grain elevators are an iconic part of Saskatchewan's landscape. Their impact on the agricultural development in the province is indisputable. Yet, while about 3,300 wooden elevators were in operation in 1950, each able to store 283 bushels, only a few hundred remain today. After my trip to Val Marie, I watched a short film by Bill Macfarlane (2010) about the Val Marie grain elevator. Maurice Lemire, whose father was Val Marie's first elevator agent, is filmed helping to restore its roof and interior, as well as discussing community efforts to fundraise \$60,000 for further restorations. Lemire rues the fact that "kids are heading for the big cities and they didn't like the farm life" and is working hard to revitalize some of the memories and values of a nearly forgotten way of life. "My dad used to come here and fix shoes and give us haircuts and all these kind of things, so it's important to me, you know? The companies that owned them didn't want to be responsible for the upkeep so they just knocked them down... It's all about making money for the companies. They don't care about us guys in these little towns" (Macfarlane 2010). He describes efforts to revive the elevator and turn it into a museum as part

of the work that is needed to “save our little prairie town, which is pretty important... There’s not many left” (Ibid.).



Figure 6.6: Alex and a visitor during a fascinating and uniquely Saskatchewan cartographic exchange. Photo by author.

According to a *CBC* article, and corroborated by Alex, “Wooden grain elevators used to be the sign of a successful community. The towering structures, whether owned by farmers or co-operatively by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, were places to store and prepare grain before it was shipped to a world market through a network of rails and roads. They were also community hubs where people shared news and did business” (Pearce 2020). As farms were consolidated by large agribusinesses, grain elevators were torn down, which had a demoralizing effect on many communities. In Val Marie, it has been noted that the younger generations lack a connection to the iconic structures in their backyard, and that if the physical structures vanish, so too will the nostalgic symbol that holds importance for the older generations. To rectify the lack of attention paid in history classes to the myriad factors leading to rural decline, high school students have

been tasked with interviewing their elders to broaden their perspectives about the elevators' historical and cultural value. "By interviewing older community members, [a high school student] learned the elevator was home to haircuts, boot repairs, and after-hours socializing on top of farming business. 'Once you go into it, you can almost feel how busy it used to be'" (Ibid.). It is being duly noted in the province that "preserving and saving the roots of the community could be the first step in revitalizing it" (Ibid.).

Another issue the article discusses is the necessity of consulting with Indigenous peoples to enhance conservation efforts. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool would regularly hire Métis workers to maintain its elevators across the region, "dangerous work with few benefits" (Pearce 2020), and yet, Indigenous narratives are all too often omitted from the remembrance of grain elevators. Not only are Métis perspectives excluded, but so are the Indigenous peoples whose lands were appropriated by farmers moving in. "As a symbol of intensified farming... grain elevators represent a severe disruption to traditional Indigenous economies and cultures" (Ibid.). According to one Indigenous scholar, "We can't smile with the rest of all prairie people as we look up at these giants because we know the harm they caused our community" (Ibid.).

There is a clear connection with commons in all of these examples. The traditional, albeit diverse ways of life being mourned by settlers and Indigenous peoples, but also being forgotten by younger generations, are centred on commons. These have taken the form of horizontal leadership, co-operative businesses, multipurpose spaces for communing and exchanging services, subsistence farming, and all the non-market activities among family members and neighbours that accompany a land-based lifestyle. While also a site for business, in many ways, the grain elevator was a third place for socializing, the type of space that is sorely lacking in small towns.

Codroy Valley is experiencing a similar shift to Val Marie in this regard. Some young people in the Valley are unfamiliar with the important wool-related industries that largely shaped Codroy Valley's culture and economies until a few generations ago. As mentioned in Chapter 3, one young woman told me she was shocked to learn about her community's wool heritage only last year at a local museum. This example, and the example of Val Marie's grain elevator, are testament to the power of some museological tactics to connect all generations to the land and land-based traditions through place-based education. I will discuss some empowering tactics for enabling rural youth to forge deeper connections with their communities in Chapter 8. First, to provide even more nuance to the challenges and possibilities around the ecomuseum's role in mediating community participation and relationships to perceived outsiders, I turn next to my research in the United Kingdom.

CHAPTER 7: BOUNDARY WORK IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The previous chapter presented a couple scenarios that roughly parallel those being experienced in Codroy Valley. I described how several ecomuseums in rural Saskatchewan are contending with the factors contributing to rural decline, most notably depopulation, and the emotional and ecological ramifications of the paradigmatic shift toward values and consumption patterns associated with urbanism. CLEM has taken up the political project to save its watershed and the lifeworlds that depend on it using a holistic but firm advocacy approach that prizes connection and dialogue over antagonism. Its proactivity led by a committed team of volunteers has led to some significant victories seemingly against all odds. PWSS's approach is more conventional in the sense that it draws attention to the interconnectivity of heritage and ecology within the confines of a community while encouraging a critical regionalist understanding of glocal forces and socioeconomic change. My conversations with a few of its team members combined with on-site observations brought me to a clearer understanding of how broad regional trends must be tackled through both larger-than-local partnerships (the university, First Nations, national parks) and a reassessment of the complexities surrounding the local.

One of the limitations of my research trip was the brevity of each visit. I visited 12 ecomuseums in Canada, the UK, Spain, and Portugal in the span of 30 days. The four discussed in this thesis are the ones in which I was able to engage in the most meaningful dialogues. They were also the only ones in which I was able to record conversations. PWSS included one full day within the ecomuseum space, followed by a self-guided hike in Grasslands National Park the next morning armed with new sensibilities garnered through my conversations with Norine and Lee. CLEM was even briefer, encompassing a two-hour chat with Aura Lee. Despite not being able to attend the July 1st celebrations, which she invited me to, I felt she was the right person to

talk to for a well-rounded sense of what their ecomuseum looks like on the ground. In lieu of length, my visits had depth. Our chats were heartfelt and thorough and, at least in Val Marie, complemented with *in situ* interpretation.

In this chapter, I share some takeaways from my research trip in the United Kingdom, where a theme that emerges is borders. The first ecomuseum discussed here is Ecoamgueddfa (Welsh for ecomuseum) on the Llŷn Peninsula (Pen Llŷn) of North Wales, where residents are uniting over a perceived threat to their cultural and linguistic heritage, chiefly, seasonal gentrification. Embracing a digital medium, they facilitate connections between local groups and businesses as well as bring in experts to work on cultural and ecological issues with youth. I suggest Ecoamgueddfa may act as both a warning sign and a guidepost for relatively quiet places like Codroy Valley who should nonetheless be prepared for its “discovery” by an influx of seasonal gentrifiers, and the socio-ecological upheaval that may follow. The final one I explore is Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum along the English and Scottish border, the first ecomuseum in England and the first in the UK to straddle two borders. Based on a full day of activities with the ecomuseum’s founder, I describe the innovative measures taken by the ecomuseum to empower its residents and educate the public about a globally pivotal but relatively obscure event that occurred in its territory about 500 years ago: the 1513 Battle of Flodden.

7.1 Ecoamgueddfa

Of all the ecomuseums I visited, Ecoamgueddfa stands out as the most vibrant in terms of diversity of activities and number of people involved. Its origins date back to 2011, when Arwel Jones coordinated the Llŷn Landscape Partnership, a diverse consortium of environmental, statutory, educational, and community agencies working together to ensure Pen Llŷn would thrive as a home as well as a destination. Their primary concern was the safeguarding of the

Welsh language, culture, and heritage amidst an influx of seasonal tourists, mostly wealthy folks from nearby English towns. Anxieties about the “Englishing” of Wales could be felt on the heels of a similar trend in Scotland (Jedrej & Nuttall 1996). While the influx provided income to local businesses, albeit seasonally, there were some serious downsides. With many homes being bought up by seasonal residents, an inflated housing market was preventing many local people from purchasing homes in their own villages. Buttressed by the typical brain drain of rural young people to urban areas towards a greater diversity of employment options, Pen Llŷn residents found themselves increasingly worried about the viability of their peninsula as a future home for their Welsh kin.

The partnership thus cited sustainable business development and “green growth” as goals. Seven sites on Pen Llŷn identified themselves as key assets for sustainable development on the peninsula. Familiar with the ecomuseum concept, Arwel organized a group of colleagues to visit the Ceumannan-Staffin Ecomuseum on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. They were impressed by its developmental model and, given the cultural and economic similarities between Skye and Pen Llŷn, thought the model would be adaptable at home. They approached Bangor University, a local institution, for technical and funding support. With substantial grants from regional, national, and international funders,⁹¹ in 2014, the seven sites became the core network that would work together to develop Ecoamgueddfa, the first ecomuseum in Wales.

Unlike the eight heritage sites of Val Marie, which are all within a half hour walking distance, the seven Ecoamgueddfa sites are spread across Pen Llŷn at driving or cycling distance apart from one another, all but one located directly on the well-traveled Wales Coastal Path. And

⁹¹ It was noted in conversations I had across the United Kingdom that international funding was severely cut following Brexit. For example, whereas it is one of the European Union’s largest mandates to fund minority languages like Welsh and Gaelic, the UK’s government has other priorities.

while a self-guided tour is encouraged, the sites are all interactive, rather than mostly inactive historic buildings. To optimize the visitor experience, the seven core partner sites had to meet certain criteria: adequate car parking; decent toilet and diaper-changing facilities; circular walks; either a good café or proximity to refreshments; digital interpretation panels; and Wi-Fi access (Young et al. 2017, 468). As ecomuseum partners, staff at each site are knowledgeable about the other sites and happy to promote them. They wear Ecoamgueddfa paraphernalia and are prepared to stamp your Ecoamgueddfa “passport” as proof of your visit.⁹² There are leaflets and maps on hand. It certainly feels like a brand.

The sites include two mansions and a maritime museum, centre for Welsh language and culture, permaculture and eco-building charity, interpretation centre, and sailing academy. The interpretation centre, *Porth y Swnt* in Aberdaron, by providing information and suggestions about activities in the local environment, is described as “the one that epitomises the ecomuseum concept” (Ibid., 471). “Inspired by the pilgrims who have travelled to Aberdaron and Bardsey Island for hundreds of years... [Porth y Swnt] uses poetry and art installations to capture and showcase the special qualities which make the Llŷn Peninsula so unique in terms of history, culture, and environment” (Ibid.). From there, visitors are encouraged to rent bikes, explore the beach, and attend one of the local “Taste of the Sea” festivals. At one mansion, *Plas yn Rhiw*, two cottages have been renovated with funding by the Llŷn Landscape Partnership, one decorated in its original 16th-century style, the other to modern-day standards. A former inhabitant of Bardsey Island, off the coast of Pen Llŷn and with a current population of 11, lives in the modern cottage and regularly welcomes visitors to explore his garden and learn about his memories of Bardsey.

⁹² Visitors can pick up a free booklet at any of the sites. Once all seven stamped are collected, they may receive an Ecoamgueddfa pin badge as a prize.

I was able to visit three of the sites during my trip to the peninsula. I had arranged via email to meet with two of the founders, Arwel, who introduced the concept to Pen Llŷn, and Einir Young of Bangor University's Sustainability Lab. On the first day, Einir and I chatted for an hour over coffee at Bangor University's Pontio Arts Centre, an ultramodern, six-level arts and innovation centre in the middle of campus. She gifted me a beautiful book, *Ciplŷn: Voices of the Women of Llŷn*, narrating the hopes and struggles of 14 women living on Pen Llŷn alongside dazzling photographic portraits of the women and images of the peninsula. She instructed me in some of the problems plaguing the peninsula, the *raison d'être* of Ecoamgueddfa's genesis. Pen Llŷn is unique in Wales for having the highest number of native Welsh speakers, at over 70%. However, extreme seasonal gentrification is inflating housing prices and destroying meaningful work outside of low-paying service and tourism jobs, thus forcing many Welsh people to leave their communities in search of better jobs and more affordable housing. Ecoamgueddfa is thus allied with these local and regional groups to build confidence in local communities to develop a more sustainable tourism industry that reignites pride in their language and culture. Einir mostly deals with grant writing and partnerships with the university, interest groups, and not-for-profits.

On the second day, I met Arwel in Pwllheli and he drove me to one of the sites, *Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw*. On the drive, we talked about the housing crisis on Pen Llŷn, the main issue being that "housing is expensive but wages are low." He went on to describe the crux of the problem: "If people want to live locally, they're struggling, so a lot of people move on, and then obviously that leaves a massive vacuum in tourism because you need those jobs but you also, those jobs are there to sustain communities, so if you're pulling in people from outside to work in tourism, well, what's the point of tourism?" He made it clear that local people had no problem with outsiders moving in. Rather, the problem lies in the fact that the revenue does not stay in the

communities, but moves with the tourists out of the peninsula. “Tourism has to be paying us, otherwise it’s pointless.”

Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw is the oldest art venue and commercial gallery in Wales (Figure 7.1). It is housed in an 1856 Victorian Gothic mansion with an impressive Jacobean staircase in the centre. The gallery features monthly exhibitions from local and regional Welsh artists and, since earning Accredited Museum status in 2015, is able to borrow works of national importance for its exhibitions. An adjoining amphitheatre hosts open-air concerts by local and international performers. A lecture theatre showcases multimedia art, as well as a rotating schedule of adult and children’s art workshops and lectures organized by artists-in-residence, craft fairs throughout the year, and a gift shop selling local art. In 2016, the artist in residence was a “rubbish artist” who used beach detritus to make art to inspire visitors to upcycle while raising awareness about the destructiveness of waste to our natural environments. A renovated trail system, called the “forgotten forest” due to the woodlands that had been neglected for decades, is now accessible to visitors in a series of circular paths, which link up to the Wales Coast Path (Figure 7.2).

The first thing I noticed when we arrived at the estate was the adjoining café shaped like a sea urchin (Figure 7.3). Opened in 2023, the café was designed by a non-local (English) architect with bold attentiveness to the interplay of local history and environment with global currents, to the end of strengthening a commons within the community, and thus stands out as a classic example of critical regionalist architecture. Gwyn Jones, Director of the site whom I had the pleasure of chatting with over a coffee at the café, pointed me toward a short film, in which the café’s chief architect, Matthew Sanderson, describes his artistic process in conceiving and executing the design. It begins with a long-held fascination with the original context of the design of the neo-Gothic mansion, which was constructed during a

revolutionary period in human history where people were avaricely collecting natural history right across the world. This is a time when Darwin was releasing *The Origin of Species*. His German counterpart, Ernst Haeckel, the zoologist, the marine zoologist, was fishing things out of the soup in the South Pacific and having a look at invisible structures for the first time and then drawing what he could see under the microscope. Whole worlds were becoming exposed to people. And that's the first place I went. Not to the foundations with a tape measure, but down to the beach. I found sea urchin tests and barnacles and shells, as I have been for 20 years, and I collected those friends, those little gems, and I measured those instead, and I scaled them up. It seemed logical to me to use the natural flora and fauna and zoology of the place to inform the building design, the sculpture design. (plaglynyweddw 2023)



Figure 7.1: *Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw*. Photo by author.

The sea urchin, unique to the Llanbedrog Bay overlooked by the site, has thus been scaled up to an 11-metre-wide, self-supporting structure with an 80% recycled stainless steel outer shell designed to emulate a colony of 89,000 “acorn barnacles,” each individually punched, pressed, and welded to the subframe. The barnacles scatter natural light while minimizing internal solar gain, and a central “oculus” spills natural light into the café space, which is thus passively ventilated in the warmer months (Figure 7.4). The 12 structural beams that radiate from the

occulus follow Fibonacci's spiral sequence and meet analogous columns, which connect to four-pointed arches that recall the style of the Gothic house. Each of the arches frames a portal view to the exterior coast and woodlands. The shell's marine-grade construction material is resistant to the chemical and physical weathering otherwise present in the estate's marine environment. A funnel-shaped chandelier is inspired by the microscopic zooplankton *Litharachnium tentorium*. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the sea urchin's structural mechanics, Sanderson investigated at the minutest of scales.



Figure 7.2: View from the Wales Coast Path above *Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw*. Photo by author.

Besides the structural observance of phenomena microscopic to global, the café is open seven days a week, all but three weeks out of the year, and, with up to 50 staff throughout the year, is a major source of local employment. I learned about the contributions of the site, and Ecoamgueddfa more generally, in the community-building project over a coffee with Arwel, Gwyn, and a local woman, Dyddgu, whom Einir had requested to come join me. All agreed to be

recorded. Although Welsh is their native tongue, all were happy to converse in English so that I could understand them.



Figure 7.3: The café at *Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw* that resembles a sea urchin. Photo by author.

Dyddgu, who has lived on the peninsula her whole life, and raised a family there, is passionate about growth of sustainable tourism so that money is circulated locally. She has felt the effects of inflation very close to home, as one of her sons is unable to afford housing but wants to continue living there, so was forced to convert a van into a home. “People who want to live within the community, they have a choice when they go to college or whatever, and if they want to come back, it should be easy to do that,” she told me. “Get a proper job, I mean a permanent wage, so they can live where they want. That’s how the schools, then, can be kept open and the language is being kept, and the traditions and the culture.” A related issue is around services for things like fires and sea accidents. One town, Abersoch, has a lifeboat station and a fire station, but “the crew, they can’t buy houses within the village because they can’t afford it. So the services, then, can’t be kept going.” Arwel chimed in, “So the response time goes up because they have to

travel in to go out again. That has a big impact, it's life changing. It can really mean life or death."

To put the problem in perspective, Dyddgu described tourism when she was growing up. "When we were children, every school holiday, six weeks in summer, we used to go and live in the caravan and rent the house out for six weeks. We got the money to go on holiday then. My mother was a teacher and my father was a mechanic, then we could afford just those little extra holiday. That economy was really local then. Find a place, stay for a week, and off they went." Nowadays, she worries that with accommodation rentals being bought out by seasonal residents, the rental money leaves the peninsula along with the proprietors, which is complicating local sense of place and, along with that, threatening the vitality of Welsh language and culture. Sadly, she rued, "We're just swimming against the tide all the time."

Yet, I was not convinced about the severity of the problem. I asked, "Aren't there still 70% native Welsh speakers on Pen Llŷn?" Arwel's description of the situation challenged me to recall the scenario being faced by countless linguistic communities around the world. Moribund languages are still in use, but the relevance of their continuation for future generations is doubtful amid shifting values and hegemonic control by institutions that relegate minority languages to symbolic status while propounding the commonsense superiority of lingua francas like English, particularly for school and work. Welsh-speaking communities certainly exist in other parts of the UK and the world, Arwel schooled me, and they become like a "Welsh ghetto." These ghettos form in larger cities like London or Cardiff, Wales's capital, due to a lack of job opportunities in their hometowns. "There's still places where it could be like 90- to 95-percent Welsh speaking," he said. "Those people could be coming from very different communities but they all live there, and then everybody thinks, 'Oh, that's a standup community.' Well, it is, but

they're from everywhere. Those people would like to live somewhere maybe closer to where their families are.”



Figure 7.4: Inside *Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw*'s café. Photo by author.

On the flip side, that outmigration leaves a vacancy ready to be filled by mostly English folks happy to capitalize on the beauty and affordability⁹³ of North Wales. For Dyddgu, these new relations reek of extractivism, because “most people, especially these people with second homes, won’t be able to live here at all times because they can’t cope.” Pen Llŷn, with its inclement seasonal climate and lack of urban amenities such as cinemas and luxury shops, qualities native inhabitants are comfortable with, is not a viable year-round destination for the newcomers. And yet, the peninsula is “their happy place,” Dyddgu snickered. “That’s what they call it.” Arwel interjected, “You can’t blame them. It’s just, there’s a lot of happy places here with different people, groups of people that caravan together from different places, camp and stuff. But that

⁹³ According to my interlocutors, Wales is one of the poorest countries in Europe. Whereas the European Union had been financially helpful, Brexit has left Wales economically vulnerable, and seasonal extractivism is not helping.

disparity of wealth in a poor community, in a geographically poor community, that's the issue, I'd say. Although it's beautiful, it's not a rich area. It's a poor area. We live in a desirable area that's poor.”

Throughout our conversation, I was struck by the parallels between North Wales and Newfoundland. Just as Welsh speakers from Pen Llŷn are pulled into other parts of the country for work and a more luxurious lifestyle while still retaining a sense of pan-Welsh identity, diasporic communities of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, who are lured to places like Alberta for similar reasons, try to maintain a sense of place and identity with recourse to newly localized, pan-Newfoundland nationalist or nativist images (mummers), customs (Screech-Ins), and music (Newfoundland musical kitsch). Based on his observations of the Newfoundland diaspora in the United States, Thorne (2007) found that relationships to Newfoundland music roughly parallel three musical networks outlined by French economist Jacques Attali, whereby communities undergo a gradual separation of performers and audience due to commodification and globalization. While, already in the second network, “control over the music industry begins to be removed from the community itself,” commodification of music is sealed in network three, thus “breaking all ties between music and time and space” (Thorne 2007, 70). For Thorne, Newfoundland’s “musical kitsch,” a cultural identity represented by the successful commercial groups like Great Big Sea and the Irish Descendants, and one that is prevalent among the Newfoundland diaspora in the US, “is no longer intimately connected to the community for which it was meant to serve” and therefore “is most easily used to promote essentialized identity, and is closely related to stereotypical images of Newfoundland within Canada”⁹⁴ (Ibid.).

⁹⁴ Musical counterhegemony also occurs in the diaspora. Thorne (2007) finds that among diasporic communities in Ontario, for example, Attali’s fourth network, that of musical composition, is more prevalent, whereby locally produced music that reflects the surrounding environs is reestablishing a form of commons, which support the nurturance of a Newfoundland sense of place outside of Newfoundland.

These networks roughly parallel those theorized by Robert Klymasz (1973) regarding folklore and language change. In the context of Ukrainian language and culture in the Canadian Prairies, Klymasz identifies three layers. The first layer, that of the “traditional,” is the most unchanged. The next, the “transitional” layer, is where certain traditional elements crystallize, others fade away, and new features emerge. The third layer, he identifies as the “innovational” one in which tradition is reconstructed into a “streamlined, modern-day version of the folklore legacy” (Klymasz 1973, 133). Echoing Thorne’s theorization of Newfoundland musical kitsch, Klymasz bemoans the “degenerative impact of language loss” as being the single most important factor to have influenced Ukrainian folklore in Western Canada, where transmission of folklore loses its “rich verbal core” and becomes more “sensory”, “part-time”, and “hyperbolic” (Ibid., 134). These are the processes, I think, about which Arwel and Dyddgu are chiefly concerned. And yet, unlike the Ukrainian language, which, while endangered among the Canadian diaspora remains prominent in Ukraine and bordering countries,⁹⁵ Welsh’s motherload is Wales. As is happening with Scots Gaelic in Scotland (not to mention Codroy Valley) and Gaeilge in Ireland, unless conservation actions are taken now, the fate of spoken Welsh is dubious.

To counter the anxieties displayed by my interlocutors at the café, Dyddgu, who took me under her wing for the next several hours, brought me to *Nant Gwrtheyrn*, the centre for Welsh language and culture. Perched in a stunning valley looking out onto the Irish Sea, “the Nant” is the result of efforts to renovate a Victorian quarrying village that had been abandoned following the closure of the quarry in the 1970s. At the Nant, visitors can visit the quarryman’s cottage to learn about earlier life in the village, which provided granite for streets in cities in England and

⁹⁵ That is not to discount the linguistic effects of war. Among other travesties, warfare is a prime example of linguistic hegemony, either through the elimination of speakers of the language deemed inferior or threatening by the aggressor, or through institutional domination.

other parts of Europe. One can also enrol in Welsh language and culture courses, and participate in cultural events such as St. David's Day celebrations. The Nant organizes wildlife and heritage walking tours to Tre'r Ceiri, one of the UK's most densely occupied hillforts during the early Bronze Age, and one of the best preserved. A cottage accommodation and restaurant are also available on site.

Unable to find a vacant space in the busy parking lot full of gigantic camper vans, likely occupied by the seasonal tourists Arwel had described, Dyddgu stopped her car in front of one of the campers so we could have a quick look at the Nant from afar. While we stood on the coast and Dyddgu pointed out some features on the landscape, an English man lounging and drinking a beer in front of the blocked camper called out to us rudely. "Hey! You can't park there, you know." I could sense her blood boiling as she forced herself to respond coolly, "We'll just be a minute." She was angry. As we drove off, she vented her frustrations at the sense of entitlement of the English gentrifiers. We passed a man running on the street. "He's English," she said. I asked how she could tell. "All the local people work, they don't run around." She drove me to Nefyn, one of the towns that has been the most severely gentrified. After driving by one exclusive pub, restaurant, or bed and breakfast after another, we passed the local school that closed down when local families could no longer afford to stay in the community. It was an emotional drive and the sense of loss was palpable.

Since we were unable to eat our sandwiches at the Nant, Dyddgu decided to take me to a tiny old church in the countryside, which she told me is always open to the public (Figure 7.5). Excited to show me some of the features in the church's interior, she led me through the church gate and tried to open the door but it was locked. After knocking for a few minutes, it was opened just a crack by a tall man resembling Andy Warhol. Dyddgu greeted him in Welsh and

asked if we might enter. He responded in English that there was a private art studio inside and no visitors were permitted entry. Dismayed, she led us back to the gate where we ate our lunch in the chilly wind.



Figure 7.5: Old stone church in the Pen Llŷn countryside, inhabited by artists. Photo by author.

On our drive to another ecomuseum site, the Llŷn Maritime Museum where she works part time, Dyddgu told me about a cycling tour company started four years ago. “They don’t know of the culture, they don’t speak the language, they take people and they really don’t know anything about our story.” Undoubtedly, the natural beauty on the tour is stunning, but Dyddgu and others are worried that an exclusive focus on nature is extractive because it ignores the conflictual realities of everyday life for local people. Therefore, she told me that one of Ecoamgueddfa’s goals is to branch out from connecting, funding, and bringing visibility to sites within the digital space in order to address this lack in touristic offerings on the peninsula.

What I’m talking about is to create different tours, which we could deliver on, and then take people from one part to another, tell them the story, the proper story, the real story, the history, the culture, the language, everything that we’ve got to offer.

Lots of other people have moved here, but we're a part of this land and we want to be able to tell our story. So if we could create different tours and invite people who are here on holidays, people who come here on holidays, tourists, so we can tell them our story, like we're doing now, really. And we've got different young people that have started businesses here, and we could take the tour there to see. One of my friend's children now, they're farmers, they've been farming for years and years and years. I think he's the third generation on the farm, which he started to try to change things for the farm to work. He's trying to make some diversity with selling the beef from the farm itself. So you could take people there to see how things are, how he's got to change things for this farm to be able to survive here, and for the farm to continue into the next generation.

Through conversations at Ecoamgueddfa, it became apparent that in order to shield themselves from hegemonic forces, including the acute despondency aggravated by language loss, a necessary tactic used by Welsh residents has been to construct cultural, economic, and linguistic borders around Pen Llŷn. Of course, drawing boundaries around an imagined place constructs insiders and outsiders. Yet, following Frampton (1983, 24–25), in an age of placeless modernity, we are compelled to “posit, after Heidegger, the absolute precondition of a bounded domain in order to create an architecture of resistance.” Pen Llŷn is at risk, and Ecoamgueddfa is helping residents and visitors connect the dots to better understand the confluence of global causes and localized effects. The end goal, as Arwel put it, is “circularity.” Stable incomes through year-round and sustainable tourism should enable residents to remain in their hometowns if they so desire, so as to empower themselves, and future residents, to appreciate rather than exploit the peninsula's complex but vulnerable histories, customs, and languages.

7.2 Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum

Ecoamgueddfa reveals how the border between the environs of Pen Llŷn and England is a site of ongoing tensions between values perceived as local or global. Arwel and Dyddgu both expressed frustration at the universal standards and aesthetics of accommodation businesses operated by people unfamiliar or uninterested in the peninsular culture. At one point, Arwel lamented that

“every coastal area in the UK has exactly the same thing,” indicating he does not wish to see Pen Llŷn collapse into the sort of placeless vacationland whose aesthetics are encroaching into nearly all coastal areas around the country.

Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum is also concerned with borders, but in a way that is more cooperative than defensive. The idea for some sort of orchestrated, cross-border commemoration came about five years before the quincentennial of the largest battle ever fought between the Kingdoms of Scotland and England. It is said that King James IV of Scotland, with his Scots army numbering between 30,000 and 100,000 people, invaded England under the leadership of Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey while King Henry VIII was away conducting business in France. Although no material evidence exists, the received wisdom is that the English won a resounding victory, with a few thousand deaths compared to a staggering tens of thousands of Scottish deaths (Miller, Bankier, & Bowden 2018). Among the Scottish casualty count were nobility, senior clergy, cavalry, and King James himself.

The man who decided to take action in 2008 to ensure a large-scale event for the quincentennial is Lord James Joicey, a local landowner with multiple generations of family history in the region. I spent an afternoon with James touring various sites associated with the battle on the English side of the border and recording a two-hour conversation at the Lavender Tea Rooms in Etal, where he treated me to a pot of tea and slice of Northumberland “Border Tart” (Figure 7.6). At the end of our chat, he gifted me a book titled *Flodden 1513: Legends and Legacy – The Findings of the Flodden 500 Project* (Miller, Bankier, & Bowden 2018), which documents the collaborative efforts between local organizations, international funders, students, professionals, and interested citizens, all buoyed by the Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum, to recover, uncover, and discover knowledge about the battle, its precursors, and the aftermath.



Figure 7.6: Border tart and tea in Etal. Photo by author.

Initially, he summoned together about five people whom he knew to be knowledgeable about diverse aspects of the battle, including an archaeologist, a historian, and a caretaker of the battle site. James knew that if anything large-scale were to be done to commemorate the battle, it would have to come from the grassroots level, since those at the higher levels would likely lack the money or time. They decided it best to “raise the profile of the battle amongst local schools, amongst local clubs, amongst local history societies, amongst all sorts of just local community groups who have an interest in it.” One regional custom they decided was a good place to start was the annual summertime “civic week,” during which each small town hosts a week of festivities, akin to the multi-day Codroy Valley Folk Festival, Winter Carnival, or Come Home Year celebrations.

As part of that week, most of these towns ride, they take horses and they ride around the parish boundaries of their town. It’s an old, old, old tradition of checking that the boundaries are still intact. It actually has a very serious historical thing where the mayor or the provost or whatever he was of the town would command local boys to

get out, ride around the Marches and just check that everything's in good order, the markers are still in place and so on. And a lot of that comes from the days of Flodden, when towns were towns and they had their Marches and their borders. And yet so many of those towns lost all their menfolk. And certainly, two of these towns [on the Scottish side] now have a very strong theme during their civic week of remembering the fallen at Flodden. Maybe it's 500 years ago, but they still do.

Following the initial brainstorm session, James and his small team went out "into the field" to make connections with some of the local groups already planning events for Flodden. They gathered about 30 people from both sides of the border for a meeting, and together they came up with a list of 80 people, one of whom was a student at Newcastle University doing a master's degree in Heritage Studies. The new, enlarged group, backed by a steering committee of nine committed volunteers, requested that this student go through the list and investigate the various commemorative plans in the region. When he came back to report on his findings, which included a peace garden, rock concert, classic car rally, church flower festivals, and several parades, the student, who had taken a course with Peter Davis, suggested they consider using the ecomuseum model for their Flodden project, as a way to thematically connect and bring visibility to already existing monuments.

Already, the Flodden group envisioned a baseline of 12 sites concerned with the battle, several to which James brought me on our tour. Besides Flodden Field (Figure 7.7), where the two armies are said to have engaged in combat, other preliminary sites were Barmoor Castle (Figure 7.8), where the English soldiers camped the night before the battle, and the Church of Branxton (Figure 7.9), said to be a temporary mortuary and burial site of English soldiers. Even in the early days of planning, the committee felt it important to include sites further afield. For instance, Flodden Wall was constructed in the centre of Edinburgh, in reaction to the dreadful news of Scotland's defeat at Flodden, as fortification against a possible English offensive. In our conversation, James lamented that tour buses daily circle the city centre, highlighting the cultural

contributions of Robbie Burns and Bonnie Prince Charles without mentioning the wall they drive directly past, which is in fact intimately connected with the fate of the country and the world.⁹⁶



Figure 7.7: Commemorative cross at Flodden Field. Photo by author.

Just as Pen Llŷn had experienced when applying for funds to support a minority language and culture within the European Union, the Flodden Ecomuseum took advantage of their location inside a region designated a “Less Favoured Area.” James described this position as reflective of the fact that “there’s nobody here, there’s no infrastructure, there’s no motorways, there’s no public transport.” In any case, they successfully solicited the EU’s LEADER fund⁹⁷ fairly quickly with the stipulation that the ecomuseum would create employment. Rather than create new businesses, however, they used what was already there and promised to enhance them, such

⁹⁶ For instance, James described one of the meetings in which they were discussing the global significance of the Battle of Flodden. “There was one theory that even if this had really gone in a certain number of ways, we could not be sitting here speaking English, but French, because Scotland and France were the dominant power. You know, that English could not have been the main language of the world, but it could have been French. I mean, that’s conjecture beyond belief, but there is kind of a logical route into that argument.”

⁹⁷ LEADER stands for Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l’Économie Rurale, which translates to “links between activities for the development of rural economy.” Funds support small-scale projects in rural communities.

as increased visitors for bicycle hires, bed and breakfasts, and cafés. They also made the unanimous decision not to create a visitor centre. “They said, these are sites that already exist. We are a very fragile area. If we create another café or another- it just lessens the slice of the cake that everybody else gets, so let’s bolster these guys who are already here by having them ancillary to the site. And it also will force the visitor to go to the sites. Otherwise, he just goes to Flodden visitor centre and thinks he’s done it.” Nonetheless, a local Trust charity did purchase an old telephone booth for one pound (*The Herald* 2013), and convert it into what they claim to be the world’s smallest visitor centre (Figure 7.10). Inside, visitors can listen to audio recordings about the battle while perusing maps and information about the other sites (Figure 7.11).

They also decided to appeal to the National Lottery for funding. Their appeal had to fit certain requirements. One was intention to expand, which they satisfied through their plan to expand from the baseline 12 sites to 41, including one as far south as Portsmouth.⁹⁸ The second was archaeology. While anecdotal stories, legends, and myths circulate about the battle, it has “never really been properly excavated or researched on the ground, ground-truthed. The stories abound about body pits and everything being piled up. And we still to this day have not really got to the bottom of that one.”

The third was education, which in their appeal they geared toward the elderly, reflecting the region’s demographics. They framed it as education with a significant mitigative factor regarding costs to the National Health Service, including social and mental services for things like dementia, obesity, and depression. “We’re looking at projects that will mitigate the burden on the country of an aging population,” James told me. “Firstly, physically, because they’ll be on

⁹⁸ The Mary Rose is a ship docked in Portsmouth, England, which played an important role in the Battle of Flodden. As Thomas Howard’s flag carrier, in response to the Scottish invasion, it delivered around 1,000 troops to join the English army at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

their knees digging things out of the ground. Those that can't be on their knees digging things out of the ground will be cleaning and sorting it, cataloguing it, recording it. Others will be burying themselves in archives. Using this brain. And this brain, this mental side of aging, is by far the most costly.”



Figure 7.8: James Joicey in front of Barmoor Castle. Photo by author.



Figure 7.9: Church of Branxton with the ecomuseum sign in front. Photo by author.



Figure 7.10: Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum's visitor centre, possibly the “world’s smallest.” Photo by author.

Archival work is a huge component of the project. One of the early members of the committee, a local archivist who specializes in deciphering medieval script, suggested that they use the Lottery funding to expand access to historical documents scattered around the country pertaining to the battle but unread by anyone. “I would love to get these transcribed into modern lettering,” she allegedly reported to the group. “Why don’t I run a course in paleography?” In the appeal to the Lottery fund, she predicted the course would attract about 20 students. 42 ended up signing up, and as the courses expanded, more local people enrolled and learned how to decipher the medieval documents.

And this border area is full of people, elderly people, who are now researching other stuff that has been desperately needed to be researched. I met a guy just three or four weeks ago and he said, “I was one of Linda’s students.” Oh yes, he said he’s transcribing documents from King James VI, I think. And that’s just on the back of it. And he is engaged, they meet together, they have coffees together. The therapy that this brings, Roshni, it’s astonishing. This area, as you’ve seen, is a quiet area, not much happens. It’s ideally attractive to people who are semiretired, retired, come up

for a peaceful life, or come back home, in many ways, you know, come back to their roots. And so, they come back to their roots, and they know where their roots are, it's Flodden. You know, I remember, it's mine. I've got a stake in this. It's mine.



Figure 7.11: Inside the world's smallest visitor centre. Photo by author.

Thus, while the ecomuseum was conceived as an avenue to commemorate the 500th anniversary of a battle perceived as critical to the cross-border region and beyond, catalyzed by early meetings and fundings, it has taken on a life of its own. Even at the quincentennial, Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum did not commission any projects, providing rather a “light touch” in which they offered a supportive ear about plans for rallies, parades, excavations, school projects, and so on. There was no shortage of commemorations being planned in the region. “Somebody wrote a play, somebody wrote a concerto, which was performed by the Scottish National Orchestra. It was written to commemorate Flodden 500 years on. There was a huge service in St. John’s Cathedral, which is the big Christian church in Edinburgh. Because, for the nation, this was 500 years since disaster.” A local Scottish rock-folk band, who regularly performs songs about border warfare, wrote one song about Flodden, as well as setting local poems about Flodden to

music. “And it just resonates with everybody around here because we know what they’re singing about. We know what the story is. We wallow in that sort of mystical terror. This is our land.”

I pondered whether folks residing along the border region experience a strong sense of place. “Yes,” he replied, “We’re all Jack Tamson’s bairns. Bairn is a child. Nobody quite knows who Jack Tamson was,” he laughed. “We’d all like to have met him.” He continued, “But it’s that kind of banter that bonds us all. If I’m traveling away, southerly or abroad, and find someone and I hear the local dialect—there’s a Northumbrian one and there’s a Scotch one, very, markedly different—but you can hear them both and you just go straight in. Where are you from? And within two comments, you’ve got something in common.”

When I asked how that deep-rooted sense of place fares for newcomers, he replied that it was very difficult, but not impossible for newcomers to be “brought into the family. They don’t have to have a role, necessarily, but they just have to be in the family.” As per his observations, most newcomers do try to fit in. They tend to start in “neutral territory, like local music society or the film club or maybe a church or something where they can be there, but neutral and incognito. Nobody knows who they are, but they know they share a love of music or birdwatching. They’ve joined the local club. You know, go walkabout in somewhere. That’s how they tend to start.” Now, with the ecomuseum set up to connect the various sites along the border, it is easier for newcomers to participate in the local history and share “in the one feature, which is the common feature of Flodden.” Archaeological excavations will continue into perpetuity, as will annual civic weeks, school projects, rock concerts, and paleography courses. Stories and legends will always be told about the mysterious battle that killed a king and sealed a border. A group called the Till Valley Archaeological Society was founded for the quincentennial.

It's now 135 strong. They're digging up all sorts of other things. They've got a museum down the road here, in an old building which we no longer use. They've got all their artifacts there, and they've suddenly developed into a self-contained, self-driving heart-beating body of people who are driven onto other things, but know where their heritage came from, know why they started. "Why did we start this? Oh, it was because of Flodden."

In stark contrast to Ecoamgueddfa, tourism is tangential to Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum.

According to James, "Tourism was never going to be anything else than a sort of consequence. It wasn't a driver." Rather, the ecomuseum is a tool used to empower the people of the region, multigenerational and newcomers alike, through a common interest in an event that largely shaped the identity of the region into what it is today. Within any of the inexhaustive list of 41 sites, one signifier can interconnect numerous *significata* (Turner 1967) based on anecdotes, family histories, local legends, or popular culture, and the *significata* are proliferative. As groups branch out to explore the complex and multifaceted connections to the Battle of Flodden through time and space, new identities and histories are likely to emerge, and with them new customs and narratives about the border region.

James was also firm in the ecomuseum's decision not to put anyone on a museum shelf or a pedestal. "You are not a museum piece that people go, 'Oh, look, look, look.' You're not Disney, for heaven's sake." Peter Davis similarly warns of the risks accompanying any ecomuseum project attempting to transform "living cultures into mere exhibitions" (2008, 406). These admonitions about the desire for some communities to "preserve" and display their culture echo Tom Sanya's anxieties about static ecomuseums in Africa that lack a critical regionalist approach. "By sticking to an uncritical sense of their cultural heritage, communities are wont to develop the ecomuseum as a kind of stage-set of the past to stoically resist change and maintain landscape as a theme park... becom[ing] a kind of cultural Disneyland in the service of nostalgic contemplation and narcissistic tourist consumerism" (Sanya 2013, 9). Rather, Sanya argues that

ecomuseums need to embrace an open system to reflect the fact that “societal evolution is precipitated by both local and extraneous forces” (Ibid., 8). For Sanya, in their uncritical attempt to preserve “our culture,” such ecomuseums “wittingly or unwittingly keep the community unaware of the meta-structures that maintain their underdevelopment” (Ibid., 10). On the other hand, one of my arguments in this thesis is that critical regionalism dovetails with ecomuseums precisely because they open up spaces of resistance to hegemonic enclosures, be they cultural, intellectual, economic, or civic commons. I ultimately agree with Sanya that it is in the best interest of communities using the ecomuseum model to embrace a critical regionalist approach.

Nonetheless, it is inevitable that by attracting visitors both locally and further afield to events such as civic weeks, art workshops, commemorative parades, and rock concerts, the ecomuseum is positioning itself as a “display event” (Abrahams 1981), in which participants reflexively present and analyze their identities for a broader audience, who are in turn invited to ponder and comment on those very presentations. By display event, Roger Abrahams was referring to public events that are largely peaceful in intent and bring diverse “segments of a plural or stratified community together (at least ideally) within this playfully licensed context” (Abrahams 1981, 311). Importantly for Abrahams, and as certainly occurs in the ecomuseum space, not all participants in a display event are known to each other, unlike more private performances of folklore. For him, this is the aspect of display events that should be most interesting to folklorists, because with difference and heterogeneity come potential conflicts and negotiations, providing a ripe arena for “studying the dynamics of lore as it is performed and practiced at the boundaries, even across the borders” (Ibid., 306).

It is attention to these border dynamics that a critical regionalist approach seeks. Based on my conversations with ecomuseum folks in Wales and along the England-Scotland border,

these border tensions are central to the conceptualization, ongoing work, and identity formations tied to the ecomuseum. The boundaries between rural and urban behave in a similar way, as we saw with the social, cultural, and ecological consequences of depopulation in Val Marie, as well as the hegemonic water wars being waged by and among rural folks in the Qu'Appelle Valley and bordering regions. In the final two chapters, I return to Codroy Valley where I envision an ecomuseological path forward.

CHAPTER 8: CAVEATS AND POSSIBILITIES

Until this point, I have explored the successes and forward momentum of ecomuseums in a multitude of locales. The case studies I have drawn upon are testament to the rich diversity of the ecomuseum model. Ecomuseums may be digitally-based, literally without walls, like CLEM, acting more as a connector than a cultural medium. Or, as PWSS demonstrates, they may have an overt focus on the conservation of ecosystems and the human cultures that depend on them. They may be primarily tourism-based, like Ecoamgueddfa, where all participants are rallying behind an inclusive and sustainable tourism market that avoids the pitfalls of a henceforth culturally and economically extractive industry. They may also be more actively engaged with research and archives, like Flodden, where participants are working to build a historical legacy for present and future generations. Explicitly or not, each of the ecomuseum communities in the present study is united in its collective fight against some hegemonic force, whether it manifests as watershed damage, rural decline, extractive tourism, or cultural amnesia.

In our quest to build the best possible future for Codroy Valley, with the ecomuseum being one dynamic factor contributing to this goal, we need to remain cognizant of potentially hegemonic forces within the heritage sector that disguise themselves as allies. Therefore, this chapter interrogates some of the caveats and paradoxes associated with heritage projects, particularly where tourism and developmental paradigms are involved. I begin by appraising the dangers posed when a culture is put on display. Questions of authenticity and representation are reframed in a critical regionalist and third space lens as a method to prevent the wholesale objectification of culture. I also take a critical look at the implications of cultural tourism in Codroy Valley on the fabric of everyday life. Finally, I incorporate lessons from the preceding arguments and observations to envision an ecomuseum in Codroy Valley.

8.1 Objectifying culture

They call it Newfoundland culture. I don't like being taught about our culture and character in a school room. The government is creating our culture. Culture has to be lived and experienced. When you put it in a book you remove it from experience. They talk about us in words we don't understand. Newfoundland culture exists in people, not in books about people. Culture has to be experienced - to be communicated orally. Writing something down changes it. Newfs should teach their own culture through traditions and stories. Experience it before you read about it in books. You got to do it to live it; learn it from others, not from books. (Davis 2003, 185–186)

This quote comes from a young woman in a Newfoundland outpost voicing her disapproval of how schools were teaching Newfoundland Culture as part of the curriculum in the early 1990s. Ostensibly, the courses were designed to enhance local pride and self-respect, particularly amid rapid outmigration in rural areas. The quote suggests that they may have had an opposite effect. More to the point, it points to the necessity of experiencing *living* culture, as opposed to seeing or hearing it represented in audiovisual media.

The young woman is effectively speaking to the need for a third space, the *espace vécu* identified by Lefebvre (1991) as the space where culture is directly experienced. It is plausible, as Tim Rogers (2002) points out, that folkloristics, museum studies, and nearly all academic disciplines overuse *espace conçu* (second space) in order to interpret, compare, and showcase traditions that were produced informally and dialogically within *espace vécu* without actually engaging with them.⁹⁹ The objectification of cultural forms is nothing new to Western tradition, and in a sense is as old as the ancient Hebrew *Aleph-Bet* (Abram 1996). Indeed, in *The Spell of the Sensuous*, David Abram (1996) uses a phenomenological framework to argue how cultural mediators, such as alphabetic writing, have removed human individuals and societies from their

⁹⁹ Of course, numerous folklorists and social scientists do much more than simply represent traditions in abstraction. Many public folklorists engage with third spaces when dealing with borderlands and counterhegemonic customs and narratives, sometimes themselves encouraging transformative experiences through activism. Philadelphia Folklore Project is one such platform (Kodish 2011).

innate proclivity toward directly experiencing the “more-than-human world,” which both includes and exceeds human culture. Thus mediated, nature becomes objectified, betokening a fundamental epistemic shift that entails the possibility of owning, exploiting, and destroying it.

At least since the Renaissance cabinets of curiosities, artifacts belonging to so-called exotic cultures have been removed from their originary context and put on display for the enjoyment of members of elite classes, who believed themselves capable of “knowing” the Other through their objects. As Said, Naithani, Briggs and others have observed, colonial practices of extracting, prefacing, and conflating discrete cultural texts have had dire and long-lasting consequences for Western epistemological assumptions regarding the questions, methods, and objectives of cultural inquiry. The very practice of uprooting texts from their source, inevitably to serve some political purpose, and using them as a representation of some *authentic* culture is itself problematic. Johann Gottfried Herder, with his romantic mission in the 18th century to “discover” the true German *zeitgeist* among the common people (*das Volk*) within their folktales and poetry is often seen as Europe’s pioneer in the quest for authenticity.

In *In Search of Authenticity*, Bendix (1997, 46) explains how “in a climate of scientism, the moral and emotional conceptualizations of authenticity required material representation,” for which the term came to be associated with materialized texts such as the folksongs and folktales compiled and commodified by Herder and the Grimms. Remarkably consequential to the future of social sciences, these romantic collectors “offer a recipe to recover the lost treasure and stake a claim for the specialist to serve as mediator. The specialist extracts the material from the folk (who are doomed to submit to the corrupting influences of progress), restores it to its original beauty, and offers it for ingestion to those upper classes who need a fix of authenticity” (Ibid., 54). Thus, while the oral and material texts of imagined purveyors of authentic Germanness were

decontextualized, packaged, and sold to an elite consumer base in order to deliver the latter from the woes of modernity, the producers of the texts themselves remained anonymous heirs to moral decrepitude while being simultaneously subjected to essentialization and fetishization.

The concept of authenticity has since been problematized. In a nod to the complex process of cultural translation, James Clifford (2004) argues that it is impossible to point to any authentic culture, identity, or tradition in the sense of original, pure, uncorrupted, or fixed because all cultures, identities, and traditions are constantly constructed, reconstructed, invented, and reinvented. Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin (1984, 288) consider all traditions spurious if one subscribes to the naturalist paradigm that sees tradition as “pristine and immutable heritage of the past.” Rather, “If tradition is always defined in the present, then all spurious traditions are genuine” (Ibid.). They conclude that “genuine and spurious... are inappropriate [terms] when applied to social phenomena which never exist apart from our interpretations of them” (Ibid.). Their comments echo the critical regionalist admonition not to take etic interpretations of regional phenomena for granted, but rather to probe the dynamic forces that furnish the tools and purposes of inquiry in the first place.

Yet, it is not a great leap to see how, in a climate that posed authenticity as synonymous with truth, museums became a prime location in which to observe supposedly authentic cultures on display, and to leave feeling as though one has arrived one step closer to the truth about humanity. Nor is it exclusively nonhuman objects that are on display. In her influential essay, “Objects of Ethnography,” Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1991) traces the phenomenological effects of the museological encounter wherein humans were removed from their social context and charged with performing everyday tasks while put on display in a sterile environment.¹⁰⁰ As spectators in

¹⁰⁰ An early example of a “living style” exhibit was staged in 1822 by English antiquarian William Bullock in his “Egyptian Hall” at the London Museum. The exhibit featured a Laplander family plucked from their native land, and

such an environment, we find that “the more different we are from each other, the more intense the effect, for the exotic is the place where nothing is utterly ordinary. Such encounters force us to make comparisons that pierce the membrane of our own quotidian world, allowing us for a brief moment to be spectators of ourselves, an effect that is also experienced by those on display” (Ibid., 409). That analytical drive to compare one’s own “common-sense world” with the Other’s, even beyond the museum walls, is what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett’s calls the “museum effect.” Moreover, as the museum effect becomes ubiquitous, “One becomes increasingly exotic to oneself, as one imagines how others might view that which we consider normal” (Ibid., 410).

To bring the discussion back to the young woman’s objection to studying “Newfoundland culture,” is there a danger in partly shifting from intersubjectively *living* one’s environment to self-consciously *representing* one’s culturescape? Might the ecomuseum present both a problem and a solution to this conundrum of objectifying culture? Put differently, how might the ecomuseum transcend Rogers’s critique of folklore studies’ habitual and exclusive engagement in first and second spaces?

The answer, I think, lies both in semantics and in the radical prerogative of the new museology to serve, above all else, the needs of the host community. First, the semantics of ecomuseum are misleading. Based on Aura Lee’s description, one would hardly call CLEM a museum in the traditional sense. And, apart from its “tiniest visitor centre in the world,” one would be hard pressed to recognize museological elements in Flodden’s praxis. Ecoamgueddfa’s network of sites does include a brick-and-mortar museum, but the ecomuseum’s whole is much greater than the sum of its parts. Infrastructurally, PWSS resembles a conventional museum, in that it comprises the schoolhouse hub, the national park’s visitor centre nearby, and the grain

tasked with driving a sledge outfitted with live reindeer, tents, utensils, and weapons against a frosty panorama (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991, 405).

elevator, which has recently been granted museum status. Conceptually, however, the nebulous eco- prefix takes centre stage in distinguishing Val Marie from other museum communities. Indeed, its mandate to provide opportunities for community members to co-develop dynamic and fluid relationships while conserving their natural and cultural heritage is firmly rooted in human ecology. Furthermore, my conversations and observations in the space bear witness to their embrace of a critical regionalist approach in their work.

Questions remain, however, around the reflexive representation of one's culture. We know that ecomuseological performances, such as Alex's grain elevator tour, occur *in situ*. For whom, how, and why, then, are ecomuseum participants presenting their culture? Again, the answer lies in the community's needs. A major goal that links all the ecomuseums I studied is the desire to connect inhabitants of a region to its cultural, ecological, and historical elements so as to cultivate a grassroots environmental awareness and strengthen sense of place and rootedness in place. Tuan (1977, 198) contrasted sense of place from rootedness in place, arguing that "[a] truly rooted community may have shrines and monuments, but it is unlikely to have museums and societies for the preservation of the past." It appears that communities who choose to build ecomuseums are somewhere in between. They are responding to a crisis of modernity and, in order to reinforce their roots, they need first to elevate their sense of place and belonging. The museum or society that is marshalled to the cause, in this case the ecomuseum, is precisely that medium in which those important linkages can be drawn. It is precisely those *in situ* performances and dialogues wherein third spaces are produced, in which multiple perspectives converse with one another in a shifting bricolage of intertextuality, identity reformations, and recalibrations of received wisdom.

The complex processes necessary for deconstructing the universalizing regionalizations that render rural places like Codroy Valley inadequate for sustaining an economically viable life may be conceived as having an end goal of “truly rooted community” where everyone has a clear purpose in the present, strong ties to the past, and a bright outlook for the future. Yet is a “truly rooted community” pure fiction in a rapidly modernizing, corporatizing world replete with local insecurities and global anxieties? I would like to suggest that, similar to the queer drive for a utopian future that deems the queer label redundant, or to the class struggle that envisions a classless society, a truly rooted community may never exist but as the utopia we prefigure every moment through our reflexive, counterhegemonic performances and artistic communication in everyday life. Collaborative arts that connect identity and emotion to place, intergenerational storytelling and ethnography that transmit knowledge and strengthen rootedness, architectural engagements that acknowledge regional and autochthonous influences, cooperative industries that recognize the value of intertextual tradition and innovation, temporary and multi-sited exhibits that speak to place’s eternal cosmopolitanism, and citizen science that instructs about the fragility of ecosystems in a fossil fueled world: these are the sorts of sustained and reflexive undertaking that may furnish an ecomuseum with the critical regionalist infrastructure necessary to build a healthier and more inclusive present and future.

Apropos to the objective of safeguarding and expanding the commons within the ecomuseum project, in *A Postcapitalist Politics*, Gibson-Graham (2006) proffer three political ideals enacted through reflexive performance: politics of language, politics of the subject, and politics of collective action. First, a politics of language is needed whereby new vocabularies are

colloquialized to represent, calculate, and perform those diverse economic activities¹⁰¹ that trigger *jouissance* and unity over hopelessness and antagonism, yet remain undervalued in official economic narratives. It is crucial that a politics of language not essentialize the economy as “deterministically shaped by invariant logics” (Zanoni et al. 2017, 579), but see it, rather, echoing Stewart’s ordinary affect, as contingent, dynamic, and negotiable. Geertz’s notion of thick description is useful in the documentation of linguistic colloquialisms, old and new, which surface through the performance of diverse economies and the diverse contexts in which they are used. Ethnographic interviews and observations conducted for the ecomuseum’s archives or other projects are ideal settings to put thick description to work around the politics of language.

Next, a politics of the subject enjoins the cultivation of individual desires and a motivation to inhabit non-capitalistic economic spaces such as those enacted in the commons. Because capitalism is so pervasive in how one’s economic identity is conceived, whereby employee, consumer, investor, or owner of business or property tend to trump other possible identifications (Zanoni et al. 2017), a “resubjectivation” is proposed to counter capitalocentric framings of the self. This is achieved through the resocializing of economic relations so that interdependence and intertextuality at multiple scales within community economies are locally acknowledged and emphasized (Gibson-Graham 2006).

When collecting ethnographic thick descriptions for the ecomuseum, including in the archives, researchers might heed the way economic relationships are framed. For instance, one could take note of the description of economic activities provided by O’Quinn with regard to his grandfather, as well as O’Quinn’s own resubjectivation that appears as a reflexive response to

¹⁰¹ Consonant with the diverse economic framework, I am referring to any activity that contributes to the overall economic landscape at any scale, which may include capitalist business but also informal markets, unpaid labour, gift economies, and community-based exchanges.

the consumeristic enclosures threatening his own generation. Sustained attention to structures of feeling around historic and contemporary commons, especially in one's own community, works to recentre and normalize those activities, with transformative potential for one's own economic identity. Furthermore, resubjectivation happens at multiple levels or "layers" (McLean 2016), reflecting the disparate vantage points being mobilized. Fiona McLean (2016, 283) identifies three discrete layers with regards to identity building in the museum, namely, "the identities of those encoding the representations; the identities of those decoding the representations; and the identities of those being represented." It is inevitable that cognizance of the layering effect of representational politics fosters empathy through enhanced intersubjective awareness.

A third politics, that of collective action, involves the actual building of community economies, and thus demands relations centred on the common aspiration of economic wellbeing and a sustainable future for all human and more-than-human inhabitants. However, a crucial dimension of both the diverse economies project as well as the ecomuseological paradigm is that not all short-term or even long-term goals can be known in advance or premeditated. Coming from a critical regionalist perspective, it becomes clear that diverse assemblages of "diacritical relations, differences, affinities, affects, and trajectories" (Stewart 2007, 73) are constantly being discovered and constructed, leaving open the possibility of surprise and imagination regarding the future, or, conversely, the constant threat of failure and loss. Leaving space for emergence from the unknown, or "unreality" (Bachelard 1964, xxx), is intrinsic to the paradigm. Indeed, in *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard invokes the power of imagination by claiming, "Any weakness in the function of unreality will hamper the productive psyche. If we cannot imagine, we cannot foresee" (Ibid.).

Even CLEM, whose sole stated objective at the moment is to save the Qu'Appelle River watershed from further enclosure by hegemonic interests, is constantly being implicated in new struggles with new actors and relational tactics, and thereby involving itself in new forms of collective action. A willingness to ally with struggles paralleling those being faced by Codroy Valleyers will strengthen localized regionalizations that see community economies as valuable, intrinsically and in relation to capitalocentric discourses that seek to devalue them. Moreover, Reid and Taylor remind us of the connections between commons, grassroots environmentalism, and social justice: “Historical understandings of the centrality of the commons to liberation from gender, race, and ecological exploitation might help to build wider solidarities between localized civic environmentalisms around the world” (2010, 41). Drawing those connections in critical regionalist fashion can only enhance structures of feeling around inclusivity and tolerance, as well as ignite a grassroots environmentalism drawn from localized ecological knowledge.

8.2 Cultural tourism

Ecomuseum scholars and practitioners note the inevitability of tourism at some scale alongside social and cultural developments (Doğan 2019; Stephens & Tiwari 2015; Waterton & Watson 2013). It is recognized, however, that tourism is typically not the primary goal (Sutter 2021), and even that an overarching focus on tourism is a recipe for failure. In a 2021 webinar titled “Ecomuseums and Climate Action,” Glenn Sutter of the Saskatchewan Ecomuseum Initiative spoke bluntly that “while there have been a number of applications of the model across the country, most of those that focus on tourism—just attracting people and money, with very little focus on climate—importantly, most of those early projects are not active anymore” (Sutter 2021). Of course, there are some exceptions, with Ecoamgueddfa an exemplar of what a focus on sustainable tourism might look like vis-à-vis extractive tourism. More often than not, however,

tourism is a secondary effect of the social and psychological empowerment that ideally occurs within the ecomuseum community (Doğan & Timothy 2020; Waterton & Smith 2009).

In fact, the ecomuseum tends to displace capitalocentric indicators of economic success within the conventional, market-based touristic sector by prioritizing those creative economies and ecologies, such as regenerative gardening, cooperative businesses, gifting, upcycling, exchange, and favours, that reinvigorate and ethically sustain livelihoods (Corsane et al. 2007; Gibson-Graham, Hill, & Law 2016). Nonetheless, places like Codroy Valley, in which agricultural and other industries have declined, may find it fruitful to enlist tourism as a development tool. Moreover, touristic ventures could nod intertextually to touristic legacies in the Valley such as the Afton Farmhouse or Chignic Lodge.

As testimonies from Afton or Chignic would likely attest, rural areas provide visitors a unique opportunity to partake in the stories, traditions, and activities of a close-knit host community. Kyle Woosnam (2011) extends Durkheim's model of emotional solidarity through a study of touristic encounters in rural Texas. He finds that when residents exchange beliefs, behaviours, and interactions with tourists and visitors, emotional solidarity is enhanced. Mustafa Doğan (2019, 544, 547) describes, in a rural ecomuseum in Turkey, "the mutual recognition of different cultures and the learning, interaction and communication processes involved... The relationship between the visitor and the residents is more than an economic one and is based on the tourists sharing in their daily life." Moreover, social and psychological empowerment may accompany a community's growing self-esteem when its customs and traditional knowledge are perceived as being valued by outsiders (Scheyvens 1999; Scheyvens & van der Watt 2021).

Finally, the arrival of visitors to a new place provides an alternative "mirror in which the local population views itself to discover its own image" (Rivière 1985, 182). In these critical and

non-exploitative encounters, visitors are implicated in the process of cultural renewal. Through participation in demonstrations, workshops, or lectures pertaining to local knowledge and custom—cod-jigging, flyfishing, trapping, leathermaking, sheep shearing, spinning and carding wool, foraging, boatbuilding, woodworking, cheesemaking, composting, beer brewing, round dancing, storytelling, singing, playing bagpipes, building ice boxes, farming with animals, baking on a wood stove, preserving food, repairing roofs, or lugging houses on skiffs, to name some potential examples—tourists and potential newcomers offer a larger-than-local perspective to a previously declining rural community now on the uptick. They may also provide an additional customer base for goods and services produced through revived heritage industries, such as the \$70 map I purchased from Alex in Val Marie.

8.3 Envisioning a Codroy Valley ecomuseum¹⁰²

I envision the ecomuseum as a form of third space pro-activism. At first glance, one may assume it to be just another representation of culture, akin to the way most museums’ performances and texts seek to represent culture using limited dialogue. On closer inspection, however, one detects a unison of beating hearts, with community members collaboratively documenting, interpreting, unsettling, sorting, comparing, and displaying narratives and cultural practices in their own backyard. Even community mapping has enormous third space potential. Recalling Grasseni’s discussion of the “skilled landscape” in Chapter 5, the Bhabhan third space encounter of drawing the map produced an end result that encouraged a third space encounter in the Lefebvrian sense, of directly experiencing space. Indeed, the pedagogical intent of the locals in the mapping project was clear: “the only way to understand the place was to walk it” (Grasseni 2004, 713).

¹⁰² See Appendix A for a comprehensive overview of the context, vision, next steps, and suggested themes for the ecomuseum in Codroy Valley. I presented this document accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation at a community meeting in October 2024, which clarified confusion around the ecomuseum concept and generated lively discussion.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the ecomuseum is that narratives are continually performed for different audiences, so that the narratives themselves are always in a position to be modified. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Cruikshank's (1998, 40) research demonstrates how storytellers used different tactics to communicate their ideas to diverse audiences, troubling the notion that "oral sources are somehow stable, like written sources, and that once spoken and recorded, they are simply there, waiting for interpretation." Indeed, as Edward Bruner (1986, 11) tells us, "It is in the performance of an expression that we re-experience, re-live, re-create, re-construct, and re-fashion our culture... The performance itself is constitutive."

But it is the place-based storytelling and narrating that is perhaps the most radical feature of the ecomuseum space, for its ecological potential. For centuries, life revolved around the land and waters of Codroy Valley, and quotidian storytelling was one mode of transmitting crucial place-based knowledge. Hearing about the experiences of one's predecessors *in situ* created ineffable bonds with that place and inevitably contributed to one's sense of stewardship of the land for futurity. It is no wonder, then, that Cruikshank (1998, 140) confidently declares "the relation between storytelling, cultural translation, and social action." Or that Hufford (2019, 13) assures us that "[r]eproducing and affirming the collective experience of a flesh of sensibility through conversational storytelling about local things, we refresh the sense of belonging on which Leopold's conservation ethic turns." Storytelling about place, in any number of forms, is necessarily a central component of the ecomuseum in Codroy Valley.

For instance, storytelling may take the traditional flavour of organized sessions at specific venues, or musical histrionics around the firepit. It may accompany moving across the land or sea. The mental health benefits of outdoor movement are indisputable. Lippard (1997, 17) avers that walking the land "offers an unparalleled way to open oneself to the 'spirit of place' and to its

subterranean history. Motion allows a certain mental freedom that translates a place to a person kinesthetically.” Guided walks or river excursions through which inhabitants interpret history *in situ* would provide an invaluable learning experience for visitors and locals alike. Ecomuseum participants could brainstorm themes for a variety of tours, and guides could rotate or provide different perspectives on the same theme.

Storytelling could also take the form of demonstrations and skill sharing. Someone could offer lessons on building snowshoes while telling stories about the materials used, the historic relations behind the materials, the social, cultural, and economic aspects of snowshoeing, and so on. Moccasins are another functional item that could be incorporated into a joint workshop-storytelling session. They were once common enough in Codroy Valley, according to Bennett’s research on a song, “Oran nam Mogaisean” (The Song of the Moccasins), which was initially composed and performed in Gaelic by Allan MacArthur’s brother, Murdoch, in the first half of the last century. In *The Last Stronghold*, Allan is quoted as explaining the meaning behind the song as well as describing the process of making the moccasins, from stretching the cowhide (or sheepskin or calfskin), to cutting, scraping, planing, soaking, and tanning it with birch bark (Bennett 1989, 167), a process transmitted to settlers by their more skillful Mi’kmaw neighbours. The song is a humorous jab at Murdoch’s faint success at making the moccasins, and it was apparently very popular at millings, especially among the older folk who knew Murdoch and his story well. Although millings are no longer performed in the Valley, interested community members may attempt a partial reenactment, or at least compile and perform some of the songs that were habitually sung to the rhythm of the milling, while also paying tribute to important artistic and technological contributions by the Valley’s Mi’kmaw inhabitants.

When it comes to customs for reenactment or even revival, there is no shortage in the Valley. Some traditional crafts and remedies, like cooking lard for making soap and candles, mixing boiled cherry or dogwood bark with ground juniper for cold relief, or naturally dyeing sheep's wool, are still practiced by some residents. Undoubtedly there are people living in the Valley who would be able to provide detailed information about where and when to harvest the ingredients and how to prepare them, as well as anecdotes about using or administering them. Ice harvesting before refrigeration is another custom that could be used as an exercise in community building, if not for actually keeping food frozen throughout the year. Several people I spoke with had vivid memories of carving the ice and layering the ice boxes with sawdust and salmon to keep it refrigerated until at least the end of summer.

In one upstate New York community, Miller's Mills, there is an annual ice harvest to commemorate two centuries of ice box refrigeration in that town. In a poignant display of *communitas*, each winter residents cut individual blocks out of the same lake that was used for ice harvesting since the 1790s. They judge each block by size, thickness, clarity, and weight, guide the "cakes" to the shore with pikes, lead them up a ramp to a horse-drawn sleigh, snare them with tongs, stack them on the sleigh, and allow the draft horses to haul them up the hill to the icehouse. The cakes are then covered in sawdust as they are stacked, after which participants ride the sleigh back down to the pond. While the ice harvest today is primarily "an event that is used to keep memories alive" (Hoehn 2022, 11), the ice is in fact used for their ice cream social every summer, and undoubtedly provides a fascinating space for community members to comment on the complex global processes that built a thriving ice industry in that town¹⁰³ for nearly 150 years. Residents are still aware that when, in the late 1930s, President Roosevelt

¹⁰³ Kevin Hoehn (2022, 5) tells us that for about 150 years, ice harvesting was a thriving industry in the United States, "second as an export only to cotton at one point."

created the Rural Electrification Administration in order to bring electricity to rural areas like Millers Mills, their ice business could not compete with mechanical refrigeration. And while most residents today would not voluntarily exchange their refrigerators for ice boxes, the ritual is clearly a visceral performance of identity work that keeps them returning year after year to complete the vigorous harvest in common.

In the absence of oral testimony, we can scour the archives for Codroy Valley's customs and creativity of old. One website, "Newfoundland's Grand Banks," is dedicated to genealogy research in Newfoundland and Labrador, and includes a curated historical record for Codroy Valley. Apart from reproducing broad historical narratives—admittedly androcentric, derived from the 1822 explorations of W.E. Cormack as well as newspaper articles spanning the last century—the site compiles information about medicine, mining, communications, religion, roads, law, "mixed nationality," woolen mills, and vignettes concerning events, deaths, and anecdotes. It might be a worthwhile endeavour to put the narratives found on this website in conversation with contemporary oral narratives in Codroy Valley. For instance, one historical event that appears on that website is a momentous summer picnic that occurred in August of 1901. It is worth citing at length because it offers a picturesque snapshot of the Valley in a specific time period, and was a well-attended and well-publicized event that even appeared in the province-wide paper, *The Daily News*. Of note are the reference to attendees "from as far away as Canada," the attention to dress and décor, references to unmistakable features of the landscape, musical entertainment, sporting contests, and fundraising for building construction in lieu of government grants.

People descended on the beautiful spot from all over—from Cape Ray to the south and Bay of Islands to the north. Some came from as far away as Canada and a goodly number of American tourists were also there. The occasion was a summer picnic at Codroy Valley at a site known as Islandview which lies almost at the head of Grand

River. Rev. Dr. Charles O'Regan, the parish priest of the area, was in charge of the arrangements for the picnic. The funds raised were to go for the erection of a new public hall and school room at Codroy. Islandview got its name, apparently, from the fact that a short distance further up the Grand River at a widening, the stream was studded with islands of all shapes. It was described as a "post card scene as only could be viewed in the Codroy Valley"... There were over 200 persons present for the event, but Mr. Doyle's commodious grounds were by no means overcrowded. The priest and his assistants were kept busy from the start of the event. The ladies in charge were described as "looking well in their cool summer gowns." Bunting was profusely draped from pole to pole and the flags were displayed to the greatest advantage. Hot dinners and tea were served in Mr. Doyle's new residence. Lemonade, cake, candy and "and other good things" were dispensed from tents by the ladies. Dancing stands were erected here and there around the grounds and many found amusement in dancing to bagpipes. Some were fortunate at the wheels of fortune, while others regretted their bad luck. Among the other activities indulged in by the west coast residents at that August picnic [124] years ago were football, "pugilistic exhibitions" and tug of war... A shooting match attracted considerable attention. The object was an animated moving deer set up at 200 yards distant from the marksmen. The honors were taken by clergymen... An open air concert was held at 4 p.m., at which performers were received with hearty applause. Mr. J. Fitzpatrick of Codroy was described as being "intimitable"... Tea was served at 6 p.m. and after that all the articles not disposed of during the day were auctioned off. Field games then occupied the attention of all until 8 p.m. . . When the receipts of the day were tallied it was found to the gratification of Father O'Regan and his committee that \$400.00 was in the kitty. That went with the \$100.00 previously raised for the building of the two-storey public hall and a school room. At that time there were six schools in Codroy under the supervision of Father O'Regan and the government grants were not sufficient to maintain them in a state of efficiency. Following the picnic the crowd left beautiful Islandview, many getting aboard the train for their homes in the various settlements along the coast. (Newfoundland's Grand Banks 2025)

Needless to say, the potential for an immensely enjoyable reenactment is enormous. It could become an annual or sporadic event that intertextually cites a vastly different world rooted in the same earth. Historical reenactments provide *jouissance* and *communitas*, but are also an opportunity to commemorate personalities that added significantly to the spirit of a place. In this case, Father O'Regan shines through as a legendary figure. By most other accounts he is remembered fondly, and his tragic and untimely death cast a grave shadow on the region for a long time.

All these examples speak to the power of conscious attention to custom, which establishes norms that unofficially govern local commons, as an antidote to enclosure. Although custom has been defined as “the *unconscious and unreflective*, but flexible passing on of past practices” (Abrahams 2005, 148, emphasis added), for Mary Hufford, customs of commoning, and the ecological resources on which those customs depend, need to be self-consciously revived and valorized amid the current climate of extractivism. Those customs and resources are already vulnerable because they largely lack visibility, and are made further invisible by, in the case of the wind farm, extractive development as an effect of “dualistic, reductionist research methods, supported by archaic colonialist narratives that persist in the literature of environmental review” (Hufford 2016, 636). Renewed attention to custom is so powerful because customary activities over time, together with associated tangible cultures and environments, “develop an ‘inherent publicness,’ an abiding association with ‘customary publics’... Whether we think of them as ‘intangible cultural heritage’ or ‘folklife,’ customs are the interactional routines that structure and renew the mutually constitutive relationships among commoners, and between commoners and commons” (Ibid., 640).

Proceedings for the ecomuseum, and the mitigation archive that it constitutes, must include ethnographic dialogue if we are to revalue commons and the ecosystems they uphold. Through deep commoning, participants “attend not only to the human dimension of custom, but to contributions of the land to dialogues of mute perception that support our initiation into worlds collaboratively wrought by human and more-than-human interlocutors” (Ibid., 642). Through conversational speech, for instance, we learn place-names for topographical features and their etymologies, so that “place names become a dynamic, interactive index to kinship networks and land-use history” (Ibid.). Therefore, much of the work that goes into the ecomuseum will involve

interviews between community members: grandparents and grandchildren, teachers and students, parents and children, tourism operators and tourists, neighbours and newcomers, and so on. Conversations that produce multi-perspectival narratives, coupled with mute dialogues of perception that invoke the more-than-human world, may ensure that traditional and innovative practices on the land and sea stay relevant well into futurity.

Gestures and verbal references to specific places and land-based practices are certain to invoke any number of texts. Stories, beliefs, images, customs, songs, recipes, and objects collected in the Valley are all cultural palimpsests holding progressive understandings of our geographical, social, economic, and technological interconnectedness with other places. For instance, Patsy's pirate story brings up images and questions related to pirating along Codroy Valley's streams and shores. Who were those pirates? What was their story? Imaginative exercises can bring the pirate ships, waterways, navigational instruments, and clothing back to life. Even a seemingly mundane object like a cast-iron pan can tap into visceral imaginings of the close encounter between a Codroy woman and an unknown seaman attempting to burgle her household. On that note, material culture is a powerful critical regionalist tool for ruminating over the three dimensionality of physical objects in place. Temporalities and socialities are further dimensions that can be explored as they interact with space in captivating ways.

For instance, Cashman's research in the Derg Valley of Northern Ireland reports retired farm implements taking on new life when put on display in front yards, in defiance of linear chronotopes of progress that prioritize modern, expensive, and optimal consumer products. Hufford's (2003, 275) work on Appalachian "seng hoes," vernacular tools used to dig carefully for ginseng, posits them as "thresholds to histories of the society of the mountains." The evolution of the tool, which typically begins as a fire poker, automobile spring, or mine pick,

produces a backstory that offers a portal into the region's social and political history, such as its legacy of coal mining. Nor does their value end with their handling as a hoe. During the harvest, they are used periodically as walking sticks, bushwhacker, and defense against rattlesnakes. After their retirement, their value continues to grow as they are cherished as keepsakes and perhaps stored with other hoes that belonged to special individuals. It is not uncommon to find parallel objects in Codroy Valley. "Ugly sticks" are ubiquitous music makers comprised of mundane objects assembled vertically in a ludic and vulgar expression of creativity. Railroad cars dot the Valley, taking on new uses as sheds and storage containers, as do railroad ties, driftwood décor, and artistic ensembles made from beach glass.

Artistic and musical talent abounds in Codroy Valley. The ecomuseum will bring greater visibility to Codroy Valley's creative traditions, through a combination of "artisan trail" maps, workshops, demonstrations, showcases, galleries, concerts, commemorations of historical artists, and community art projects such as quilts, sculptures, murals, or collaboratively curated art shows. A "queer crafters" map is one means of bringing heightened visibility and appreciation to important contributions from 2SLGBTQIA+ community members. Already, Come Home Year Festival host art projects where community clusters compete to create the best sand sculpture (Figures 8.1 and 8.2). Winter Carnival hosts a similar snow sculpture competition (Figure 8.3).

My mention at one of our meetings about Val Marie's gallery featuring regional artists' renditions of Saskatchewan elicited excitement about carrying out a parallel project in the Valley. Blending art and environment mobilizes critical thinking about the value of place, commons, and relations with the more-than-human world. Lippard (1997) articulates the environmental and critical regionalist implications of an activist art praxis. She sees artists as ideally positioned, as "envisionaries," to make public those vital and multiple connections

between land, history, and alternative chronotopes that actively oppose the “rapacious view of nature” that tends to overshadow important place-based relations.

The potential of an activist art practice that raises consciousness about land, history, culture, and place and is a catalyst for social change cannot be underestimated, even though this promise has yet to be fulfilled. Artists can make the connections visible. They can guide us through sensuous kinesthetic responses to topography, lead us from archaeology and landbased social history into alternative relationships to place. They can expose the social agendas that have formed the land, bring out multiple readings of places that mean different things to different people at different times rather than merely reflecting some of their beauty back into the marketplace or the living room. As envisionaries, artists should be able to provide a way to work against the dominant culture’s rapacious view of nature, reinstate the mythical and cultural dimensions of ‘public’ experience, and at the same time become conscious of the ideological relationships and historical constructions of place. (19)



Figure 8.1: A 2024 Come Home Year sand sculpture
Photo by author.



Figure 8.2: The backside of the sand hippo.
Photo by author.

The strong didactic element in many ecomuseums offers a unique opportunity to blend critical arts and environmental education, through activities that broaden students’ perspectives about human ecology in their own backyards. One ecomuseum partnership that has used the platform to engage communities in citizen science projects is LIVE, an acronym combining the names of

two peninsulas: Llŷn in Wales and Iveragh in County Kerry, Ireland. LIVE’s website showcases exemplary projects that have been undertaken under the leadership of locally and regionally based arts and environmental educators (LIVE 2023). For example, LIVE launched an Iveragh Lizards Citizen Science project in May 2021, requesting that local residents submit sightings of the common lizard, Ireland’s only native reptile. The data that poured into the ecomuseum’s web portal more than tripled the existing data on the peninsula, which has been collecting data since 1964. They created free educational resources related to the species, all available on the LIVE website, spread the word about the project via radio, newspaper, and social media, added photographs submitted by residents on the website, and hosted a lunchtime talk to discuss early findings. The work done by the citizen scientists is proving useful for conservation efforts by bringing awareness to the elusive reptiles while working to protect their preferred habitat well into the future.



Figure 8.3: “North the owl” created for Winter Carnival 2025. Photo by author.

Another inspirational educational project on LIVE’s website is called “Finding Maude Delap.” Maude Delap spent the vast majority of her life on Valentia Island,¹⁰⁴ off the southwest coast of Ireland, where at an early age she became fascinated with jellyfish. Despite being home-schooled and limited to working with rudimentary laboratory equipment, Delap became a self-taught marine biologist with groundbreaking contributions to the study of jellyfish and plankton. She is recognized as the first person in the world to breed jellyfish in captivity and to publish her observations of their full reproductive cycle, as well as discover a unique species of sea anemone, all work that is still cited today. Her valuable research earned her a fellowship offer at Plymouth Marine Biological Station in 1906, but her father refused to allow his unmarried daughter to leave home. Nonetheless, Delap continued to study marine life and publish her work until her death in 1953. LIVE’s contribution is to locate some of the knowledge gaps about her work and to sift through the literature to catalogue and archive her notebooks, letters, and other documents. One of LIVE’s “knowledge gatherers,” Jane Sheehan, who initiated the project, is carrying out her own research on jellyfish and plankton communities in Iveragh’s waters, and used the ecomuseum’s infrastructure to gather stories, images, and memories from the local community. She produced a LIVE lunchtime seminar, Maude Delap blog, “Maude Delap Heritage Trail,” accessible via bicycle, car, or on foot (Sheehan 2023), and numerous jellyfish and plankton resources for teachers and enthusiasts. A major goal is to bring greater visibility to a trailblazing scientist who unfortunately is not widely recognized outside of Iveragh.

Codroy Valley might consider an annual or biannual “spotlight” on a human or nonhuman community member so as to bring greater acknowledgement of their presence in the Valley of today or historically. A heritage trail that focuses on the indispensable contributions of,

¹⁰⁴ Valentia Island is the site of the first transatlantic cable, which arrived from Heart’s Content, Newfoundland on October 24th, 1866, just two weeks before the birth of Maude Delap.

for instance, Mi'kmaw guide Sulleon or Sylvester Joe to the earliest Western representations of Codroy Valley would prod residents to contemplate linkages and resuscitate their faint memory from the archive and into the public sphere. Trails tracing musical inspiration, production, and performance sites of Minnie White, Paulie Hall, Allan MacArthur, or any number of legendary Codroy Valley musicians, would encourage ethnographic research, storytelling, and expansion of a local music archive. A birding map highlighting sightings of a particular species of bird is another bountiful option in the Valley, possibly linking phenomenological experience on the land with citizen science. Already in the past few years there is a new “celebrity” bird in the Valley (Figure 8.4), a Steller’s sea eagle affectionately named Stella by east coast residents who appears to be a vagrant that has been spotted in Texas, Nova Scotia, Massachusetts, Maine, and Newfoundland (Shivaram 2021). Likewise, participants could emulate LIVE’s “BioBlitz” event that combines citizen scientists’ documentation of diverse flora and fauna in the Valley with a boat trip and guided walks led by local gardeners, beekeepers, birders, and conservationists.

White Butte Ecomuseum¹⁰⁵ in southern Saskatchewan also provides educational resources on their website, which might aid Codroy Valley as they develop their own place-based curriculum. Apart from their digital storytelling projects and heritage walking tour, White Butte’s teacher’s activity guide (Hall 2018), which stems from their project, “Local Community Engagement: White Butte Ecomuseum Ecology Heritage Project,” includes eight thematic lessons designed around experientialism and mindfulness, each focused on a disparate aspect of the regional landscape. The lessons are intended to “stimulate discussion about environmental,

¹⁰⁵ On my research trip, I stopped by White Butte to walk their self-guided heritage trail, and had an engaging phone chat with one of their board members, Rebecca Otitoju. Rebecca explained to me how their ecomuseum is unique for paying tribute to White Butte’s relatively recent settlement, as it acquired village status in 1963 and became a town as late as 1979. Its digital story map and collection combines audio storytelling with photos from a wide range of local and long-time residents.

social and economic sustainability to nurture engaged, responsible citizens” (Hall 2018, 2) among students from grade 4 to grade 6, though they can certainly be adapted to any age group.

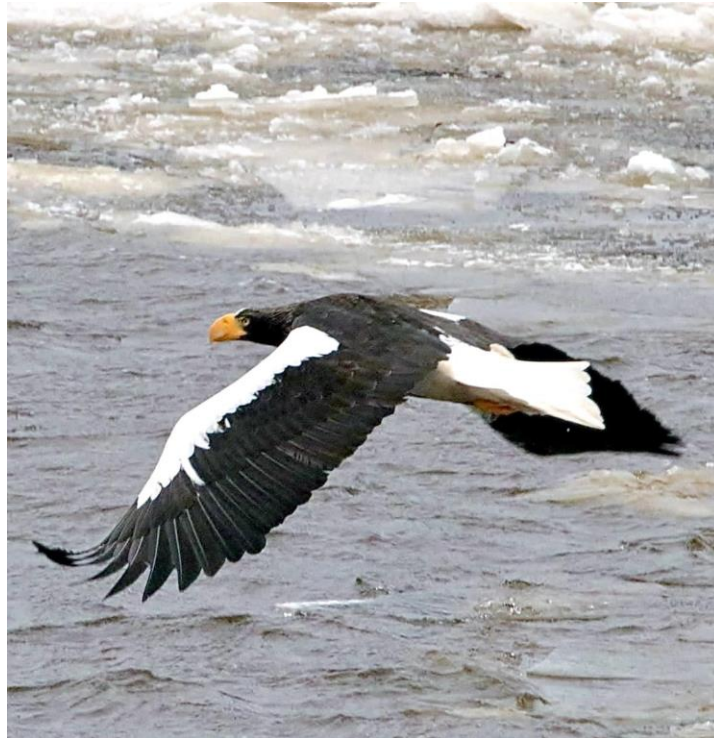


Figure 8.4: “Stella” the Steller’s eagle in Codroy Valley. Photo by Codroy Valley Wetland Centre.

The first lesson, for example, invites students to create a living art exhibit using natural materials, while prodding them to reflect critically on memories and affective experiences in natural spaces, as well as the consequences of society’s encroachments on those vulnerable spaces. Other lessons include journaling, cattle management, water, grassland birds, climate change, and a migration obstacle course. Overall, students are tasked with thinking through how relations of power at multiple scales impact local spaces and affective experiences in place. By using an autoethnographic and collaborative ethnographic approach, they are encouraged to ponder seriously how best to build a future in common with the more-than-human world. The critical regionalist perspective they espouse could be integrated into an environmental and arts education curriculum for Codroy Valley, in which students are tasked to reflect on, say, how bird

migration patterns and fish stocks are being aggravated by a combination of local and global forces, and what actions might be taken now to mitigate those effects in perpetuity. One solution they would likely come up with is partnerships.

Building solidarity networks among communities of practice is a significant contribution of the ecomuseum paradigm, as it provides a platform for regions and communities to share resources and support at multiple scales. Saskatchewan Ecomuseum Initiative is a robust ecomuseum network in Canada that incorporates diverse stakeholders and influences regional politics. I hope to see a similar initiative in Atlantic Canada, so that Codroy Valley's ecomuseum participants can exchange notes with similarly aggrieved communities in the region. Indeed, while challenges (and successes) are felt locally, many of the hegemonic forces are larger-than-local, so organizing to identify and resist those forces by undermining them with a localized politics that spurs decolonial language, subjectivities, and collective action is a good beginning to a counterhegemonic project on a regional scale. Codroy Valley may also take advantage of its historic and current cosmopolitanism to connect with ecomuseum communities further afield. For example, with its strong cultural and familial ties to Scotland, there are several partnering possibilities with ecomuseums in that country, such as on the Isle of Skye (Skye Ecomuseum), around Aberdeen (Torry Ecomuseum Project), in Tay County (Cateran Ecomuseum), and along the English border (Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum).

One particularly enticing transnational partnership was initiated in 2018 between Torry Ecomuseum Project in Aberdeen and Shimizusawa Project in Yubari on Hokkaido, Japan. The Torry-Yubari Exchange was a printmaking project designed to connect two cities built around a fossil fuel industry, to compare identity narratives with allies across the planet who had never visited each other's city. Photographs representing diverse participants' notion of "what they

think of as the landscape of their city” were framed and put on display alongside photos by a professional printmaker, and a select few were exchanged with the allied city. Every few weeks, one community member from each location would share their photographs and perspectives via Zoom chat, blog, or email. Even though that project has now ended, members from both cities continue to share photos via Instagram. The most recent photos depict sources of comfort such as groups planting flowers and trees, accompanied by handwritten signs describing their emotional relationship to whatever activity they are performing. Codroy Valley is not a post-fossil fuel city, but it does have much in common with rural communities around the world who are dealing with extractive industry, outmigration, underemployment, xenophobia, environmental decline, and erosion of land-based traditions. The ecomuseum will offer a searchable platform for potential allies to make those important connections.

Ecomuseums do more than represent culture; they furnish spaces to *live* it, in which senses meld with space, time, texture, and society so as to hone perceptivity while building sense of place. The English Enclosures, Cantwell (1993, 36) tells us, harkened a drastic shift in aesthetic values from lived space to representations of space, as made apparent in the newly conceived landscape garden, where three-dimensional space was represented in two dimensions, so that “life and the representation of life seemed to become one.” In the ecomuseum, manicured lawns and ornamental flower beds might be opened up for more than just viewing, but for *living*: sampling the wildflowers and herbs, brewing poultices, extracting essential oils, garnishing salads with edible flowers, and so on. And the elements, birds, insects, and multitude of microorganisms living and communicating with one another can be pondered and exulted. “Soil is magnificent!” one might proclaim, as one trains one’s senses to perceive and wonder over the robustness of its

vast networks of life, death, and reconstitution. Rather than an object of desire for the eye, space may become *espace vécu*, which in turn transforms into *place* where knowledge, joys, and visions are exchanged and appraised.

CONCLUSION

Momentum is steadily growing to collect stories in Codroy Valley and build an ecomuseum. Everybody knows somebody who has stories to tell, songs to sing, and skills to pass down. Many elders know the stories and songs, but fear they will end in this lifetime as transmission is lacking. The ecomuseum and the windmill project have spurred a sense of urgency to roll up our sleeves and get going before it is too late. Early in 2025, the Ecomuseum Sub-committee Vice Chair, Ron Laudadio, sent a message to our Facebook group chat following an interview with two elder community members. His text captures the endorphin rush familiar to ethnographers following a successful interview.

Folks, I held a 2-hour interview with Lydwena and Lolly O'Quinn last night, and boy, did we strike gold! So many wonderful stories about life in Searston are now captured! Searston beach area was once home to 11 buildings, two blacksmiths, a small post office and a government store, a dock that stretched out into the ocean, evenings seeing the lights of sometimes 5 or 7 schooners from Boston and the Caribbean waiting offshore for the tide to rise, horse and buggy crossing the gut on the 'lower ferry,' the lightning strike that burnt down the church, we now have the name of the schooner that sunk about 90 meters off the beach shore, about Jack Gale who ran the store and delivered groceries despite his polio, and Aunt Dinah finding a hole and old remains of a body with a few gold coins. I'm going to reach out to Richard Chession to get more stories of the Searston beach and then I'll work on getting them together into a cohesive set of audio clips. I'll be over to Lydwena's and the rectory museum to capture the pictures, newspaper clippings, and artifacts they have from well over a hundred years ago.

Clearly, in one two-hour interview, Ron tapped into a regionalist way of knowing that links Searston Beach to a vibrant commercial scene stretching as far back as over a hundred years ago, as far away as the Caribbean and Boston, and as deep as at least 90 metres under the ocean. A critical regionalist approach now will seek more perspectives to pursue these connections further. For instance, what was being traded in those schooners? Who, if anyone, from the Valley went to the Caribbean, or vice versa?

Newfoundland's role in the transatlantic slave trade is only in recent years coming to light. Long-cherished traditions like the "Screech-in" are being examined with a more critical lens. Rather than an innocuous, home-grown ritual, it is being recognized as implicated in the slave trade when put in a historical context. The Screech rum now used in the ceremony is a holdover from the Demerara rum that was produced in Guyana and imported to Newfoundland in exchange for salted codfish that fed slaves¹⁰⁶ in the Caribbean and Americas. In turn, slaves harvested the sugarcane that was then processed into Newfoundland staples such as rum and molasses (Campbell 2022). Even some of the salt used to preserve the cod was harvested in the Caribbean islands. Slave ships were built in Newfoundland, and some of their crew members were slaves. These are the stories Newfoundlanders and Labradorians need to come to terms with when they persist with isolationist narratives or xenophobic discourse. The Rock has never been isolated, and in fact, has dark and violent global connections.

The ecomuseum will have to collect and mobilize "the partial traces, artifacts, images, metaphors that provide clues and insights, incentives to further cultural production and debate" (Powell 2012, 55). Codroy Valley is unfinished, and never will be finished. How might we tell stories about Codroy Valley that see its "moment of cultural production, ephemeral when considered in isolation... not as relatively discrete and autonomous but as connected not only to each other but to broader patterns of the production of space, of history, of culture and politics" (Ibid., 56)? All of the stories are important, especially if they spark third space dialogues that seek to rewrite unsustainable narratives in order to claim a better future. Much of the fodder for

¹⁰⁶ In a radio documentary series titled *Unearthed: Slavery in Newfoundland and Labrador* (Barrett 2022), Xavier Campbell, a St. John's-based writer who grew up in Jamaica and has called Newfoundland home for well over a decade, and gender studies scholar Sonja Boon describe how the better grades of cod were sent to ports in Europe and the Mediterranean. The cod of the poorest quality, sometimes even rotten and called "refuse fish," went to the islands to feed slaves.

revaluing and reclaiming Codroy Valley's commons is lying dormant in the structures of feeling inhabiting the personal experience narratives of our elders.

Indeed, one person's experience speaks not only to an individual sense of self, but also to a world of structures of feeling. For folklorist William Wilson (2008, 8), the dialectic of self and place is bound up in those stories, for "self is a person existing and acting in, and linked to, a community of 'others.'" Moreover, when we share those stories with the greater public, *in situ*, they become "dynamic tales that shape audience members' own sense of person and place in an ever-expanding fabric of intertextuality" (Ibid., 8–9). Everyone may potentially play a role in retrieving those perspectives and putting them in conversation with structures of feeling inhabiting the younger folks and newcomers of today, as much as those structures of feeling waiting to be recovered from the archives. In their study of the roles of grandparents in the province, Singh and Devine (2013, 21) remind us that "'everyone'—and not only the designated highly funded 'experts' and 'researchers'—can have the ability and desire to produce, and in fact can produce relevant and local knowledge in contemporary Newfoundland and Labrador society to make sense of their everyday lives." Ethnographic methods that blur the subject-object binary and open up third space dialogues with more-than-human inhabitants will only add to the repository of local knowledge that will continue to safeguard the commons and the customs and ecologies that depend on them.

While a complex assemblage of cultural and economic narratives and chronotopes have convinced most young people in the Valley that working in agriculture is no longer a sexy or economically viable option, plenty of people will inevitably be drawn to Codroy Valley's fertile lands in the coming decades. Growing food was the main pull that brought Lana and me to the Valley when still in our 20s and 30s, and I know of one other person who has since moved in to

live sustainably off the land. Others have since moved to the Valley to retire, to start rural businesses, to raise families in a safe and beautiful environment, or to return home. The ecomuseum will help to ensure that those newcomers become anchored to the place's history and identity, while also weaving in their own lifetime of identities, dreams, and anxieties. Perhaps, if an ecomuseum had been operating when we arrived in 2016, we would still be living there.

As for the windmill project, pending buyers for a questionable hydrogen market, World Energy GH2 recently announced that it has its sights on other uses for the turbines. The most plausible option being bandied about is for the windmills to power a data centre for AI purposes. While the insidious hegemony of AI dependency is the subject of another study, suffice to say here that it is incumbent on residents to discuss the prospects of a windmill-powered data centre in their region, as part of the broader conversation about the future role of AI in our everyday lives. Is it essential enough to require that a windfarm be built on common land? Might AI be viewed as an encroachment on the commons? Might the windfarms, if they need to be installed, be used to power a different project more relevant to the health and overall wellbeing of the Valley's human and more-than-human inhabitants?

Narratives that proclaim high technology with capital-intensive investments as the necessary and commonsensical fix our society needs are inevitably backed by an agenda. Chronotopes of linear growth as requisite for sustaining "the economy" are excluding worlds of customs, narratives, and border thinking that resist those pronouncements but may lack the clout to make a big splash. As Shuman (2005, 59) reminds us, "narratives invent rather than reflect coherence or fragmentation in the world." Through ethnographic and archival research, we can interrogate the tidiness and fictive wholeness of hegemonic narratives that posit cultural goldmines like Codroy Valley as destined to the annals of history, if not as a playground for

seasonal cottagers. We can identify the intertextual and intersectional frictions that inhabit real or potential sites of cultural translation, finding in those spaces the possibility of counternarrative, resistance, and redemption.

There is a role for everyone in the making of an ecomuseum. Whether one would rather roll up their sleeves, pull out their recorder, and witness other people's stories, or if they prefer working behind the scenes, strategizing, transcribing, archiving, digitizing, or fashioning exhibits, an ideal scenario is for everyone to use their strengths and implicate themselves in the story that is constantly unfolding, twisting, and rewriting itself. Hope, as Ernst Bloch (1954) noted, is a recognition that there is always an excess that cannot be contained by any one articulation, thus opening up the future to a wider range of perspectives. I hope, as do countless Codroy Valleyers of today, that when more b'ys take root in the bay, as newcomers or returnees, those perspectives will continue to grow, in strength and in number. Where birdsong is sought in conference with humans, when lynx tracks are honoured as material culture, when folksongs are re-storied in the landscape, we can sigh with relief that we are doing our job, yet acknowledge that much work still lies ahead.

* * *

Lana and I made the challenging decision to move away from Codroy Valley in April 2024, just as the hundreds of garlics we had planted the previous fall were nuzzling their way through the buttery soil. We made one last kelp haul and lathered the red magical substance all over the garden beds. We tucked the cozy beds in with mounds of compost. We embarked with our three cats on a final trek along the icy riverbanks, over the snowy hills, and to our favourite lookout point in a forest clearing. We visited friends for teas and goodbyes, had a massive garage sale, drove to our most cherished spots in the Valley, and cried. Our tears were a rambling mixture of

relief, uncertainty, excitement, and regret. They carried salty memories of kelp hauls, wood splitting, edible wildflower bouquets, pickled garlic scapes, and India beer. Through our tears we discerned the unique landscape, now so familiar to us, as we wept for all the familiar faces we had come to admire, the intimate life histories they had graciously shared, the side-splitting laughter at darts, the dances, bonfires, kayak parties, and infinite memories.

Our own Codroy Valley story has a happy, queer ending. Several people had expressed interest in purchasing our home, but it never felt right. They will just replace the garden with sod, we mourned, and “update” the house to keep up with the Joneses. How dreadfully boring, we thought. Just as we were about to settle one of those deals, an enthusiastic family from Manitoba entered the picture. A decidedly queer household with two dads, one mom, and four boys, and a long and dedicated history of permaculture, crafts, and trades, we were flabbergasted by the sudden luck hurled at us out of left field. Today, the family is thriving in Codroy Valley. The four boys added a substantial demographic to the local K-12. Two trades in consistently high demand, carpentry and plumbing, are now readily available in the Valley. The garden is flourishing and expanding without chemicals, and there is zero desire to adhere to conventional aesthetics. The ecomuseum has new members, to boot. I, too, will remain a member, for as long as I inhabit the palimpsest that makes up the place widely known today as Codroy Valley.

APPENDIX A: CODROY VALLEY ECOMUSEUM INFORMATION SESSION

Codroy Valley Ecomuseum: Context, Vision, Next Steps, Suggested Themes

I. CONTEXT

Codroy Valley is one of the most spectacular places on earth. Physical beauty, but also its unique history, ecology, customs, legends, artistic traditions, and ingenuity are all part of what make this place special. For centuries, humans and nonhumans co-existed, toiled, and thrived in a harsh but bountiful environment, passing down important traditions, values, and skills through practice, stories, rituals, and play. Once the premier breadbasket of Newfoundland and Labrador replete with farmers, shepherds, fishers, artisans, merchants, lodges, expansive kinship networks, and a bustling shop on every corner, the Valley today is witnessing outmigration alongside a decline in decent job opportunities. Tourists tend to overlook the Valley, or if they do venture in, often spend a night or two and leave without connecting to the Valley's rich heritage. Much fertile land lies fallow, food security and ensuing health complications are dire realities, and deep connections to place that nurture our ecosystems are faltering as people spend more time indoors, in cars, and in isolation.

Not all is lost, however. Many still remember a golden age of hard work, reciprocity, bountiful harvests, healthy ecosystems, and strong sense of purpose. Residents, including newcomers, are striving to bring about a return to those traditional values, albeit with certain updates befitting Codroy Valley in the 21st century. Inclusivity, for instance, is being embraced, where all human and nonhuman community members are seen as a valuable part of our heritage regardless of age, species, gender, sexual orientation, provenance, religion, occupation, ability, or ethnicity. Community gardening initiatives, a growing number of recreational opportunities, and new business ventures are pulling their weight alongside long cherished activities like dances, potlucks, summer and winter festivals, artisan markets, concerts, birding, kayaking, and much more. Our area development association is working with school groups, the elderly, local businesses, and social enterprises to direct sustained energies, support, and funds toward allied initiatives that wish to see the Valley flourish.

Codroy Valley Ecomuseum is helping bridge these visionaries by providing a platform on which residents, visitors, and tourists can work together to bring to light all the Valley has to offer. A "museum without walls," it follows the ecomuseological prerogative to prioritize the needs and wellbeing of the host community. This is achieved through community-led interpretation, management, preservation, and propagation of Codroy Valley's multiple and evolving heritage forms and narratives, and the enhanced sense of place that accompanies these responsibilities. Our ecomuseum sees social, cultural, ecological, and industrial heritage as inextricably linked and worthy of critical engagement. Beyond bringing visibility to already-existing activities in the Valley, it will facilitate in/outreach and research for the development of

tourist experiences, interactive trails, a compelling website and app, citizen science collaborations, and pop-up exhibits related to local culture and ecology. It will also assist in the curation of archival texts, brochures, educational resources, merchandise, videos, interviews, blogs, podcasts, and publications, as well as a rotating calendar of workshops, festivals, conferences, guided walks, and family days. The renewed emphasis on regenerative tourism, sustainable ecosystems, rewarding job opportunities, and overall quality of life are sure to promote Codroy Valley as a place to visit, care for, and call home for generations to come.

II. VISION

- interpretive trails (preferably circular walks) that correspond to specific themes
 - themes addressed at public input meetings
 - maps & interpretations on website or app, accessible via QR codes
 - digital guide provides audio/video, text, and links to further information
 - trail markers colour-coded (or whatever) by theme; themes may overlap
 - trails may shift and/or accumulate over time
- “experiences”* that can be booked/purchased in advance based on availability
 - expert-guided interactive walks that educate about interactions between humans and environment (flora, fauna, geology, climate, etc.) in the past, present, and future; public input meetings will address who will guide and where
 - horseback tours
 - a day in the life of... (shepherd, fisher, early settler or Indigenous inhabitant, self-sufficient farming family member, schoolkid before electricity, craftsman, etc.)
 - boat rides
 - fishing, hunting, trapping excursions
 - hands-on food/garden tours
 - storytelling and supper with campfire and music
 - hands-on traditional crafts and trades
 - birdwatching tours

*locals highly encouraged to participate (e.g., a young adult from Tompkins didn't know about Codroy Valley's sheep and wool heritage until she visited the Minnie White museum)

- ecomuseum hub that houses library, archive, maps, brochures, information, equipment, gift shop, café, meeting room, exhibition, restrooms, refreshments, Wi-Fi
- regular program of pop-up workshops and events (BioBlitz, spotlight on community members, family days, etc.) related to ecological/cultural heritage at different sites around the Valley
 - educational/environmental materials and activities determined in part by baseline study on local perceptions of environment and knowledge gaps (more on this below)
- public input meetings at regular intervals but at different locations (to diversify the crowd) that involve mapping, remembering, negotiating, planning

- first one might revolve around a not-so-simple question: “Where is Codroy Valley?”
- subsequent meetings can decide on specific themes, trails, key contacts, etc.
- platform that advertises/brings visibility to Codroy Valley activities, groups, businesses
 - via social media, brochures/literature, posters, ecomuseum staff
- ecomuseum merchandise available in online shop and gift shop
 - apparel worn by staff/volunteers
 - preferably designed/manufactured by local businesses
- temporary exhibits that feature local art
 - Val Marie ecomuseum showcases residents’ unique depictions of Saskatchewan; our ecomuseum could put out a similar call to residents to depict CV in any medium on a canvas
 - many museums showcase a community quilt or murals that tell its collective story
- expert-led environmental-arts education with school groups (more below)
- coffee table book with stunning photography that captures the stories of 10-20 inhabitants (perhaps one from each community; aim for demographic diversity) related to landscape, folklore, memories, foodways, anxieties, and hopes for the future of the Valley
 - hire local photographer, publisher, printer, etc.
 - available at gift shop
- ethnographic cookbook, available at gift shop and/or participating venues
 - example from Croatian ecomuseum: <https://www.batana.org/en/the-eco-museums-projects/recipes-from-the-house-of-batana-book/>
- tourist infrastructure
 - adequate automobile/bicycle parking
 - well-maintained toilet and diaper-changing facilities
 - refreshments nearby
 - digital interpretation panels with some physical text
 - access to Wi-Fi
 - accommodation options for diverse budgets (B&Bs, hostels, cabins, campgrounds)
- beyond Codroy Valley, create a regional ecomuseum network linking ecomuseums, tourism associations, museum/heritage organizations, scientists, students, First Nations, higher education institutions, ethnographers, interest groups, etc. across Atlantic Canada
 - good regional example is Saskatchewan Ecomuseum Initiative (SEI): <https://sustainableheritagecasestudies.ca/2021/12/30/the-saskatchewan-ecomuseum-initiative/>

III. NEXT STEPS

Baseline assessment of local environmental knowledge, gaps, and barriers to transmission

- hire someone (local or university student, maybe geography grad) to research local perceptions and knowledge of the environment and natural heritage of Codroy Valley (n=80) to ascertain:
 - what locals know and value about their natural environment (natural features, place-names, interspecific/ecosystemic dynamics, wildlife/plant/fungi IDs, areas of cultural interest)
 - what locals don't know but wish they did (knowledge gaps)
 - how/when they interact with natural environment through outdoor activities
 - what aspects of the natural environment influence wellbeing and sense of place
 - barriers to environmental education
 - suggestions for sustainable tourism activities that involve the environment
- may use PPGIS (Public Participatory Geographic Information System) or something similar to incorporate public participation into the mapping/information gathering and dissemination process
- this information will yield a report (and webinar, publications, workshops, etc.) that will help guide research & development of environmental and educational programs/activities in the future
 - read report or watch webinar of Ireland case study for inspiration:
https://www.ecomuseumlive.eu/_files/ugd/d109a3_588d869e736a4411aa9b02a87dfa568b.pdf

Informative, interactive trail guides based on community input

- use targeted community meeting(s) to identify potential walks/drives based on 3-4 themes chosen by the community
- hire someone to develop series of digital guides to be accessible via website, app, QR codes as well as accompanying brochures (physical and digital) with QR codes
- they should first conduct archival research and interviews/consultations to reveal multiple narratives for walks (ecological information with cultural/historical contexts)
- guides should include maps with points of interest, audio/video files, photos, accompanying text
- links to accommodations, local businesses, further information about sites
- include suggestions for different seasons
- option to search itineraries by mode of transportation (bike, car, walk, boat/kayak), difficulty level, length, theme, and keyword (e.g., industrial history, architecture, wildlife, Searston)
 - examples: <https://www.ecomuseumlive.eu/iveraghwalks>
 - <https://cateranecomuseum.co.uk/explore/>

Digital marketing strategies

- hire expert in digital media to build attractive website
- provide guidance and templates to project coordinators for seamless digital integration
- develop brand awareness on- and offline
- set up YouTube channel for ecomuseum
- community inreach to raise awareness of ecomuseum's community development goals and to integrate diverse community initiatives into ecomuseum platform
- outreach with external (regional, provincial, national, transnational, global) organizations and individuals to strengthen our brand, bring visibility to ecomuseum model, maximize resources

Environment & arts education

- hire environmental-arts educator to get school kids to identify, draw, and map flora and fauna at different sites around the Valley; display artwork in exhibits, brochures, posters, social media, publications
 - wildlife safari in Wales: <https://www.ecomuseumlive.eu/pen-llyn-wildlife-safari>
- design community research project that involves learning from our past environmental relations to build a healthier future
 - Scotland example: <https://cateranecomuseum.co.uk/river-detectives/>
- work with school kids to make a video documenting their experiences
- annual BioBlitz festival weekend to identify/record as many species in a specific location as possible in set time, plus guided walks, art, workshops, games
 - Wales example: <https://www.ecomuseumlive.eu/bioblitz>
- plan calendar of environmental-arts activities around the Valley
- host conference/meeting with other environmental-arts educators that offers workshops and lessons/talks around the Valley
- present final report

Annual spotlight on nonhuman community member (past or present)

- hire researcher(s) to compile information about a species or environmental phenomenon in physical/digital publication, podcast, vlog/video, educational resources
 - Ireland example: <https://www.ecomuseumlive.eu/educationalresources>
- coordinate with museum designers to spotlight superstar in temporary exhibit
- develop interactive trail to observe species or phenomenon in its natural habitat, if possible
- encourage visitors and residents to engage in citizen science (e.g. submit sightings on digital map) and provide links to this information on website
- organize festival/calendar of events focused on that year's superstar
- convene one or two presentations/talks to keep the public engaged

- submit final report on findings
- could spotlight endangered species to raise awareness and develop remediation agenda

Annual spotlight on human community member or group (past or present)

- hire researcher(s) to compile information about person(s) in physical/digital publication, podcast, vlog/video, educational resources for parents and teachers
- coordinate with museum designers to spotlight superstar in temporary museum exhibit
- develop interactive trail to “follow in the footsteps of...”
 - Maude Delap example:
 - <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6c6d88a276b04a048a1cf38796d3314b>)
- encourage residents to submit photographs, recordings, information pertaining to person(s) and provide link to submissions on website
- convene one or two presentations/talks to engage the public
- organize festival/calendar of events focused on that year’s superstar
- submit final report on findings

Other jobs

- financial advisor to create budgets, allocate funds for all projects
- accountant/bookkeeper; could also be person who answers emails
- inreach coordinator for all projects to ensure smooth running of day-to-day activities; work with researchers and educators; recruit volunteers/employees within the Valley; help with event planning; organize/advertise regular public input meetings in different locations
- outreach coordinator to recruit employees and volunteers from external organizations; work with marketing strategist to build ecomuseum network in Atlantic Canada and heighten visibility of Codroy Valley ecomuseum
- social media coordinator; keep digital presence up to date
- technician for management and optimization of all digital infrastructure
- tour guides for “experiences”
- librarian/archivist to mine existing materials and archive all incoming materials
- trail builders, sign fitters
- temporary and permanent exhibition designers
- legal advisor who handles regulations, ethics, policy, publication processes
- staff for museum and gift shop
- custodial duties, grounds/trail maintenance

- communal roof repairs (Carina Hynes interview)
- moving houses with rope
- kids always had a role (e.g. conversation with Loyola about how boys would have to get fire going at school, girls cleaned blackboard)
- contemporary examples of cooperation and sharing
 - dairy farm's 10 employees with disabilities did community service around the Valley for 3 weeks in 2019; gave them a chance to get out of the house, meet people, empower themselves, help elderly residents with wood for winter, painting, etc.
 - community pasture
 - annual haymaking (Sherman Bungay) with volunteers from the community
 - volunteer street/river cleanups organized by community members
 - everyday gifting, sharing, reciprocity
 - Winter Carnival, folk fest, darts, etc. all run by volunteers

- **Theme #3: Codroy Valley and the World**
 - Codroy Valley has always been connected to other places
 - find historic references to Codroy from other parts of the world and vice versa
 - but when (usually) men left for work en masse (especially to Cape Breton, Boston, Toronto, Alberta), lack of transmission of local know-how to younger generations (Patsy Brownrigg interview)
 - there has always been marriage into/out of the Valley
 - tourism goes way back to hunting and fishing camps, with railroad and ferry; there has always been cultural diffusion, never completely insular
 - role of railroad
 - introduction of crank telephone, known locally as an "eggbeater" (Patsy's house - first operators)
 - external markets to export/import goods
 - priests and merchants often came from other villages
 - create a long-distance trail that follows in historic priest's footsteps from parish to parish (e.g., along St. George's Bay)
 - WWII German soldiers docked in the Valley (conversation with Gerry Lewis)
 - pirate lootings in Codroy (Patsy interview)
 - Vikings? (talk to Melvin or Wayne)
 - begs question of what marks an insider and outsider...
 - ask visitor to think of their own community and what marks an insider there. Perhaps it is knowledge of local traditions, dialect, place-names, family histories, vegetation, weather patterns, social/economic/cultural customs? Otherwise...?
 - how do/did newcomers become "insiders" here and in your own community?

- influx of settlers 18th-20th centuries into land already occupied by Aboriginal peoples
- migratory/seafaring connections to Basque country, Portugal (Mushrow astrolabes), France, Ireland, England, Scotland, United States, mainland Canada, etc. etc.
 - projected goal: introduce exchange with community in Scotland via another ecomuseum community (e.g. Skye, Catevan, Flodden, Torry)
- **Other themes (could also be incorporated into the above)**
 - recreation (past and present)
 - Wreckhouse
 - major transition periods in Codroy Valley history
 - origins of “Codroy” (it’s not king cod... ask Wayne MacIsaac)
 - music traditions
 - recover narratives from/bring visibility to marginalized groups/individuals from past and present (e.g. 2SLGBTQI+, children, women, Indigenous, CFAs, differently-abled, etc.)
 - learning from the past to improve our socioecological relations in the present to secure healthier future (see “Museum of Rapid Transition” for inspiration: <https://cateranecomuseum.co.uk/new-partnership-will-help-us-launch-scotlands-first-museum-of-rapid-transition/>)
 - life at sea
 - women’s work
 - wildlife, birds, coastal habitats
 - vernacular architecture (see MacKinnon 2002)
 - cemeteries
 - religious conflict and coexistence in the past (and how we’ve overcome those, mostly)
 - artistic traditions (functional and decorative)
 - Newfie bullet
 - historic businesses and venues
 - old schoolhouses

V. MISCELLANY

The prefix ‘eco’ is derived from the ancient Greek ‘oikos’ for house, household, or family. Words that start the same way, like ‘ecology’ and ‘economy,’ are associated with holism, relationships, interactions, interdependence, and the behaviour of complex systems. This gives an ecomuseum a broad foundation for addressing issues and bringing groups together to protect and raise the profile of local heritage assets and living cultures.

Museums are usually seen as places with collections, but the word itself refers to ‘places of the muses,’ the ancient Greek goddesses of inspiration and creativity. In early Greek mythology there were three muses – meditation, memory, and song – and the list was later expanded to include history, dancing, astronomy, and different types of poetry.

Young Canada Works at Building Careers in Heritage:

- Work terms of 4-12 months
- For post-secondary graduates

Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations:

- Work terms of 6-16 weeks
- For current secondary and post-secondary students

APPENDIX B: CODROY VALLEY COMMONS ARTICLE

MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2023

THE WRECKHOUSE WEEKLY

PAGE 7

Codroy Valley Commons

By Jaymie White
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

ST. ANDREWS — The reality of food scarcity, especially given the skyrocketing grocery store prices and limited produce choices due to transport delays, remains a very real concern for families across the entire country, but a project in St. Andrews called the Codroy Valley Commons (CVC), hopes to tackle that problem within their community.

"The CVC is an initiative born in St. Andrews that uses 'commoned' land to grow food, and when I say commoned, I mean it's made publicly available for shared governance by the community," said Roshni Caputo-Nimbark, co-owner of Bert Bark Inn and doctoral student of folklore at MUNL. "It's the latest in a stream of positive efforts to alleviate food insecurity and nurture thriving, sustainable cultures in the region. What makes it different is that it takes place on residential plots and invites a variety of residents and visitors, who I call 'Commoners,' to share seeds, sweat, and stories with one another in those spaces. Rather than people having their own plots, everybody gardens collaboratively in the same space."

The idea that first sparked the initiative happened six years ago.

"When my partner and I were in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan we met a woman who used other people's yards to grow food for her bicycle-powered produce business. A portion of the food goes to the homeowner and a portion to her, which she would sell to local restaurants for an income," said Caputo-Nimbark. "So that was the idea of growing food in other people's yards and it's becoming more of a thing in urban areas, but not really in rural areas that I know about, where it's organized like this."

Turning a profit isn't what the initiative is aiming for.

"CVC, rather than growing food for profit, is going to distribute food locally and put any income back into the initiative. Lana (my partner) and I, last summer we went around door-to-door on every Saturday and we got to know our neighbours and introduced the idea," said Caputo-Nimbark. "We asked if anybody had any interest in either volunteering land or time or just support for the initiative, and we had really great feedback and were encouraged to keep going."

Currently, the CVC has four



Roshni Caputo-Nimbark - Submitted photo

pledged plots of land, but even more had been offered when they first began last year.

"There was more that was pledged, but we decided that, realistically, that was all we could take on and we wanted it to stay local for the pilot year and so we stuck with St. Andrews," explained Caputo-Nimbark. "There's an annual opt-in, opt-out period where, if people decide they don't want to common their land anymore, after a year they can pull out and anybody else can opt-in and common land."

If more volunteers take part, the plan is for the CVC to expand outside of St. Andrews.

"Volunteers are absolutely the backbone of this, and the more volunteers we have, the more input we have, the more we can decide if we want to create a currency, like a local currency for example, or some kind of system where volunteer time credits can be exchanged for food, possibly even other products and services from local businesses," explained Caputo-Nimbark. "But the idea for right now is that volunteers will help grow food and then we can collectively decide what we want to do with that food. That's whether we donate to food banks, seniors' homes, give away or sell at markets, and if we sell at markets all the money will go back into the CVC."

There will soon be a quicker way to access the information and learn more about the CVC.

"I think a Facebook page is very

accessible to people. If people have ideas about other platforms I am open to it, but for now I think Facebook. In the spring at some point, I am going to make a page and then we can organize volunteer days, feed sharing, skill sharing, anything. People will be able to upload photos and even ask questions."

Along with numerous events and volunteer-appreciation days, Caputo-Nimbark is considering compiling a collection of recipes.

"I was thinking about compiling recipes into a cookbook, and to make it available to anybody looking to extend their own menus at home, and hopefully inspire people to hopefully grow and eat more vegetables because there is so much food-related knowledge here, like cooking and growing vegetables, and I just want to be able to document it and make it accessible and compelling for future generations."

Part of that accessibility includes stories and folklore.

"Beyond just growing the food, I want to use this folklore training I have for the past two years to inspire people to share stories and oral histories concerning foodways, commoning, and local economies," said Caputo-Nimbark. "People who know me are probably sick of me asking them about families and customs because I am a newcomer here, and I truly won't feel at home until I learn much more about the rich heritage and folklore of this region. I know commoning does happen still, even though it's not called

that now, so I want to draw attention to how valuable it can be for the economy and the environment."

The rich soil and micro-climate of the Codroy Valley is a perfect spot to start growing for the future.

"We have so much space in the Codroy Valley and a lot of it is just sitting there, not being used. I look at all this amazing land and think, 'we could absolutely be using it to grow more food for ourselves,' and sometimes the shelves in the grocery stores, as we all know, are bare," said Caputo-Nimbark. "It's going bad, or overly-processed, all that stuff, and we all know the health problems in Newfoundland and Labrador, so this is just another effort to try and alleviate that."

The support from the community thus far has been encouraging.

"A common response was, 'well, yeah, I have so much land and I have been waiting for someone to do something with it,' because a lot of people have acres and acres of land they just don't use, and they are excited and touched that someone wants to make it productive."

Planting has already begun for the coming season.

"We just started leeks and we will be starting several more things in the coming months, like tomatoes, peppers, pretty much everything, eggplant, you name it," said Caputo-Nimbark. "We, ourselves, have a plot of land at Bert Bark that we are commoning, so I am so excited to see who comes to volunteer at our spot and other spots."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbey, Edward. 1977. *The Journey Home: Some Words in Defense of the American West*. New York: Dutton.
- Abrahams, Roger. 1981. "Shouting Match at the Border: The Folklore of Display Events." In *And Other Neighborly Names: Social Process and Cultural Image in Texas Folklore*, edited by Richard Bauman and Roger Abrahams, 303–322. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- . 2005. *Everyday Life: A Poetics of Vernacular Practices*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Abram, David. 1996. *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than human World*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1991. "Writing against Culture." In *Recapturing Anthropology*, edited by Richard Fox, 137–162. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.
- Amin, Samir. 1989 [1988]. *Eurocentrism: Modernity, Religion, and Democracy*. Translated by Russell Moore and James Membrez. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Aucoin, Geoffrey. 1994. "Traditions and Social Customs of the Codroy Valley, Newfoundland." Assignment for FOLK 2401 (Gerald Pocius). *MUNFLA*.
- Aylward, Christopher. 2024. *Beothuk: How Story Made a People (Almost) Disappear*. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press
- Babcock, Barbara. 1980. "Reflexivity: Definitions and Discriminations." *Semiotica* 30 (1–2): 114.
- Bachelard, Gaston. 1964 [1958]. *The Poetics of Space*. Translated by Maria Jolas. New York: Orion Press.
- Baker, Kelly. 2016. "Out Back Home." In *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*, edited by Mary Gray, Colin Johnson, and Brian Gilley, 25–48. New York: NYU Press.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1981 [1975]. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Translated by Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- . 1984 [1965]. *Rabelais and His World*. Translated by Hélène Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Bakić-Hayden, Milica. 1995. "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia." *Slavic Review* 54 (4): 917–931.
- Baron, Robert. 1992. "Postwar Public Folklore and the Professionalization of Folklore Studies." In *Public Folklore*, edited by Robert Baron and Nick Spitzer, 307–338. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- . 2019. "Public Folklore: Theory of/in Practice (A Response to Elliott Oring)." *Journal of American Folklore* 132 (524): 163–174.
- Barrett, Heather. 2022. *Unearthed: Slavery in Newfoundland and Labrador*. CBC Documentary.
- Barthes, Roland. (1975 [1973]). *The Pleasure of the Text*. Translated by Richard Miller. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Bateson, Gregory. 1972. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology*. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company.
- Bauman, Richard. 1971. "Differential Identity and the Social Base of Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 84 (331): 31–41.
- Behar, Ruth. 1996. *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Belk, Russell. 2010. "Sharing." *Journal of Consumer Research* 36 (5): 715–734.
- Bell, David and Gill Valentine. 1995. "Queer Country: Rural Lesbian and Gay Lives." *Journal of Rural Studies* 11 (2): 113–122.
- Bendix, Regina. 1997. *In Search of Authenticity*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- . 2000. "The Pleasures of the Ear: Toward an Ethnography of Listening." *Cultural Analysis* 1: 33–50.
- . 2009. "Heritage between Economy and Politics. An Assessment from the Perspective of Cultural Anthropology." In *Intangible Heritage*, edited by Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa, 253–269. London: Routledge.
- Benjamin, Walter. 1968 [1955]. *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt. New York: Schocken.
- Bennett, Margaret. 1975. "Some Aspects of the Scottish Gaelic Traditions of the Codroy Valley, Newfoundland." MA Thesis. St. John's, NL: Memorial University of Newfoundland.
- . 1989. *The Last Stronghold: The Scottish Gaelic Traditions of Newfoundland*. St. John's, NL: Breakwater Books.

- . 2004. *Scottish Customs from the Cradle to the Grave*. Edinburgh: Birlinn.
- Bennett, Tony. 1998. "Pedagogic Objects, Clean Eyes, and Popular Instruction: On Sensory Regimes and Museum Didactics." *Configurations* 6 (3): 345–371.
- Bhabha, Homi. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Blank, Trevor. 2012. *Folk Culture in the Digital Age: The Emergent Dynamics of Human Interaction*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.
- Blaser, Mario. 2013. "Ontological Conflicts and the Stories of Peoples in Spite of Europe: Toward a Conversation on Political Ontology." *Current Anthropology* 54 (5): 547–568.
- Blaser, Mario and Marisol De La Cadena. 2017. "The Uncommons: An Introduction." *Anthropologica* 59: 185–193.
- Bollier, David. 2001. *Public Assets, Private Profits: Reclaiming the American Commons in an Age of Market Enclosure*. Washington, DC: New America Foundation.
- Borrelli, Nunzia and Peter Davis. 2012. "How Culture Shapes Nature: Reflections on Ecomuseum Practices." *Nature and Culture* 7 (1): 31–47.
- Botkin, Benjamin. 1953. "Applied Folklore: Creating Understanding Through Folklore." *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 17: 199–206.
- . 1958. "We Called It 'Living Lore.'" *New York Folklore Quarterly* 14: 189.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1986. "The Forms of Capital." In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by John Richardson, 241–258. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Briggs, Charles. 1993. "Metadiscursive Practices and Scholarly Authority in Folkloristics." *Journal of American Folklore* 106 (422): 387–434.
- Bronner, Simon. 2016. "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Practice." *Cultural Analysis* 15 (1): 6–27.
- Bruce, Barbara. 1971. "Personal Reminiscences of Community and Family Customs in the Codroy Valley." Paper for FOLK 3400 (John Widdowson). *MUNFLA*.
- Bruner, Edward. 1986. "Experience and Its Expressions." In *The Anthropology of Experience*, edited by Victor Turner and Edward Bruner, 3–30. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

- Butler, Judith. 1997. "Merely Cultural." *Social Text* 52/53: 265–277.
- Byington, Robert. 1989. "What Happened to Applied Folklore" In *Time & Temperature: A Centennial Publication of the American Folklore Society*, edited by Charles Camp, 77–79. Washington, DC: American Folklore Society.
- Byron, Reginald, ed. 2003. *Retrenchment and Regeneration in Rural Newfoundland*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Campbell, Xavier. 2022. "The dark side of cod, rum and molasses: Dispelling the myths around N.L. staple foods." *CBC*. Jan 8. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland/labrador/opinion-xaiver-campbell-cod-myths-1.6284952>. Accessed Jan 2022.
- Cantwell, Robert. 1993. *Ethnomimesis: Folklife and the Representation of Culture*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Caputo-Nimbark, Roshni. 2021. "Seed Swaps and Sunday Sauce: Lessons about Sharing Food in Hard Times." *Digest: A Journal of Foodways & Culture* 8 (1/2): 43–65.
- . 2022. "'Orgy of Blood' vs 'Getting Food on the Table': Negotiating Essentializing Discourses around the Faroese *Grindadráp*." *Ethnologies* 44 (2): 177–202.
- . 2024. "Kurdish Bards Sing A Homeland: *Dengbêjî* and Conflicting Nationalisms in the Turkish State." *Culture & Tradition* 35: 15–40.
- Carlyle, Thomas. 1841. *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*. London: James Fraser.
- Carney, Bob. 2025. "NEWFOUNDLAND_BYU, L. Tom Perry Collections, MSS8710_B93.14_I3918.jpg (approved for use by Zane Grey's West Society)." *Zane Grey's West Society Archives*. <https://www.zgws.org/archives/items/show/137>. Accessed March 2025.
- Cashman, Ray. 2006. "Critical Nostalgia and Material Culture in Northern Ireland." *Journal of American Folklore* 119 (472): 137–160.
- Cazakoff, Ingrid and Wendy Fitch. 2015. *The Ecomuseum Concept: A Saskatchewan Perspective on "Museums without Walls."* Regina, SK: Heritage Saskatchewan and Museums Association of Saskatchewan.
- CBC. 2024. "Examining 'A Queer History of Newfoundland.'" *The Signal with Adam Walsh*. Jan. 8. <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-89-the-signal/clip/16033791-calling-211-examining-a-queer-history-newfoundland>.
- Cixous, Hélène. (1976 [1975]). "The Laugh of the Medusa." *Signs* 1 (4): 875–893.

- Clair, Robin Patric. 2003. "The Changing Story of Ethnography." In *Expressions of Ethnography: Novel Approaches to Qualitative Methods*, 3–26. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Clifford, James. 2004. "Traditional Futures." In *Questions of Traditions*, edited by Mark Phillips and Gordon Schochet, 152–168. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Clifford, Susan and Angela King. 1993. "Losing Your Place." In *Local Distinctiveness: Place, Particularity and Identity*, edited by Sue Clifford, 7–19. Shaftesbury, UK: Common Ground.
- Cooper, Anna Julia. 1892. "Womanhood: A Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of a Race." In *A Voice from the South: By a Black Woman of the South*, 16–34. Xenia, OH: The Aldine Printing House.
- Cormack, William. 1824. *Narrative of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland in 1822*. Edinburgh: Printed for A. Constable.
- Cormiers, The. 2007. "MacArthur's Kitchen Party." *Comin' Home*. Cormiers Entertainment. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Z8U-MAm7_w. Accessed December 2024.
- Corsane, Gerard, Peter Davis, Sarah Elliott, Maurizio Maggi, Donatella Murtas, and Sally Rogers. 2007. "Ecomuseum Evaluation: Experiences in Piemonte and Liguria, Italy." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 13 (2): 101–116.
- Cresswell, Tim. 2014. *Place: An Introduction, 2nd Edition* Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Cruikshank, Julie. 1998. *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Davis, Dona. 2003. "In the Beginning: Region, Crisis, and Occupational Choice among Newfoundland's Youth." In *Retrenchment and Regeneration in Rural Newfoundland*, edited by Reginald Byron, 177–198. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Davis, Peter. 2008. "New Museologies and the Ecomuseum." In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, edited by Brian Graham and Peter Howard, 397–414. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- . 2009. "Ecomuseums and the Representation of Place." *Rivista Geografica Italiana* 116: 483–503.
- . 2011. *Ecomuseums: A Sense of Place, 2nd Edition*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.
- De Certeau, Michel. 1984 [1980]. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translated by Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Del Negro, Giovanna. 2004. *The Passeggiata and Popular Culture in an Italian Town: Folklore and the Performance of Modernity*. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Delgado, Coral. 2001. "The Ecomuseum in Fresnes: Against Exclusion." *Museum International* 53 (1): 37–41.
- Delisle, Jennifer. 2008. "A Newfoundland Diaspora? Moving through Ethnicity and Whiteness." *Canadian Literature* 196: 64–81.
- . 2013. *The Newfoundland Diaspora: Mapping the Literature of Out-migration*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Dhawan, Nikita, Antke Engel, Christoph Holzhey, and Volker Woltersdorff, eds. 2015. *Global Justice and Desire: Queering Economy*. London: Routledge.
- Doğan, Mustafa. 2019. "The Ecomuseum and Solidarity Tourism: A Case Study from Northeast Turkey." *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* 9 (4): 537–552.
- Doğan, Mustafa and Dallen Timothy. 2020. "Beyond Tourism and Taxes: The Ecomuseum and Social Development in the Ak-Chin Tribal Community." *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 18 (2): 133–149.
- Dorson, Richard. 1968. *The British Folklorists*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dundes, Alan. 1971. "Folk Ideas as Units of Worldview." *Journal of American Folklore* 84.331: 93–103.
- Durston, John. 1998. "Building Social Capital in Rural Communities (Where It Does Not Exist)." Paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association Annual Meetings, Chicago.
- Écomusée du Val de Bièvre. 2023. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/ecomuseevaldebievre>. Accessed February 2023.
- Engel, Antke. 2010. "Desire for/within Economic Transformation." *E-flux Journal* 17: 1–10.
- Environment Canada. 2006. "Grand Codroy Estuary." The Green Lane: Environment Canada's World Wide Web site. <https://web.archive.org/web/20061002094836/http://www.atl.ec.gc.ca/wildlife/ramsar/codroy.html>. Accessed January 2025.
- Erikson, Patricia. 1996. "'So My Children Can Stay in the Pueblo': Indigenous Community Museums and Self-determination in Oaxaca, Mexico." *Museum Anthropology* 20 (1): 37–46.
- Falasca-Zamponi, Simonetta. 2020. "History, Ordinary Culture, and 'Structure of Feeling.'" *Il*

Pensiero Storico 8: 99–118.

Federici, Silvia. 2004. *Caliban and the Witch*. New York: Autonomedia.

———. 2011. “Feminism and the Politics of the Commons.” *The Commoner*. January 24. <http://www.commoner.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/federici-feminismand-the-politics-of-commons.pdf>. Accessed September 2023.

Fishman, Joshua. 1991. *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Fiske, John. 1989. *Reading the Popular*. London: Routledge.

Forsey, Helen. 2024. “Appealing the mega-destruction of wind-to-hydrogen.” *The Independent*. July 31. <https://theindependent.ca/commentary/appealing-the-mega-destruction-of-wind-to-hydrogen/>. Accessed August 2024.

Foster, Karen. 2017. “Work Ethic and Degrowth in a Changing Atlantic Canada.” *Journal of Political Ecology* 24 (1): 633–643.

Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. London: Tavistock Publications.

———. 1977 [1975]. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Press.

———. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, edited by Colin Gordon. Translated by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper. New York: Pantheon.

Frampton, Kenneth. 1983. “Prospects for a Critical Regionalism.” *Perspecta* 20: 147–162.

Fraser, Nancy. 1990. “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.” *Social Text* 25/26: 56–80.

———. 1997. *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the “Postsocialist” Condition*. London: Routledge.

Freeman, Elizabeth. 2010. *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Gabbert, Lisa. 2007. “Distanciation and the Recontextualization of Space: Finding One’s Way in a Small Western Community.” *Journal of American Folklore* 120 (476): 178–203.

———. 2011. *Winter Carnival in a Western Town: Identity, Change and the Good of the Community*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

- Gabbert, Lisa and Paul Jordan-Smith. 2007. "Introduction: Space, Place, Emergence." *Western Folklore* 66 (3/4): 217–232.
- Gale, Donald. 1971. "Growing up in Codroy Valley." Collection project for FOLK 3400 (Neil Rosenberg). *MUNFLA*.
- Garland, Jon and Neil Chakraborti. 2006. "Recognising and Responding to Victims of Rural Racism." *International Review of Victimology* 13 (1): 49–69.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 3–30. New York: Basic Books.
- Gencarella, Stephen. 2010. "Gramsci, Good Sense, and Critical Folklore Studies." *Journal of Folklore Research* 47 (3): 221–252.
- Gerber, Julien-François. "Degrowth and Critical Agrarian Studies." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 47 (2): 235–264.
- Gibson-Graham, J. K. 1996. *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- . 1999. "Queer(y)ing Capitalism in and out of the Classroom." *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 23 (1): 80–85.
- . 2006. *A Postcapitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Gibson-Graham, J. K., Ann Hill, and Lisa Law. 2016. "Re-embedding Economies in Ecologies: Resilience Building in More than Human Communities." *Building Research & Information* 44 (7): 703–716.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Giedion, Sigfried. 1958. "The New Regionalism." In *Architecture, You and Me: The Diary of a Development*, 138–51. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Glassie, Henry. 1995. "Tradition." *Journal of American Folklore* 108 (430): 395–412.
- Goffman, Erving. 1983. "The Interaction Order: American Sociological Association, 1982 Presidential Address." *American Sociological Review* 48 (1): 1–17.
- Golding, Viv. 2016. *Learning at the Museum Frontiers: Identity, Race and Power*. London: Routledge.
- González-Martin, Rachel. 2021. "White Traditioning and *Bruja* Epistemologies: Rebuilding the

- House of US American Folklore Studies.” In *Theorizing Folklore from the Margins*, edited by Solimar Otero and Mintzi Martínez-Rivera, 22–41. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Gopal, Priyamvada. 2019. *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent*. London: Verso.
- Gorman-Murray, Andrew, Barbara Pini, and Lia Bryant, eds. 2013. *Sexuality, Rurality, and Geography*. Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Gramsci, Antonio. 1971 [1929]. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.
- . 1985. *Selections from Cultural Writings*. Translated by William Boelhower. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Grasseni, Cristina. 2004. “Skilled Vision. An Apprenticeship in Breeding Aesthetics.” *Social Anthropology* 12 (1): 41–55.
- . 2015. “Seductions and Disenchantments in the Making of an Ecomuseum.” In *The Making of Heritage: Seduction and Disenchantment*, edited by Camila del Marmol, Marc Morell, and Jasper Chalcraft, 59–78. New York: Routledge.
- Gray, Mary. 2009. *Out in the Country: Youth, Media, and Queer Visibility in Rural America*. New York: NYU Press.
- Gray, Mary, Colin Johnson, and Brian Gilley, eds. 2016. *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*. New York: NYU Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1987 [1981]. *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume Two: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Halberstam, Jack. 2005. *In a Queer Time and Place*. New York: NYU Press.
- Hall, Anna, ed. 2018. “A Teacher’s Curriculum Guide.” Local Community Engagement: White Butte Ecomuseum Ecology Heritage Project. https://whitebuttemuseum.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Ecology-Heritage-Project-Teachers-Activity-Guide-Online-Version_reduced.pdf. Accessed July 2024.
- Hall, Stuart. 1999. “Un-settling ‘The Heritage,’ Re-imagining the Post-nation: Whose Heritage?” *Third Text* 13 (49): 3–13.
- . 2001. “Constituting an Archive.” *Third Text* 15 (54): 89–92.
- Handler, Richard and Jocelyn Linnekin. 1984. “Tradition, Genuine or Spurious.” *Journal of*

- American Folklore* 97 (385): 273–290.
- Haraway, Donna. 2007. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hardin, Garrett. 1968. “The Tragedy of the Commons.” *Science* 162 (3859): 1243–1248.
- Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. 2009. *Commonwealth*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Harvey, David. 1996. *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- . 2000. *Spaces for Hope*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- . 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 2012. *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. New York: Verso.
- Hayward, Philip. 2012. “Aquapelagos and Aquapelagic Assemblages.” *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* 6 (1): 1–11.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1971. “Building, Dwelling, Thinking.” In *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 143–162. New York: Harper and Row.
- Herald, The. 2013. “Is this world’s tiniest tourist centre?” *The Herald*. June 2. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13107502.worlds-tiniest-tourist-centre/>. Accessed July 2024.
- Herr, Cheryl. 1996. *Critical Regionalism and Cultural Studies: From Ireland to the American Midwest*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.
- Herring, Scott. 2010. *Another Country: Queer Anti-urbanism*. New York: NYU Press.
- Hilliard, Emily. 2022. *Making Our Future: Visionary Folklore and Everyday Culture in Appalachia*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Hillier, Bernice. 2021. “There’s nothing to prove it, but Mi’kmaw mercenary myth persists, say researchers.” *CBC*. June 21. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/mi-kmaw-mercenary-myth-colonial-history-school-textbooks-1.6073752>. Accessed May 2025.
- Hirsch, Jerrold. 1987. “Folklore in the Making: BA Botkin.” *Journal of American Folklore* 100 (395): 3–38.
- Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger, eds. 1983. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Hoehn, Kevin. 2022. "Miller's Mills' Ice Harvest." *Voices: The Journal of New York Folklore* 48 (1-4): 3-11.
- Hoffelmeyer, Michaela. 2021. "'Out' on the Farm: Queer Farmers Maneuvering Heterosexism and Visibility." *Rural Sociology* 86 (4): 752-776.
- Holzer, Sepp. 2011. *Sepp Holzer's Permaculture*. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing.
- Hoobler, Ellen. 2006. "'To Take Their Heritage in Their Hands': Indigenous Self Representation and Decolonization in the Community Museums of Oaxaca, Mexico." *American Indian Quarterly* 30 (3/4): 441-460.
- hooks, bell. 1990. *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. Boston: South End Press.
- Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno. 1972 [1947]. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by John Cumming. New York: Herder and Herder.
- Hufford, Mary. 2002. "Interrupting the Monologue: Folklore, Ethnography, and Critical Regionalism." *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 8 (1): 62-78.
- . 2003. "Knowing Ginseng: The Social Life of an Appalachian Root." *Cahiers de Litterature Orale* 53 (4): 265-291.
- . 2010. "Carnival Time in the Kingdom of Coal." *Social Identities* 16 (4): 559-581.
- . 2016. "Deep Commoning: Public Folklore and Environmental Policy on a Resource Frontier." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 22 (8): 635-649.
- . 2019. "Dialogues All the Way Down: Conversational Genres as Matrices of Cultural and Ecological Renewal." In *Cultural Sustainabilities: Music, Media, Language, Advocacy*, edited by Timothy Cooley, 19-31. Champaign: University of Illinois Press.
- Hustins, Donald. 2010. *River of Dreams: The Evolution of Fly-fishing and Conservation of Atlantic Salmon in Newfoundland and Labrador (1700-1949)*. Los Angeles: Tight Line Publishers.
- Janes, Robert and Gerald Conaty, eds. 2005. *Looking Reality in the Eye: Museums and Social Responsibility*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.
- Jedrej, Charles and Mark Nuttall. 1996. *White Settlers: The Impact of Rural Repopulation in Scotland*. London: Routledge.
- Jensen, Robert. 2005. *The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism and White Privilege*. San Francisco: City Lights Publishers.

- Jukes, Joseph. 1842. *Excursions in and about Newfoundland during the Years 1839 and 1840*. London: John Murray.
- Juris, Jeffrey and Alex Khasnabish. 2013. *Insurgent Encounters: Transnational Activism, Ethnography, and the Political*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Kelly, Ursula. 2009. "Learning to Lose: Rurality, Transience, and Belonging (A Companion to Michael Corbett)." *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 24 (11): 1–4.
- Keough, Sara Beth. 2012. "Don't Touch That Dial!: Media and the Accumulation of Social Capital among Newfoundlanders in Fort McMurray, Alberta." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 42 (2): 156–170.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1988. "Mistaken Dichotomies." *Journal of American Folklore* 101 (400): 140–155.
- . 1991. "Objects of Ethnography." In *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, edited by Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine, 386–443. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- . 2021. "Folklore Talks: Heritage, Folklore, and the Public Sphere." American Folklore Society Annual Meeting, March 10.
- Klymasz, Robert. 1973. "From Immigrant to Ethnic Folklore." *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 10 (3): 131–139.
- Knopp, Larry and Michael Brown. 2003. "Queer Diffusions." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 21 (4): 409–424.
- Kocabıyık, Coşku and Maarten Loopmans. 2021. "Seasonal Gentrification and Its (Dis)contents: Exploring the Temporalities of Rural Change in a Turkish Small Town." *Journal of Rural Studies* 87: 482–493.
- Kodish, Debora. 1991. "Why People Think Folk Arts Are Safe (and Why They Aren't)." *Philadelphia Folklore Project Works in Progress* 4 (1): 8–9.
- . 2011. "Envisioning Folklore Activism." *Journal of American Folklore* 124 (491): 31–60.
- . 2013. "Cultivating Folk Arts and Social Change." *Journal of American Folklore* 126 (502): 434–454.
- Kumarappa, Joseph. 1936. *Why the Village Movement?* Madras: Hindi Prachar Press.
- Laclau, Ernesto. 2005. *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso.
- Lawless, Elaine. 1988. *Handmaidens of the Lord: Pentecostal Women Preachers and Traditional*

- Religion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- . 1993. *Holy Women, Wholly Women: Sharing Ministries of Wholeness through Life Stories and Reciprocal Ethnography*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Leach, MacEdward. 1968. "The Men Who Made Folklore a Scholarly Discipline." In *Our Living Traditions: An Introduction to American Folklore*, edited by Tristram Potter Coffin, 15–23. New York: Basic Books.
- Lefebvre, Henri. 1991 [1974]. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson Smith. Blackwell: Oxford.
- Leopold, Aldo. 1989 [1949]. *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Limón, José. 2008. "Border Literary Histories, Globalization, and Critical Regionalism." *American Literary History* 20 (1–2): 160–182.
- Linebaugh, Peter. 2012. *Ned Ludd & Queen Mab: Machine-breaking, Romanticism, and the Several Commons of 1811–12*. Binghamton, NY: PM Press.
- Lippard, Lucy. 1997. *The Lure of the Local: Sense of Place in a Multicentered Society*. New York: The New Press.
- Lis, Catharina, and Hugo Soly. 1979. *Poverty and Capitalism in Pre-Industrial Europe: 1350–1850*. Translated by James Coonan. Sussex, UK: *The Harvester Press*.
- LIVE. 2023. "Educational Resources." LIVE Ecomuseum website. <https://www.ecomuseumlive.eu/educationalresources>. Accessed August 2024.
- Lösch, Klaus and Heike Paul. 2016. "Critical Regionalism: An Introduction." In *Critical Regionalism*, edited by Klaus Lösch, Heike Paul, and Meike Zwingenberger, 1–10. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- MacDonald, Martha, Peter Sinclair, and Deatra Walsh. 2012. "Labour Migration and Mobility in Newfoundland: Social Transformation and Community in Three Rural Areas." In *Social Transformation in Rural Canada: Community, Cultures, and Collective Action*, edited by John Parkins and Maureen Reed, 110–130. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Macfarlane, Bill. 2010. *Prairie Sentinel – The Grain Elevator of Val Marie* [Video]. YouTube. Uploaded by 3bushels, 6 May. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5sU7BM_7-A. Accessed July 2024.
- MacIsaac, Chantelle. 2017. "Gone but not forgotten." *PNI Atlantic*. September 29. <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/gone-but-not-forgotten-48683>. Accessed June 2024.

- MacKinnon, Richard. 2002. *Vernacular Architecture in the Codroy Valley*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.
- Maffi, Luisa and Ellen Woodley, eds. 2010. *Biocultural Diversity Conservation: A Global Sourcebook*. London and Washington: Earthscan.
- Magliocco, Sabina. 2018. "Folklore and the Animal Turn." *Journal of Folklore Research* 55 (2): 1–7.
- Marcus, George. 1995. "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24 (1): 95–117.
- . 1998. *Ethnography through Thick and Thin*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Martínez-Torres, María Elena, and Peter Rosset. 2010. "La Vía Campesina: The Birth and Evolution of a Transnational Social Movement." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37 (1): 149–175.
- Massey, Doreen. 1994. *Space, Place and Gender*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- . 2005. *For Space*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Mayo, Peter. 2013. "Museums as Sites of Critical Pedagogical Practice." *Review of Education, Pedagogy & Cultural Studies* 35 (2): 144–153.
- McLean, Fiona. 2016. "Museums and the Representation of Identity." In *The Routledge Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, edited by Peter Howard and Brian Graham, 283–297. London and New York: Routledge.
- Mechling, Jay. 1989. "'Banana Cannon' and Other Folk Traditions between Human and Nonhuman Animals." *Western Folklore* 48 (4): 312–323.
- Mehrabian, Albert and James Russell. 1974. *An Approach to Environmental Psychology*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Mendoza, Breny. 2018. "Can the Subaltern Save Us?" *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society* 1 (1): 109–122.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 1968 [1964]. *The Visible and the Invisible*. Translated by Alphonso Lingis. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Meyer, Ed. 2025. "Newfoundland Afton Farm–Public Domain," *Zane Grey's West Society Archives*. <https://www.zgws.org/archives/items/show/136>. Accessed March 2025.
- Mi'kmaw Resource Guide. 2015. Truro, NS: Eastern Woodland Publishing.

- Mignolo, Walter. 2000. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 2011. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Miller, Jane, Linda Bankier, and Alistair Bowden, eds. 2018. *Flodden 1513: Legends and Legacy – The Findings of the Flodden 500 Project*. Berwick-upon-Tweed, UK: The Flodden Ecomuseum.
- Mitchell, Timothy. 1998. “Fixing the Economy.” *Cultural Studies* 12 (1): 82–101.
- Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl. 1955. “Environment and Anonymous Architecture.” *Perspecta* 3: 2–7+77.
- Montanari, Elena. 2015. “Ecomuseums and Contemporary Multi-cultural Communities: Assessing Problems and Potentialities through the Experience of the Écomusée du Val de Bièvre, Fresnes, France.” *Museum & Society* 13 (3): 369–384.
- Moody-Turner, Shirley. 2013. *Black Folklore and the Politics of Racial Representation*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Muñoz, José Esteban. 2009. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: NYU Press.
- Murray, Michael. 2013. “Cities within the City: Ben Botkin’s New York.” In *New York State Folklife Reader: Diverse Voices*, edited by Elizabeth Tucker and Ellen McHale, 29–38. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Murtas, Donatella and Peter Davis. 2009. “The Role of the Ecomuseo dei Terrazzamenti e della Vite (Cortemilia, Italy) in Community Development.” *Museum and Society* 7 (3): 150–186.
- Myerhoff, Barbara. 1978. *Number Our Days*. New York: Dutton.
- N’Diaye, Diana Baird. 2021. “Telling Our Own Stories: Reciprocal Autoethnography at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender.” *Journal of American Folklore* 134 (533): 252–257.
- Naithani, Sadhana. 2001. “Prefaced Space: Tales of the Colonial British Collectors of Indian Folklore.” In *Imagined States: Nationalism, Utopia, and Longing in Oral Cultures*, edited by Luisa Del Giudice and Gerald Porter, 64–80. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. 1991 [1986]. *The Inoperative Community*. Translated by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Narayan, Kirin. 1993. "How Native is a "Native" Anthropologist?" *American Anthropologist* 95 (3): 671–686.
- . 2012. *Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Narváez, Peter, ed. 1997. *The Good People: New Fairylore Essays*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky.
- Nettle, Daniel and Suzanne Romaine. 2000. *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Neustadt, Kathy. 1992. *Clambake: A History and Celebration of an American Tradition*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Newfoundland's Grand Banks. 2025. "History of the Codroy Valley." <http://ngb.chebucto.org/Articles/h001.shtml>. Accessed August 2024.
- Nolan, Stephen. 2007. *Leaving Newfoundland: A History of Out-migration*. St. John's, NL: Flanker Press.
- Norkunas, Martha. 2004. "Narratives of Resistance and the Consequences of Resistance." *Journal of Folklore Research* 41 (2): 105–123.
- O'Quinn, Joseph. 1976. "Mr. & Mrs. George Gale, Their Traditions and Values from Codroy Valley and How They Preserved Them to Day and Kept Them in Our Time." Assignment for FOLK 3420 (Wilfred Wareham). *MUNFLA*.
- Oldenburg, Ray. 1999. *The Great Good Place: Cafés, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*. Boston: Da Capo Press.
- Ommer, Rosemary. 1973. "Scots Kinship, Migration and Early Settlement in Southwestern Newfoundland." MA Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland.
- . 1977. "Highland Scots Migration to Southwestern Newfoundland: A Study of Kinship." In *The Peopling of Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography*, edited by John Mannion, 212–233. St. John's, NL: ISER.
- Overend, Alissa. 2019. "Is Veganism a Queer Food Practice?" In *Feminist Food Studies: Intersectional Perspectives*, edited by Barbara Parker, Jennifer Brady, Elaine Power, and Susan Belyea, 79–102. Toronto and Vancouver: Women's Press.
- Pearce, Ky. 2018. "Gay by the Bay: Feeling Queer, Feeling Newfoundland." MS Thesis. Queen's University.
- Pearce, Nick. 2020. "Once rural landmarks, wooden grain elevators are disappearing from the

- prairies.” *CBC*. 25 December. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/wooden-grain-elevators-disappearing-saskatchewan-1.5853226>. Accessed July 2024.
- Pellegrini, Ann. 2007. “After Sontag: Future Notes on Camp.” In *A Companion to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Studies*, edited by George Haggerty and Molly McGarry, 168–193. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Peretti, Daniel. 2017. *Superman in Myth and Folklore*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Permanto, Stefan. 2019. “The End of Days: Climate Change, Mythistory, and Cosmological Notions of Regeneration.” In *Indigenous Perceptions of the End of the World: Creating a Cosmopolitics of Change*, edited by Rosalyn Bold, 71–90. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Phillips, Ruth. 2011. *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*. Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- plaglynyweddw. 2023. *8,000 Barnacles above the Sea*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVhkK8LiBtU>. Accessed December 2024.
- Pocius, Gerald. 1991. *A Place to Belong: Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
- . 2003. “Art.” In *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*, edited by Burt Feintuch, 42–68. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press.
- Popescu, Carmen. 2020. “Critical Regionalism: A Not So Critical Theory.” In *The Figure of Knowledge: Conditioning Architectural Theory, 1960s–1990s*, edited by Sebastiaan Loosen, Rajesh Heynickx, and Hilde Heynen, 211–226. Leuven: Leuven University Press.
- Powell, Douglas Reichert. 2007. *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Prahlad, Anand. 2021. “Tearing Down Monuments: Missed Opportunities, Silences, and Absences—A Radical Look at Race in American Folklore Studies.” *Journal of American Folklore* 134 (533): 258–264.
- Prairie Wind & Silver Sage. 2025. “Val Marie Heritage Walking Tour.” *PWSS*. <https://pwss.org/explore/val-marie-heritage-walking-tour/>. Accessed August 2024.
- Prakash, Gyan. 1995. “Orientalism Now.” *History and Theory* 34 (3): 199–212.
- Pratt, Richard Henry. 1892. “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites.” In *Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Correction*, edited by Isabel Barrows, 46–59. Boston: Press of Geo. H. Ellis.

- Putnam, Robert. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Quijano, Aníbal. 2000. "Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America." *International Sociology* 15 (2): 215–232.
- Reid, Herbert and Betsy Taylor. 2010. *Recovering the Commons: Democracy, Place, and Global Justice*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Rieti, Barbara. 1991. *Strange Terrain: The Fairy World in Newfoundland*. St. John's, NL: Memorial University Press.
- Rivard, René. 1988. "Museums and Ecomuseums: Questions and Answers." In *Økomuseumsboka: Identitet, Økologi, Deltakelse: ei Arbeidsbok om Ny Museologi*, edited by John Gjestrum and Marc Maure, 123–128. Tromsø Museum: Totens Bokhandel.
- Rivière, Georges. 1985. "The Ecomuseum—An Evolutive Definition." *Museum* 37 (4): 182–183.
- Rogers, Tim. 2002. "Henri Lefebvre, Space and Folklore." *Ethnologies* 24 (1): 21–44.
- Rollmann, Rhea. 2023. *A Queer History of Newfoundland*. Chapel Arm, NL: Engen Books.
- Royal Commission on Renewing and Strengthening Our Place in Canada. 2003. *Our Place in Canada: Main Report*. St. John's, NL: The Royal Commission.
- Rutherford, Jonathan. 1990. "The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha." In *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, 207–221. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Ryden, Kent. 1993. *Mapping the Invisible Landscape: Folklore, Writing, and the Sense of Place*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.
- Said, Edward. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon.
- . 1993. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Knopf.
- Salloum, Alec. 2023. "Co-op refinery pays City of Regina \$4.6M for 2020 'effluent' spill." *Regina Leader Post*. January 18. <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/co-op-refinery-pays-city-of-regina-4-6m-for-2020-effluent-spill>. Accessed November 2024.
- Santino, Jack. 2001. *Signs of War and Peace: Social Conflict and the Uses of Symbols in Public in Northern Ireland*. New York: Palgrave.
- Sanya, Tom. "Talking Heritage: Africa at the Crossroads of Tradition and Modernity." *African Sociological Review/Revue Africaine de Sociologie* 17 (2): 2–23.
- Scheyvens, Regina. 1999. "Ecotourism and the Empowerment of Local Communities." *Tourism Management* 20 (2): 245–249.

- Scheyvens, Regina and Heidi van der Watt. 2021. "Tourism, Empowerment and Sustainable Development: A New Framework for Analysis." *Sustainability* 13 (22): 1–19.
- Schönpflug, Karin. 2021. "Queer Utopia for a Feminist Economics." *Gender and Sexuality* 16: 1–27.
- Schorch, Philipp. 2012. "Contact Zones, Third Spaces, and the Act of Interpretation." *Museum & Society* 11 (1): 68–81.
- Schweighofer, Katherine. 2016. "Rethinking the Closet." In *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*, edited by Mary Gray, Colin Johnson, and Brian Gilley, 223–243. New York: NYU Press.
- Sedgwick, Eve. 2003. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sevilla-Buitrago, Álvaro. 2015. "Capitalist Formations of Enclosure: Space and the Extinction of the Commons." *Antipode* 47 (4): 999–1020.
- Sheehan, Jane. 2023. "Maude Delap Heritage Trail." *Discover Iveragh*. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6c6d88a276b04a048a1cf38796d3314b>. Accessed August 2024.
- Shivaram, Deepa. 2021. "A lost eagle from Asia has been traveling around North America for more than a year." *NPR*. December 21. <https://www.npr.org/2021/12/21/1066201821/a-lost-eagle-from-asia-has-been-traveling-around-north-america-for-more-than-a-y>. Accessed February 2024.
- Shuman, Amy. 1993. "Dismantling Local Culture." *Western Folklore* 52 (2/4): 345–364.
- . 2005. *Other People's Stories: Entitlement Claims and the Critique of Empathy*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Silverman, Carol. 1989. "Reconstructing Folklore: Media and Cultural Policy in Eastern Europe." *Communication* 11 (2): 141–160.
- Singer, André. 1986. *Off the Verandah: Bronislaw Malinowski, 1884–1942*. London: Royal Anthropological Institute.
- Singh, Amarjit and Mike Devine, eds. 2013. *Rural Transformation and Newfoundland and Labrador Diaspora: Grandparents, Grandparenting, Community and School Relations*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Skjelbred, Ann Helene Bolstad. 1997. "Rites of Passage as Meeting Place: Christianity and

- Fairylore in Connection with the Unclean Woman and the Unchristened Child.” In *The Good People: New Fairylore Essays*, edited by Peter Narváez, 215–223. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky.
- Sluyter, Andrew. 1999. “The Making of the Myth in Postcolonial Development: Material Conceptual Landscape Transformation in Sixteenth-century Veracruz.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 89 (3): 377–401.
- Soderling, Stina. 2016. “Queer Rurality and the Materiality of Time.” In *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*, edited by Mary Gray, Colin Johnson, and Brian Gilley, 333–348. New York: NYU Press.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1985. “Can the Subaltern Speak?” In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 271–316. London: MacMillan.
- Stahn, Carsten. 2023. *Confronting Colonial Objects: Histories, Legalities, and Access to Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stephens, John and Reena Tiwari. 2015. “Symbolic Estates: Community Identity and Empowerment through Heritage.” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 21 (1): 99–114.
- Stewart, Kathleen. 2007. *Ordinary Affects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Stoller, Paul. 1994. “Ethnographies as Texts/Ethnographers as Griots.” *American Ethnologist* 21: 353–366.
- Sutter, Glenn. 2021. “Canadian Ecomuseums and Climate Change: Assessing the Potential.” Ecomuseums and Climate Action webinar. YouTube. September 30. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgDlhRuTWNs>. Accessed July 2024.
- Teruggi, Mario. 1973. “The Round Table of Santiago (Chile).” *Museum XXV* (3): 129–134.
- Thompson, Tok. 2019. *Posthuman Folklore*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- Thomsen, Carly. 2016. “In Plain(s) Sight: Rural LGBTQ Women and the Politics of Visibility.” In *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*, edited by Mary Gray, Colin Johnson, and Brian Gilley, 244–264. New York: NYU Press.
- Thorne, Cory. 2007. “Gone to the Mainland and Back Home Again: A Critical Approach to Region, Politics, and Identity in Contemporary Newfoundland Song.” *Newfoundland Studies* 22 (1): 51–73.
- . 2012. “Mexicans with Sweaters, Working in the Oil/Tar Sands, In Newfoundland’s

- Third Largest City: Regionalism, Narrative, and Imagination in Fort McMurray, (Texas?).” *Ethnologies* 34 (1): 29–58.
- Titon, Jeff Todd. 1988. *Powerhouse for God: Speech, Chant, and Song in an Appalachian Baptist Church*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- . 2003. “Text.” In *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*, edited by Burt Feintuch, 69–98. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press.
- Todorova, Maria. 1997. *Imagining the Balkans*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Toelken, Barre. 1979. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Tolbert, Jeffrey and Eric Johnson. 2019. “Digital Folkloristics: Text, Ethnography, and Interdisciplinarity.” *Western Folklore* 78 (4): 327–356.
- Tompkins, Kyla Wazana. 2012. *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the 19th Century*. New York: NYU Press.
- Trevor-Roper, Hugh. 1983. “The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland.” In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 15–42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Trogal, Kim. 2015. “Care of Commons: Exploring Questions of Care, Gifts and Reciprocity in Making New Commons.” In *Economy and Architecture*, edited by Juliet Odgers, Mhairi McVicar, and Stephen Kite, 49–58. London: Routledge.
- Tsing, Anna. 2005. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu. 1977. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Turner, Kay. 2019. “Neighbors and Witches in Times of Conflict: Afterthoughts and Aftereffects of Doing a Workshop at “Thinking with Stories.”” *Marvels & Tales* 33 (1): 25–50.
- Turner, Victor. 1967. *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Turner, Kay and Pauline Greenhill. 2012. *Transgressive Tales: Queering the Grimms*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Tye, Diane. 2008. “At Home and Away: Newfoundland Mummers and the Transformation of Difference.” *Material Culture Review* 68: 48–57.
- . 2010. *Baking as Biography: A Life Story in Recipes*. Montréal: McGill-Queen’s

- University Press.
- Tzonis, Alexander and Liane Lefaivre. 1981. "The Grid and the Pathway: An Introduction to the Work of Dimitris and Suzana Antonakakis." *Architecture in Greece* 15: 164–178.
- Valle, Gabriel. 2021. "Learning to be Human Again: Being and Becoming in the Home Garden Commons." *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4 (4): 1255–1269.
- Vergo, Peter, ed. 1997. *New Museology*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo. 2004. "Exchanging Perspectives: The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies." *Common Knowledge* 10 (3): 463–484.
- . 2015. *The Relative Native: Essays on Indigenous Conceptual Worlds*. Chicago: HAU.
- Warner, Michael. 1993. *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Waterton, Emma and Laurajane Smith. 2009. "There is No Such Thing as Heritage." In *Taking Archaeology out of Heritage*, 10–27. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Waterton, Emma and Steve Watson, eds. 2013. *Heritage and Community Engagement: Collaboration or Contestation?* London: Routledge.
- Westerman, William. 2006. "Wild Grasses and New Arks: Transformative Potential in Applied and Public Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 119 (471): 111–128.
- Weston, Kath. 1995. "Get Thee to a Big City: Sexual Imaginary and the Great Gay Migration." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 2 (3): 253–277.
- Wetzel, Michael Jerry. 1995. "Decolonizing Ktaqmkuk Mi'kmaw History." MA Thesis. Halifax, NS: Dalhousie University.
- White, Hayden. 1980. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1): 5–27.
- White, Jaymie. 2023. "Codroy Valley Commons." *Wreckhouse Weekly* 4 (10): 7. 6.
- Whitten, Clint. 2023. "Everywhere and Nowhere... All at Once: Exploring the Role of Visibility in Rural Queer Narratives." *Theory & Practice in Rural Education* 13 (1): 32–51.
- Widlok, Thomas. 2004. "Sharing by Default: Outline of an Anthropology of Virtue." *Anthropological Theory* 4 (1): 53–70.
- Wiesinger, Georg. 2007. "The Importance of Social Capital in Rural Development, Networking

- and Decision-making in Rural Areas.” *Journal of Alpine Research | Revue de Géographie Alpine* 95 (4): 43–56.
- Williams, Raymond. 1977. “Structures of Feeling.” In *Marxism and Literature*, 128–135. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilson, Shawn, Andrea Breen, and Lindsay Dupré, eds. 2019. *Research and Reconciliation: Unsettling Ways of Knowing through Indigenous Relationships*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars.
- Wilson, William. 2000. “A Sense of Place or a Sense of Self: Personal Narratives and the Construction of Personal and Regional Identity.” *Southern Folklore* 57 (1): 3–11.
- Winnubst, Shannon. 2006. *Queering Freedom*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Wix, Edward. 1836. *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary’s Journal from February to August 1835*. London: Smith, Elder, and Co.
- Woosnam, Kyle. 2011. “Comparing Residents’ and Tourists’ Emotional Solidarity with One Another: An Extension of Durkheim’s Model.” *Journal of Travel Research* 50 (6): 615–626.
- Yep, Gust. 2003. “The Violence of Heteronormativity in Communication Studies: Notes on Injury, Healing, and Queer World-Making.” *Journal of Homosexuality* 45 (2/3/4): 11–59.
- Young, Einir, Gwenan Griffith, Marc Evans, and Arwel Jones. 2017. “The Intangible Made Tangible in Wales.” In *The Routledge Companion to Intangible Cultural Heritage*, edited by Michelle Stefano and Peter Davis, 465–478. New York: Routledge.
- Zanoni, Patrizia, Alessia Contu, Stephen Healy, and Raza Mir. 2017. “Post-capitalistic Politics in the Making: The Imaginary and Praxis of Alternative Economies.” *Organization* 24 (5): 575–588.
- Zinck, Raymond. 2014. *Newfoundland’s Utopia: History and Stories of the Codroy Valley*. Self published.