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**ALIMENTATION AND ACADIENITÉ: FOOD AND
CULTURAL IDENTITY IN RURAL NOVA SCOTIA
TOURIST DESTINATIONS**

L. Charlene Vacon

A thesis

in the

Department of Communication Studies

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

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Abstract

Alimentation and *acadienité*: food and cultural identity in rural Nova Scotia tourist destinations

Charlene Vacon, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2007

Two and a half centuries after the devastation of *l'Acadie* in The Deportation, one may still think of oneself as Acadian. In this dissertation, I examine how people from the birthplace of *l'Acadie* today use eating and food in understanding themselves this way.

Through fieldwork in the Acadian communities of Nova Scotia between 2002 and 2004 and in auto-ethnography, I examine symbolic and affective processes of alimentation that I find are imperiled by contemporary economic relations. Our sense of ourselves as a group that is achieved in these social processes I term *acadienité*.

In this dissertation, restaurants are the entry point for examining alimentation in *acadienité*. Restaurants are an essential part of tourism development, as it is presently undertaken in Nova Scotia. Tourism development here is an economic discourse that devalues localized culture produced by and for the local people, what Braroe (2002) terms ethnologic culture, valuing 'ethnic' culture instead. It cannot be dismissed outright, however, since tourism development promises relief from the economic trials that plague the people of rural Nova Scotian communities.

I argue that the locals' own practices and narratives of alimentation are indicative of alternative, counter-hegemonic social processes that offer the possibility of an authentic ethnic Acadian-ness. The 'ethnic cuisine' that is postulated within economic discourses is challenged by local practices and narratives that draw heavily from the peoples' ethnologic representations and experiences of Acadian-ness. While I raise

questions about the long-term prospects for Acadian cultural vitality given the ongoing ethnicization of Acadian villages, I find reason to be hopeful insofar as the Acadian people continue to struggle to define ethnic Acadian-ness in terms of our heritage, emotion, cultural narratives, and ethnological selves. I have reason to believe that the Acadians' sense of *acadienité* is, in fact, strengthened in this struggle to define our ethnic selves in the face of tourism development and economic relations.

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there is no greater sense to instill in a child than that she is great. Thank you for your faith. Thank you to my father, Larry Vacon, for keeping our heritage alive and sharing it with me. My grandmother, Emily Deveau, is in many ways the inspiration behind this project. It is through her that I developed a fascination and love for restaurants and for the Acadian ways of eating. I want to thank two remarkable people, my parents-in-law John MacIsaac and Margie MacIsaac, for their enthusiasm and gracious assistance in many forms. Finally, I want to thank a great friend and colleague, Linnet Fawcett, for so much help and an exemplary attitude toward academic work.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

... That your Lands and Tenements, Cattle of all kinds and Livestock of all sorts are forfeited to The Crown, with all other your Effects Saving your Money and Household goods, and you your Selves to be removed from this his Province

– From lieutenant governor Colonel Charles Lawrence's Deportation Order read by John Winslow in the Province of Nova Scotia, September 5, 1755

In 1755, the administration of Nova Scotia deported the area's French-speaking inhabitants. Government representatives burned Acadian villages, destroying any hope of return. Under duress, some fourteen to eighteen thousand Acadians were removed, forfeiting the homeland (Griffiths, 2005: 438). *L'Acadie* was dispersed, lives were lost, and the way of life bonding the unique Acadian people to one another was put in grave peril as the inhabitants of Acadian communities on Nova Scotia's mainland were separated and scattered over hundreds and thousands of kilometres.

Two and a half centuries after the destruction of Acadian settlements in The Deportation, I think of myself as Acadian. I have plenty of company in thinking this way, as one of 71 590¹ Canadian people who in 2001 declared themselves to be of "Acadian ethnic origin" (Canada, 2003). Of these people, 11 180 were in Nova Scotia, where I

¹ The figures in this paragraph are from the last Statistics Canada census for which we have fully tabulated data, the *2001 Census of Canada* (Canada, 2003)

was born and lived until, at twenty-seven years of age, I moved to Montreal (Nova Scotia, 2003: 6).

Our territory, *l'Acadie*, did not survive². What had, by 1755, already become entrenched as “Nova Scotia” under British rule could imagine no way of allowing Acadian life to continue within that place.³ Yet Acadian cultural identity, communities, and ways of life persist to this day. My research examines contemporary cultural formations of people in Nova Scotia who, despite not only the profound rupture of dispersion but also the years of challenges to their ways of life, have a sense of themselves as Acadian.

Acadian today

While Acadian-ness is now an important part of self-referencing for an extant group, we have not simply emerged from the ages as “Acadian,” in the same way as any of our ancestors. Most apparently, the immensity of The Deportation undoubtedly affected Acadians’ self-knowledge. In fact, the intensity of that historical period bears a positive relationship to the persistence of Acadian identity, an irony in that the massive attack on Acadian communities ought to have brought on cultural disintegration. The effect that

² Although the region that is now Nova Scotia was often referred to as *l'acadie* during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially in the times when the French controlled the area, the French-speaking inhabitants who developed their own unique culture (the “Acadians) never actually had political power or leadership of *l'acadie*. State power of the territory passed back and forth between France and Britain. I refer to *l'acadie* as “our territory” in the sense that it was while living in this geographical location that the inhabitants developed culturally distinctive communities that were very much related to their locations.

³ As early as 1621, the British and French were both claiming the same territory in the New World. “Nova Scotia” was claimed by the British Crown under James I, but that same area had already been granted in proprietary portions beginning with French businessman Poutrincourt’s grant from Henry IV in 1606 (Griffiths, 2005: 10, 33).

The Deportation has an identity is visible now, with today's Acadians the world-over sharing narratives of The Deportation.

My job here is not, however, to examine how Acadian identity existed in 1755 or how it was able to persist after that fateful year. Nor is my intention to examine any other historical period, other than the one in which I live. I am looking for the mechanisms of contemporary Acadian identity in today's trials and triumphs of people in Nova Scotia's rural communities. I share the moniker "Acadian" with them, with our ancestors, and with a contemporary diaspora. How Acadian-ness is lived, how it is symbolically rendered, and what it means, constitute the everyday re-emergences of Acadian-ness.

Indeed, we do not today emerge Acadian in the way of Marguerite Mius d'Entremont. Our early ancestor, Mius d'Entremont farms the dyked marshlands for fruit, vegetables, and livestock, raising her family in the Catholic religious tradition (Le Blanc, 2003: 26-27). She, along with her husband, Pierre Melanson, move from Port Royal to found Grand Pré in 1682 (Ross and Deveau, 1992: 46-48). An Acadian woman, born into an elite French-speaking family, Mius d'Entremont is not only a farmer, mother, and wife, but also, as much out of necessity as anything else, she is a politically savvy woman (Reid et al, 2004: 53). The international struggles between Britain and France are, after all, broadly consequential if not, as Griffiths suggests, imminently meaningful in the lives of the majority of Acadians (2005: 438).

The importance of Acadian self-referents such as family, religion, geography, or political economy has been bandied on the waves of our history. It is wholly reasonable to imagine that social and cultural relationships change, and that we live as Acadians in a different (yet no less Acadian) way than our ancestors should surprise no one. It is,

however, a more subtle endeavour to imagine the means for social and cultural relationships, and then to imagine how those means may undergo periods of transformation and change. In this dissertation, I examine some of the most important means by which Acadians living in contemporary Nova Scotia create and re-create their Acadian-ness. That is to say, in the pages that follow I examine how Acadians communicate identity with one another.

“Charlene. Come over here and move Daddy’s legs up onto the couch.”

My father winces as I grab a hold of his feet and strain to move them. I go as gently as I can but I am little and they are big. The woolen socks right up against my cheek – worn two pairs at a time – are tattered and icky. I think that I can smell the salt-water on them.

“They’re heavy!” I mock-complain, pleased that I can help.

Dad lets out a breath. His face, strained, shows none of its usual wind-blown, sub-bathed colour.

Three days before: the ring of the phone somehow changes the air in my house. It is immediately more difficult to breathe. The air is thicker, and shares its shape and colour with time, which is a dark blob.

My mother, who answers the phone, goes pale. After that she hangs it up. Next, she calls someone else. This continues for sometime. I cannot say how long because, when you are just six years old, it is rather uncertain to say how long anything lasts. And, there is also the matter of the dark blob in the house making time even more difficult to figure.

“Someone’s been hurt on the boat,” is how my mother puts it to my older brother. The boat. The scallop dragger. My father.

A hulking ocean-going vessel, the scallop dragger takes my father away for twelve days at a time. I listen to the radio while he is away for weather reports of Grand Manan, Lurcher, Brown’s Bank, and George’s Bank. “Winds of 20 knots today. Seas of 30 feet.” During the forecasts, I picture Daddy pelted and tossed about on the deck. I see the boat riding a swell; the wind whips the sea spray up.

One day when I come home from school, Mom says that Daddy should be home today. If we go to meet him at the wharf, Daddy might be still on board the dragger, standing at its side shucking scallops. Then, he is home for several days before the weather is right and it is time to leave early one morning, to go to the wharf and load the boat, again.

Then, word comes that it is a Vacon who’s been injured. Which one? My father or his cousin? The mechanism of injury, someone on the phone is telling my mother, is that the winch “let go,” hurling tons of steel at the man. No word on his condition, or whether the man has been hit in the head. My mother, and my brother, and I are sinking deep within the dark blob. No word if it’s Daddy; no word if he is dead.

Nearly twenty years later, my Dad calls me from Pubnico where he now lives. He went fishing today and only caught one fish, yet there’s no regret in his voice.

“Fishing is like that some days,” Dad says.

Some Acadians return after The Deportation to settle in remote parts of the former *l’Acadie*. Yet, even the seclusion of our post-Deportation fishing communities will not

hide us from secularization, the English language, and many other social, political, and economic changes enacted in the Western world after the Second World War.

For those of us who continue to live in the post-Deportation Acadian villages of the historical home-land, Nova Scotia, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, fishing takes the place that farming occupied for Mius-d'Entremont and her contemporaries. The ocean provides food as well as livelihoods for generations of Acadians settled in areas where the lands are too poor to sustain significant agriculture. Schedules, priorities, and ceremonies are over-determined by the tides, the weather, seasonal imperatives, and the migration of certain species of fish. Whole communities live by this fishing way of life, even when there are few fishers in any particular family. A place so closely tied to commercial fishing is governed by the rhythms associated with working the ocean. Acadian communities in Nova Scotia, so tightly aligned with that one industry, will rise and fall by that industry.

During the 1990s, the Atlantic fishery incurs a series of devastating "closures." Fishing for some entire species of fish, like the once abundant cod, is finished. The economic disturbance caused by problems with the fisheries in Atlantic Canada is perhaps the most evident of the disturbances created by the massive rupture of communities from their main way of life. Disruption of the fisheries creates severe losses of revenue and livelihood in many Acadian communities. The economies of fishing communities shrink, as people and businesses have less and less money.

One antidote to these economic ills proffered by various levels of government in the 1990s, and increasingly by local communities in Nova Scotia, is tourism. Tourism is mobilized as a type of economic development meant to provide primary jobs within the

industry as well as “spin-off” employment when other goods and services see increased demand.

The economies of Acadian fishing communities are, however, only one aspect of macro-organizational relationships arising with livelihood. Consider that an ‘economic’ production such as fishing also allows for certain cultural production to arise from within the social organization that fishing articulates. This is a Gramscian notion of culture, whereby it both arises within and assists in re-creating economic relationships in a dialectical manner (Jones, 2006: 33). People understand and express themselves in relation to their way of life, which is very much premised on fishing or farming or whatever else conditions daily life in the community.

Like fishing and farming before that, tourism has effects in Acadian communities that reach far beyond economics to the social, political, and cultural relationships of communities. What is more, as a way of life for Acadian people, tourism has the potential to be like a hall of mirrors. Tourism in Acadian villages directly utilizes Acadian heritage and culture. It is meant to reflect the Acadian ways of life for visitors to see. Yet, as economic development, this heritage tourism itself becomes part of the contemporary Acadian way of life.

A so-called economic production such as heritage tourism has as its *raison d’être* showcasing cultural production. If heritage tourism becomes an important and even central part of the economic and social organization of a village, what remains as the socio-economic basis of cultural production? You see, in this case, Acadian culture and heritage are no longer once-removed from economic production; they are in some important senses the basis of the economy itself.

In this context, my research examines Acadian-ness in its contemporary relationship with tourism. I term this contemporary sense of ourselves as Acadian, *acadienité*, which I will argue is not necessarily equivalent to the Acadian-ness shared with tourists. I am curious about the means of creating and re-creating *acadienité* in the lives of people for whom a busload of America tourists has become the contemporary equivalent of a good landing of Atlantic cod.

Attempts at communicating the Acadian way of life to visitors occur at various different kinds of venues in the tourist destination communities. Acadian historical villages are one venue. These are found in several places in Nova Scotia (see Appendix Two). Churches are another place for sharing an idea of Acadian-ness with visitors, and they often double as cultural heritage sites open to the public. Often the churches will offer the services of a tour guide or heritage interpreter during the peak season. Acadian museums are found in many of the Acadian villages, especially those that have developed themselves as destinations for visitors. There are also a few archeological sites where the Acadian past is explored, Acadian tours organized by entrepreneurs in villages around the province, and several places where archival and genealogical records are accessible to visitors.

The Acadian restaurant is another in the series of venues for sharing Acadian-ness with visitors (see Appendix Three for a list of Nova Scotia restaurants with significant Acadian menus). Restaurants bring together both the everyday activity of Acadian life – preparing food and eating are quotidian aspects of contemporary Acadian life – and the sharing of this experience with cultural tourists and others. They are multifaceted sites where food and eating intersect with tourism and culture. In the

setting of eateries, hungry locals and curious tourists smile and nod at one another over supper while the underpinning economic transactions and over-pinning tourism infrastructure assist in the persistence of the place, the people, and the Acadian way of life. It is a meeting place, a workplace, a place to dine, a place to reflect upon, a place of representation, a place of memory, a place to share, and a place where we construct our narrative history. Restaurants are nodes in the articulation of contemporary notions of *acadienité*. Here, in complex ways, Acadian-ness is communicated with those who are outside of the everyday experience and knowledge of Acadian ways of life, as well as with other Acadians.

Acadian identity and tourism

What is an Acadian, anyway? “Acadian” is not a unified, static, or constant group and personal identity. The attributes of its definition are not universally agreed upon. As an identity, the “Acadian” is indeed a problematic notion in the contemporary context.

French-speaking Maritimers, for example, are largely of Acadian descent. The number of these French speakers, as declared in the *2001 Census of Canada*, does not, however, translate into anything like a similar number claiming Acadian ethnic identity. From the *2001 Census of Canada*, there were 276 355 native French-speakers in the Maritime Provinces (*The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2006), with 36 745 of them in Nova Scotia (Canada, 2005d). There have been no recent notable mass immigrations -- neither French speaking nor any other people -- to the Maritime Provinces⁴. Therefore,

⁴ During the latest period for which there is data, Statistics Canada noted population decreases in all of the Maritime Provinces. The largest of these was in Nova Scotia, where a downturn of 0.12% represented a net loss of 1128 people during the October through December, 2005 period (Canada, 2006). This indicates that

we may assume that many of these French-speakers are native to the region, and are descendants of post-deportation “Acadians.” Yet, the entire national total of self-declared ethnic “Acadian” people is slightly more than 71 000 (from 2001 Census figures).

Resources, such as *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (2006), refer to an approximate 300 000 Acadian people in present-day Canada. This figure represents less than 1% of the total estimated population of the country⁵ (Canada, 2006). While the often-cited Acadian population figure is not supported by Statistics Canada’s data on ethnic self-definition, there is other logic to the quoted number. If we add the total of those who are French-speaking in the Maritimes or “Acadian regions” of Canada, to those in the rest of Canada who claim an Acadian ethnic identity, the resulting sum could conceivably be in the 300 000 range.⁶

From the census information we begin to see that thinking of ourselves as an *ethnically defined* group, or presenting “Acadian” as a cohesive ethnicity, is not presently the predominant way of self-defining for people who could, nevertheless, be considered Acadian either by genealogy or by more recent cultural factors mediated through history and geography.

while there are people moving into Nova Scotia and the other Maritime Provinces, they are not doing so *en masse*. Losses of population in the provinces of Canada are largely due to migration to Alberta. Immigration from outside Canada during the last quarter of 2005 offset some of this migration, but not fully (Canada, 2006).

⁵ Statistics Canada Population Estimate as of January, 2006 stands at 32,422,919 (Canada, 2006).

⁶ Unfortunately, “Acadian” is not one of the selected ethnic categorizations available in the Statistics Canada data tables for provinces and territories other than for Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick (for example see Canada, 2005e).

Most of the people living in the communities represented in this dissertation are descendents of Acadian settlers to their respective regions.⁷ Surnames that can be traced back to the time of The Deportation or earlier, to this day tend to represent particular regions such that 'Samson' is an Isle Madame name, 'Deveau' a Chéticamp name, 'Saulnier' a Baie Sainte Marie name, 'd'Entremont' a Pubnico name, 'Bellefontaine' a Chezzetcook name, 'Pothier' a Wedgeport name, and 'Frotten' a Quinan name (Ross and Deveau, 1992: 78). A few French-speaking people who immigrated to these communities later, like the Vacon brothers in the nineteenth century, were absorbed into their Acadian milieu.



Photo 1.1: A road-sign in West Chezzetcook bears a familiar local name.

⁷ In fact, until very recently there were so few 'outsiders' immigrating to Acadian communities that marriages among related people, or in anthropological terms consanguinial unions, were not uncommon (Chiasson, 1998: 16).

An unidentified author (or authors) writing under the topic “Acadian World Congress” on Wikipedia (an online publicly-editable encyclopedia) tersely present(s) many of the important considerations in defining who is, and who is not, an Acadian:

Debates [at the Acadian World Congress] included the best ways of preserving Acadian culture in an overwhelmingly English area, and what exactly an Acadian is in 2004. Some Acadians in the Maritimes do not recognize more recent immigrants as true Acadians, although most people accept any French-speaking Maritimer as an Acadian. There was also a debate about whether the descendents of Acadians, who do not speak French, qualify (Wikipedia, 2005).

If “Acadian” is at least an imagined group, it is not evident who qualifies to belong to the group.

Le Blanc, in thinking of applications of the term “nation” to the Acadians, suggests that Acadian people could be “considered an ethnic nation, one with no political boundaries; a nation without a state” (2003: 100). Le Blanc discusses a historical juncture in the nineteenth century when improvements to communications and increased mobility enabled disparate Acadian communities to “unite people with common characteristics, such as language and history” (ibid.).

Although the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may have been a time of enhanced group consciousness for Acadian people, it is not necessarily the case that contemporary affinity or group consciousness is anything like it was at the beginning of the last century. Again, I will not conduct diachronic analysis, but I believe it is, in fact, quite likely that our contemporary sense of ourselves as a group is particular to the present-day. I base this idea on the fact that, as Le Blanc suggests, previous articulations of Acadian group consciousness have been linked to particular historical formations.

Following these questions about our own group consciousness, are concerns about the strength of our Acadian representations meant for others. Recall for a moment that 2006 census data, when measured against the proportion of the Canadian population likely to be in some way “Acadian,” introduce doubts about the internal vigor of the notion of “ethnic” self-identification. Internal group identity, what has in this case been termed “ethnicity,” is not so robust as to allow all would be Acadians to self-define as members in an ethnic group. Now, let me add to this a similar and related problem of how we represent Acadian-ness to others.

Griffiths, a contemporary historian of *l’Acadie* and, most recently, of the development of Acadian identity, identifies the wont of externally-oriented representations of Acadian group identity. Griffiths suggests that, to great consequence, Acadians have quite consistently failed to appeal to others as a unique and internally-cohesive group:

The Acadians have always had trouble convincing other people that they are a truly distinctive community, not merely a small colony of expatriate Frenchmen or an appendage of Quebec. One of the major determinants in the chain of events that resulted in the deportation of 1755 was the refusal of both English and French to accept the Acadians’ definition of themselves as “les français neutres.” Nor were the Acadians much more successful during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in asserting their identity They are, for many people, not a significant living culture but an oddly persistent folk society, with attributes that are often seen as charming rather than valuable (Griffiths, 2005: xvi).

The picturesque notion of the Acadian is, for better or worse, one of the extant representations of the group. If Acadian culture and its perceived intrinsic validity rests squarely on a folkloric notion of Acadian life in contemporary society, is that the representation that ought to be used in tourism promotion? How does a folkloric

Acadian tourism image interact with the internal cultural identity of the people, with the possibility of cultural vitality, adaptability, and change for these people?

Le Blanc, who has written about Acadian tourism and identity in the context of Grand Pré, identifies a gap in our understanding about the relationship between tourism and Acadian identity:

There has been no examination of the impact of tourism development on the creation of Acadian identity, although many newspaper articles and brochures demonstrate how certain individuals and organizations promoted tourism at Grand Pré from the 1880s to the 1950s. This promotion of Grand Pré and Nova Scotia as tourist destinations contributed to the construction of Acadian identity (Le Blanc, 2003: 77).

There is no scholarly treatment, other than Dr. Le Blanc's, of the relationship between our sense of ourselves as Acadian and the development of tourism where we represent Acadian-ness for the tourist's gaze.

During the period of this study, the emphasis on tourism and economic growth for Acadian communities is heightened. Between 2003 and 2005, there are many anniversaries to celebrate. Commemorative celebrations are planned to coincide with the anniversaries of significant historical events. A special committee, L'Acadie 2003-2005, coordinates and promotes Acadian events during this period of increased remembrance and festivity.

The year 2003 is the 350th anniversary of the founding of Pubnico, the oldest extant Acadian settlement in the province. Other Acadian community anniversaries follow on its heels in 2004 and 2005. The largest anniversary to commemorate during this period is the 400th anniversary of the founding of *l'Acadie*.



Photo 1.2: Visitors to West Pubnico are greeted by road signs, including the one at the right of the photo for the 350th anniversary of the founding of Pubnico.

The year 2004 marks four hundred years since the first visit to Nova Scotia by Samuel de Champlain, Jean de Biencourt, Sieur de Poutrincourt, and Pierre du Gua, Sieur de Monts (Faragher, 2005: 2). The settlement of 1604 at St. Croix Island became a permanent one by 1606, with French colonists who would stay on and form *l'Acadie* from a base at Port Royal. Today, while there is no Acadian settlement at the first site of colonization, there is a National Historic Site at Annapolis Royal called the Habitation. All the Acadian regions celebrate the founding of *l'Acadie* at Port Royal, or what is now known as Annapolis Royal (see Figure 1.1).

In 2004, Nova Scotia also hosts the *Congrès mondial acadien*, to coincide with the anniversary of the founding of *l'Acadie*. This is the third such gathering in contemporary times. The first one in New Brunswick in 1994 and the second one, held in Louisiana in 1999, brought thousands of visitors into those locales. A fourth congress is planned for 2009 on the Acadian Peninsula in Quebec. In 2004, Nova Scotia sees

300 000 people celebrate at the hundreds of events associated with the *Congrès mondial acadien* (L'Acadie 2003-2005, 2005).

The final year of the festive period is less densely populated with activities. In Clare, they celebrate the 50th anniversary of their popular Acadian festival.

The ways of life in the contemporary milieu and the future vitality of Acadian communities are complexly influenced by discourses about what "Acadian" is right now. Within the period of this study, a time when emphasis on the "Acadian" is heightened by the celebrations and preparations, discursive activity is heightened. Those in positions of influence in the discourses of Acadian-ness include governments, other decision-makers (tourism organizations, municipal development agencies, business groups), and people in extant Acadian communities.

For example, we can see the discursive activity of the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture in the following example. The Department sees the festive time as an opportunity not only to attract visitors for the celebrations but also to grow Acadian tourism:

With the upcoming 2003-05 anniversaries of French exploration, colonization, and settlement, including the 3rd Congrès mondial acadien in 2004, Nova Scotia has an opportunity to capitalize on the economic growth potential of major activities and events related to tourism, culture and heritage (Province of Nova Scotia, 2003: 12).

Indeed, in its 2003-04 Business Plan the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture discusses its plans for Acadian celebrations for the next two years in section "F: Priorities," sub-section "F.1: *Economic Growth*" (my emphasis). The current and short-term context of Acadian culture is conceptualized as particularly important for the economic growth of Nova Scotia. In this case, as in others that we will see, the

opportunities for Acadian culture within tourism are discursively represented, not as cultural opportunities, but as economic ones.

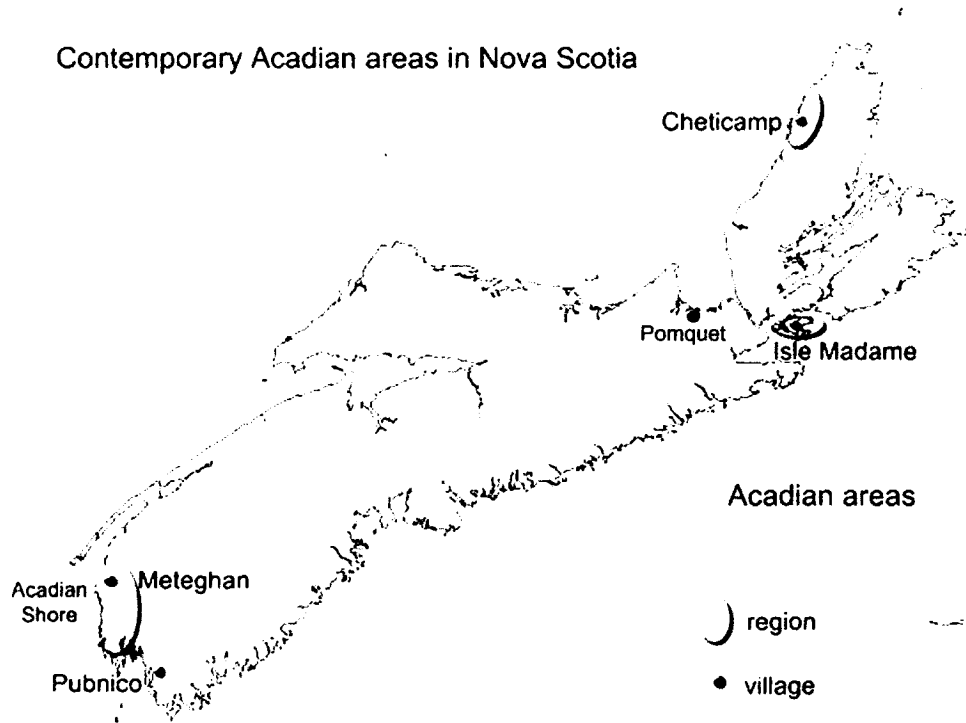


Figure 1.1: Contemporary Acadian areas of Nova Scotia

A brief history and geography of the Acadian People

Acadians' history and geography continue to play formative roles in the articulation of identity and culture. The place of Acadia remains important to Acadian people despite the fact that there is no territory that truly belongs to the Acadians, and there never was. "Acadia" is a site of pilgrimage and migration for the Acadian Diaspora. For cultural tourists as well as for many of the Acadians who live there year round, Acadia

represents a cultural “preserve,”⁸ a homeland, and a narrative linkage with our ancestors and with one another.

It can be argued that the central organizing narrative for Acadian people is the historical event known as The Deportation (sometimes called The Expulsion or, in French, *le grand dérangement*), an event spanning the years 1755 through 1763. The Acadian Odyssey, a web-based history of the Acadian people suggests this centrality for contemporary Acadians when it states that “(a)ll Acadians, no matter where they live today, see the ‘great upheaval’, or the deportation as the ultimate factor of their common identity” (Centre Acadien, 1996).

The Deportation is an event that has had both geographic and historical importance in the cultures of Acadians. The forced expulsion of more than 11 000 Acadians along with later re-settlement certainly goes a long way to accounting for the contemporary geographic dispersion of the Acadian population and extant cultural centres (Conrad and Hiller, 2001: 85). Those who were deported and settled themselves into new lives elsewhere became the ancestors for much of the contemporary Acadian Diaspora. Cajuns, for example, develop as a cultural group in Louisiana from Acadians who stay on after The Deportation to create a new home. Reflecting the Deportation pattern and later political developments, the Diaspora includes people throughout the Maritime Provinces and Quebec, in the United States, especially New England and the Louisiana Cajuns, and some in France.

Even for those who manage to return to Nova Scotia in the years after The Deportation, there is no homecoming. Part of the condition of the Acadians’ return is

⁸ From *L’acadie: the Odyssey of a People*, a poster published by the government of Canada: “Today’s Acadians, in Canada’s Maritime Provinces vigorously maintain many of their traditions. They preserve their

that they settle in entirely new areas.⁹ Though they worked for years creating dykes to make some of the most fertile farmland in the New World, their coveted fertile homelands are now occupied by other families emigrated from New England, the so-called Planters.

The places open for Acadian settlement happen to be those with poor soil for farming. The new settlements are mostly along the ocean coast, where rocky formations and shallow topsoil predominate. In these conditions, the returned Acadians will never be able to recreate the relative wealth from the land that they previously enjoyed. My ancestors turn to the forests and to the ocean to sustain themselves.

Returned Acadians are forced to re-settle by another difficult provision. They are told that they should only group in small communities. This factor, combined with the search for available land, leads returning Acadians in the years after 1763 to settle in remote and distant areas (Appendix Three lists the seven major areas of settlement from 1764 onward). Importantly, the new Acadian (Catholic) settlements are also well apart from the centres of (Protestant) political and economic power.

The Deportation may have had the intended effect of strengthening English hold in the area. The resettlement, however, has made an unintended historical contribution that Ross and Deveau consider at least partly responsible for the preservation of Acadian language and culture:

Many factors contributed to the survival of the Acadian culture in distant corners of Nova Scotia including the way land was

French language, as well as a unique cultural identity forged by some four centuries of turbulent history' (Canadian Parks Service, 1993)

⁹ Returning Acadians are also required to take the Oath of Allegiance to the British Crown (Ross and Deveau, 1992: 74).

granted and the ethnic composition of the communities. As will be seen throughout this chapter, the settlement pattern as it unfolded during the latter part of the eighteenth century has had a determining influence on the Acadians of today. Each region has evolved differently and has its own special characteristics which are clearly identifiable even in speech habits and accents (Ross and Deveau, 1992: 76).

Forced to settle in remote areas, many of the communities had scant contact with each other or with other ethnic communities. The result for at least some of the communities was self-reliance, the development of unique cultural attributes, and language retention.

Extraction

Acadia begins as a French colony first settled in 1604 in the area that is present-day Nova Scotia (see Figure 1.2). The land is already home to about 3000 indigenous people, mainly from the Mi'kmaq tribe. The first permanent French settlement in the region is on *Baye Française* (now the Bay of Fundy). It is called Port Royal by the French.

The settlers in this place, who are at this point all men, seek their fortunes in this "New World" trading furs with the Native people and in the Atlantic fisheries. Griffiths describes how two of these men, Charles de la Tour and Charles D'Aulnay, were interested in the economic potential of *l'Acadie*: "[D'Aulnay's] aim was the exploitation of Acadia, as a development of his family's fortune in France while La Tour's was the development of Acadia, as the place where he would found his own fortune" (Griffiths, 2005: 53).

These early entrepreneurial traders thus play a great role in the eventual colonization of *l'Acadie*. Charles de La Tour, for example, brings several families to settle in *l'Acadie* (Ross and Deveau, 1992: 19). The most well known among the

families he brings are Philippe Mius d'Entremont and Madeleine Mius d'Entremont who went on to found Pobomcoup in 1653. The community exists to this day as Pubnico, a vibrant Acadian village in the Argyle region of Nova Scotia (Figure 1.1). Pubnico now celebrates being the oldest Acadian settlement that is still Acadian due to the fact that, during re-settlement after The Deportation, Pubnico is one of only two previously Acadian areas (the other being Isle Madame) where returning Acadians are allowed to go (Ross and Deveau, 1992: 75).

Acadians in the 17th and early 18th century cannot avoid the political struggles of world powers¹⁰ as political control of this colony passes back and forth between the French and the English until the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The Treaty of Utrecht gives the lands of Acadia and its political control to Britain. By 1750, there are Acadian settlements throughout the British-held land (in what are now the Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island).

Under the rule of the King of England, the skillful maneuvering around the political leadership in what they must understand as their own land, if not their own territory, ends for the Acadians. Many of these people trace their presence on this land back one hundred years. Their ancestors are the French colonists who arrived in the mid 1600s (Ross and Deveau, 1999: 20). Yet, the people inhabiting this territory by the mid-eighteenth century no longer consider themselves French. Griffiths argues that they maintain their own identity:

¹⁰ Louis F. Cimino, an anthropologist of New Brunswick Acadians, remarks that Acadians "skillfully" managed to both refuse an unconditional oath as well as take up arms from 1713 until 1755 (Cimino, 1977: 21). This suggests that Acadians were very much aware of international political struggles. The daily lives of Acadians, however, were likely lived on a much more local scale with subsistence occupying the greatest of their attentions. While the early Acadians enjoyed relative wealth, it was based in physically demanding work. Griffiths suggest that the majority of Acadians took "as little notice as possible" of the wrangling of politics (Griffiths, 2005: 438).

The majority of the population looked upon themselves as the rightful inhabitants of the lands they farmed, the woods they hunted, the seas they fished. While the Acadian population was small in 1754, numbering somewhere between fourteen and eighteen thousand people, it was a population that had a considerable sense of community identity (Griffiths, 2005: 438).

They have already been on this territory for generations, developing their own way of life here. The Acadians, aware of the British control of the territory and of their French ancestry, maintain their own relationships with the geography, with the aboriginal population, and with one another.

Fearing that the French would be able to draw on the ancestral history of the Acadians to sway Acadian loyalty in their direction, the British devise a plan to require the Acadians to swear an unconditional oath of allegiance to the British crown. Many Acadians do sign the Oath, but most also refuse to be compelled to take up arms against the French.

In 1755, by order of His Excellency, Charles Lawrence, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia and under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel John Winslow, the forced removal of Acadian people from Nova Scotia begins. This historical period is The Deportation.¹¹

¹¹ The notion that The Deportation was a historical incidence of ethnic cleansing has surfaced in recent years. Brasseaux asserts that The Deportation was a campaign of ethnic cleansing (2001). The notion of ethnic cleansing is again taken up in a book review by Clive Doucet appearing in the *Globe and Mail*, February 26, 2005. The heading appears as: "Ethnic cleansing the Canadian way" (Doucet, 2005: D6). The book reviewed is John Mack Faragher's *A Great and Noble Scheme: The Expulsion of the French Acadians* (2005). A number of letters to the editor take the review to task on two fronts. First, in 1755, the year the Deportation began, there was no such thing as "Canada." Second, one letter to the editor writer encourages us to remember that the Acadians were not the first to be part of a genocidal plan in the new world; that distinction goes to the Native people. In a response to these letters, Doucet agrees with both of these arguments but writes, "However, the Acadian deportations can be referred to as an ethnic cleansing, as the process by which they were evicted from their lands and then scattered has been followed by national governments in many other places since" (Doucet, March 2, 2005: A1). I am not convinced that this is quite the case, since the notion of "ethnic cleansing" is a neologism. However, it is interesting to note that Brasseaux portrays the early Acadians as an ethnic group.



Figure1.2: L'Acadie circa 1750. Seutter, Seutter, and Lotter map.

The Treaty of Paris in 1763 finally ends all French entitlement in what is now Canada (except for the islands of Saint Pierre and Michelon). Deportations of Acadians end as well, with the halt of a French threat. In the years after 1763, Acadians are allowed to return to Nova Scotia with stipulations on where they may live and limits to the size of the populations in any one place.

Despite Acadian re-settlement of the area, Acadia as a geo-political entity (a colony) does not persist beyond The Deportation. Yet, to this day regions of these provinces continue to be known as “Acadian” for reasons of present culture and language as much as for past settlement patterns. Consonant with this, there are people and populations occupying these regions that today call themselves Acadian and/or claim an Acadian heritage, myself among them.

My family hails from the Southwestern part of Nova Scotia. The family name “Vacon” is found in Quinan about twenty minutes by car from the main centre for this part of the province, Yarmouth. The people in Quinan are descendants of Acadian, French, and Mi’kmaq ancestors. In the village houses, I still hear Acadian French spoken. However, it is only in the oldest generation – that of my long-gone great grandparents – that French is the sole language spoken. The majority of people in the five generations after the great-grandparents speak in English as well as in French.

I, however, have had to learn French as an adult.¹² From the age of three, I grow up in Yarmouth, the hub of southwestern Nova Scotia. Yarmouth has many Acadians, but Acadian cultural features are less prominent than in a place like Quinan where Acadians are the overwhelming majority. I am schooled in English. At the time, there is no other option, and none is sought anyway. In our house, my parents (and then my mother after my parents divorce) speak to me in English. In all the stores, among my friends, on the sports fields and swimming pools, for me the language of work and play is English.

¹² I am not alone as an Acadian scholar who also lives by that identity who has had to reclaim the French language. Dr. Barbara Le Blanc, a professor at L’Université Sainte-Anne in Nova Scotia, admitted to an audience gathered for the Chéticamp launch of her book, *Postcards from L’acadie*, that she ‘lost her French’ while growing up and had to re-learn the language later in life (2003b).

French is not absent. I hear it a great deal. My parents speak to one another in French whenever they do not want their daughter to understand the conversation. They speak to their own friends or siblings in whichever language carries the moment. My older siblings speak French to my parents.

Later in life, when I begin to think about the idea of being Acadian, my language exclusivity is an important factor in conditioning a cautious approach to the idea. As I ponder my identity, I wonder, 'Can I be Acadian without speaking the Acadian language?' Now, as I sit contemplating the question of Acadian identity, I see that early question as part of my own narrative history. In the story of how-I-got-to-who-I-am-today, it was - partly - this uncomfortable question that set me on a course to look at components of Acadian identity.

About the same time that I am examining my personal relationship to Acadian-ness, I am also becoming fascinated with the study of food as it relates to culture. In fact, I already have a cultivated interest in the culinary and gastronomic aspects of food and eating. I credit this to my early days spent in my grandmother's restaurant, which left a lasting fascination with food. Now living in Montreal, a city with a vibrant gastronomy, only serves to excite my taste for knowing more about food.

Through wondering about Acadian-ness and about cuisine, I have come to the idea that there is a great deal that can be said about "Acadian food." One idea in particular stands out for me, that Acadian alimentation is one piece of the "identity collage," allowing us to develop symbolic notions about who we are (Le Blanc, 2003c).

A map for the journey

This thesis explores alimentation in villages where Acadian-ness is hailed in tourism. I focus on restaurants since, as we will see, this is one of the most accessible ways to share Acadian-ness with tourists. I work toward and through writing autoethnography, a writing method that encapsulates my political and affective stances vis à vis research in the Acadian communities of Nova Scotia.

If autoethnography privileges the journey over the destination, as Ellis and Bochner argue (2006: 431), then in this brief section I present a kind of map of the terrain we are moving on. Here is an overview of how the thesis is organized and why I present it in the way in which I do.

The framework I mobilize to examine localized contemporary Acadian-ness is one that premises the study of communication as an examination of social processes. My framework follows Carey's argument that communication is found in the "actual social processes wherein significant symbolic forms are created, apprehended, and used" (Carey, 1992: 30). This is, then, the theoretical basis for examining processes of alimentation in the everyday lives of people in rural Nova Scotian Acadian communities, or, to put it another way, doing fieldwork: it is in the social processes of alimentation where we find communication.

This theory of communication is also my impetus for using the writing methods that I have in the chapters that detail the fieldwork. I use autoethnography to share insight, analyze, and theorize because it is a method of writing that emphasizes storytelling. Storytelling is, I believe, a rich way to show social life in action. I hope to

evoke through telling stories the life-world of contemporary Acadian-ness. This evocative method is a communications exercise with more depth of feeling and intimacy than is possible within more traditional ethnographic writing (Ellis and Bochner, 2006: 438).

Writing narratively is important to me for its ability to create affective zones within the text. Similarly, it is important for me not to interrupt those passages, which would disrupt the readers' engagement with the affective possibilities. I would like the reader to have a deep and abiding sense of the feelings, sights, smells, and tastes that I had growing up and then later, as I traveled through Nova Scotia for this research, as an adult. Food and eating are, after all, experienced through a multitude of emotions and senses.

Story-telling is also important for me because telling stories figured prominently in the discussions I had while I was in Nova Scotia on this fieldwork. People tell stories that figure them in time and space. As a method in this thesis, narrative echoes a method of symbolic activity that the people living in Acadian villages today use.

Finally, approaching the research in this way, I have set out two more-or-less distinct sections within the dissertation, one that is narrative and another that is analytical. The narrative chapters are those that tell about Acadian-ness as it is actually lived, and do so largely (although not entirely) un-interrupted by didactic analysis. Other chapters, the more analytical ones, demarcate the conceptual terrain within which the thesis as a whole is at work. This is not to say that these two sections do not sometimes overlap. At times I use narrative in the more analytical parts. Nor is autoethnography without analysis, although the analysis within my stories is, as Hannah Arendt has suggested, generally revealed rather than defined (qtd. In Ellis and Bochner, 2006: 438).

In Chapter 2, I examine the theoretical terrain, developing my analysis along four key terms: tourism, alimentation, *acadienité*, and communication. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodological considerations that I made to design the research as I have, as well as the particular methods I use in the present research. Together with the present chapter, these three account for the analytical and conceptual sections of the thesis, at least insofar as these chapters explicitly articulate the theoretical and methodological issues extant in Acadian life today (at least in Nova Scotia).

In Chapter 4, I begin my narrative of *acadienité* with my own birthplace and first home, the French Shore of Nova Scotia, which is now known as Baie Sainte Marie. The story continues through Chapter 5 in a community that I have grown to deeply care about, Chéticamp, and in Chapter 6 where I visit Argyle and Isle Madame. The conclusions in Chapter 7 provide my assessment of *acadienité* as it is developing in the contemporary Acadian villages of Nova Scotia, analytic assessment based on what I have argued and told in the previous chapters. I offer some brief remarks about future research that would be useful in this context. Finally, I end on a narrative postscript, after traveling back through Nova Scotia in 2006.

Chapter 2

ALIMENTATION, COMMUNICATION, TOURISM, ACADIENITÉ: THEORIZING CONTEMPORARY ACADIAN CULTURE IN NOVA SCOTIA

Culture is ordinary: that is where we must start.

-- Raymond Williams (2001: 11)

This chapter sets out in four key terms the key issues and debates that I found relevant to the study of contemporary Acadian culture in Nova Scotia. The four key words that contextualize the present study are: alimentation, communication, tourism, and *acadienité*.

When I began this study, I was often frustrated by the use of terms such as “food” and/or “eating” that came without meta-discussion, let alone a definition. Even when these terms are the object of study (see, for example, Probyn, 2000; Visser, 2000; Wood, 1995), I could rarely find explanation for what precisely the authors meant, nor was there exploration of the terrain that the terms covered.

Perhaps a term such as “food” appears quite obvious to others? I notice, however, that the term is used in various ways and unqualified in its usage. What is more, I find that an excellent indicator of opportunity for exploration is precisely the time when an object seems obvious. Words are important. As Raymond Williams argues in *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society* (1988 [1976]), the words that we choose

to use and how we use them are worth attending. The vocabulary we use is central in allowing us to understand and to communicate. Although their meaning at any given time is not the final articulation, terms work to portray important contemporary notions. Words mediate communication allowing us to share meaning. They are among the most important tools that enable, constrain, and delimit understanding.

Williams encourages us to recognize the very subtle movements in the way words are deployed:

We find a history and complexity of meanings; conscious change, or consciously different uses; innovation, obsolescence, specialization, extension, overlap, transfer; or changes which are masked by a nominal continuity so that words which seem to have been there for centuries, with continuous general meanings, have come in fact to express radically different or radically variable, yet sometimes hardly noticed, meanings and implications of meaning (1988 [1976]: 17).

Scholars may use the same words, yet will do so in somewhat variable ways. Therefore, the vocabulary used in this dissertation is not without connotations, openings, and other problems with the meaning of its words. In all cases, to comprehend and build upon the particular ways that some important terms are used for the present communications study will require an attentive reading of both this chapter and the entire document.

Alimentation

I have been drawn to alimentation in “Acadia” in some measure because of the recent renaissance in alimentary interest. It is a popular preoccupation, this attention to food. In the rise of “foodie” culture, many kinds of people are actively involved in discussing and developing our knowledge of food. Magazine and bookstore shelves are filled with

recipes, musings, methods, and the lifestyle writing that accompanies the various approaches to food. It is a social, political, cultural, and economic issue, any of which would call for treatment in the academic literature.

Where scholarly writing about food had been confined during the mid-part of the last century mostly to nutritional science and anthropology, it is now appearing in diverse disciplines and fields. Since Reay Tannahill's major contribution to food history in 1973, analytical and descriptive writing on food has flourished in history (Visser, 1986, 1991; Fernández-Armesto, 2002), philosophy (Narayan, 1997), sociology (Goody, 1982; Mennel, Murcott, and van Otterloo, 1992), cultural studies (Probyn, 2000), and literary criticism (Abarca, 2004). There were notable manuscripts before Tannahill's. Barthes first published "Toward a psychosociology of contemporary food consumption," in 1961, and Levi-Strauss' 1962 *Totemism* is a lasting contribution to the anthropological literature of eating. It was with the 1970s, however, that food writing both in academia and popular culture came into its own as a legitimate field of study, thriving by century's end in books such as *Eating Out: Social Differentiation and Pleasure* (Warde and Martens, 2000), *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies* (Belasco and Scranton, 2002), and *Food in the USA: A Reader* (Counihan, 2002), just to name a few examples.

The increase in the discourse on food over the last thirty years has initiated the use of a certain lexicon, but rarely with sustained interest in its meta-analysis. Thus, words like "food" and "eating" are regularly used, but often to differing effects. While it would be useful to have a more thorough examination of this lexicon, here my task is much more humble. I simply introduce the manner in which I mobilize certain words.

For a long time, I used the combined phrase “food and eating” to discuss the artifacts and processes to which they refer. I required a notion, after all, that refers to eating and to food, which these words do quite well. The two terms seemed to go so well together that many other scholars had already rehearsed them in their work. Probyn (2001), Visser (1991), or Mennel, Murcott, and Van Otterloo (1992) used food and eating to look at various aspects of related processes such as the relationship to the body, associated rituals, or politico-economic relations involved in production and distribution.

The phrase “food and eating,” however, had its problems. First, albeit substantively least among the destabilizing issues, is that “food and eating” is cumbersome. The phrase lacks the elegance of concision. Yet, somehow the terms, when taken together or separately, are too precise. By referring rather specifically to artifacts and processes, they constrain what, in this study, has become a greater communications examination including narratives and practices. This brings me to the larger issue, which is that “food and eating” limited the objects of what I examined in Acadian villages. Instead, I need words that facilitate study of the more numerous cultural manifestations related to food and eating.

I continue to favour the phrase “food and eating” when I want to specify these two parts of a whole network of social relations, personal experience, discourse, and affect. Other times, I prefer to single out either “food” or “eating” to be most precise. The term that I have come to see greater potential with, however, is “alimentation.” “Alimentation” maintains the function of referring to that most basic of human processes – nourishment – but with a new focus not previously imagined in food or eating. The

word also hails the Acadian first language, French, where *alimentation* in contemporary usage means feeding.

While somewhat arcane in standard English usage, the word “alimentation” offers concision without occluding aspects of the formation of “food and eating” that I seek to examine here. The fact that “alimentation” is itself processual highlights several notions important to the study: that activity is implicated in creating food and eating, that these social processes are made and re-made, and that, as with any other shared human idea, alimentation can and ought to be considered cultural. What is more, by virtue of its archaic semblance, “alimentation” may be more amenable to novel treatment or interpretation than words for which we have more common and everyday meanings. With this different word, different meaning is possible: alimentation is meant to place at the forefront the cultural activity of food, eating, and their related articulations in Acadian identity.

The meanings of alimentation

The word alimentation is the noun form of the adjective *alimentary*. The base of this group of words (*al-*) can be traced to the Proto-Indo European language dating to 5500 BCE (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2005). At that time, the base meant, “to grow or nourish.” In Middle Latin from about 500 CE, the word *alimentarius* meant, “pertaining to food.” In Latin, *alimentum* meant, “nourishment.” *Alimentary* entered Late Middle English in about 1477.

In current common usage, alimentation is defined by Merriam Websters Dictionary as “nourishment: the providing of food or nourishment” (2005). Limited

neither to the activity of eating nor to the particularities of food, alimentation is a process that encompasses both and more.

That our organicity requires an alimentary process is merely one of the reasons why we eat what we eat and how we eat it. The body necessitates nourishment, true; however, the need to be nourished exists, sometimes in contradiction, with pleasure, desire, moral proscription, and myriad other cultural devices for regulating and demarcating what food is eaten, how it is gathered, and what is done to prepare it.

The social and discursive relations surrounding pleasure, desire, and morality intersect with other relations, such as political and economic ones. None of these relations can be thought as extemporaneous to alimentation. In fact, these relations are an inextricable part of contemporary alimentation by virtue of their use to constantly re-articulate the processes of nourishment. In this way, alimentation refers to the cultural relations that constitute human processes of nourishment.

Alimentation and culture

Alimentation is a means for remembering and creating ways of life. To put it another way, it is a way of producing, representing, and consuming identity and difference. The ways that people eat, what we eat, and the meanings that are attributed to both food and eating are rich with the dimensions from which they are crystallized: social and political relations, discursive articulations, and historical material. Acadian alimentary processes contain the traces of the important historical, social, political and discursive elements of Acadian community and identification.

There are forms of culture that require little in the way of translation to create some understanding. Higgins suggests that music is one such form (2002: 26). I

believe that alimentation is even better, given that it has the added appeal of satisfying hunger. On the face of it, alimentation requires no translation because it calls on various senses for re-constructing memories and meanings. As a means of communication, its modes are experiential. The sense of taste and that of smell, underutilized in the preponderance of sight-oriented means of communicating, are, though not sufficient in themselves, central to the communicative aspects of food and eating.

This is not to say that alimentation is entirely beyond language, only that it is not entirely within language. I treat the subject of alimentation and language more substantively below in the section of the present chapter on “Communication,” but here I will note that we, in fact, rely on language for articulating relations and constructing meaning *vis-à-vis* food and practices. At the same time, food and eating are a portal into these systems that puts very little demand on the consumer for prior knowledge of social relations or cultural meaning. Entry-level participation is easy.

At other levels, alimentation is laden with cultural meaning. The contemporary rhetoric of alimentation connects eating bodies in particular ways. Narratives of the past enfold food and eating, giving rise to particular formations of collective and individual memory (Probyn, 2000: 102). Cuisine gives rise to nostalgia: a feeling for an imagined time and place also known as “Acadia” expressed in a *fricot* (stew) like your grandmother made. Thus, historical narratives are articulated in and by memories and feelings that are both mediated by alimentation.

From at least 1962 with the publication of Levi-Strauss' *Totemism*, it has been held that one exerts control over who one is at the cultural level by regulating what one eats (James, 1997). While Mintz (2002b: 24) suggests that anthropological work on alimentation begins with Bronislaw Malinowski's studies of the Tobriand Islanders in

Coral Gardens and Their Magic (1935) and the better known *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1950), it is Levi-Strauss who makes a sustained argument for the relationship of food to identity. For Levi-Strauss and other structuralists, cultural identity is created through food choices, preparation, and dining arrangements. That the cooking¹³ should equate with the emergence of civilization shows the relationship of food to the culture/nature dichotomy. Levi-Strauss puts cooking on par with language in distinguishing human civilization from nature (1962).

A great deal of cross-cultural and anthropological work has since been done establishing the links between food and cultural identity (Barthes, 1989; Barer-Stein, 1979 and 1999; Visser, 1991; Goody, 1982. Ross, 1980, also discusses these links between food and symbolic status but in a materialist analysis). More recently, Fernández-Armesto finds the communications potential of food in its cooking, the hearth allowing the emergence of a revolutionary communal eating pattern, but one that is increasingly difficult to maintain under contemporary industrial conditions:

For those who think cooking was the foundation of civilization, the microwave... is the last enemy. Tad's restaurant in the 1960s served complete frozen dinners in plastic skins, which customers defrosted at table-side microwaves. That was a gimmick which, happily, failed to catch on, perhaps because the microwave is best suited to that public enemy, the solitary eater. The communion of eating together is easily broken by a device that liberates household denizens from waiting for mealtimes. In alliance with prêt-à-porter means the microwave makes possible the end of cooking and eating as social acts. The first great revolution in the history of food is in danger of being undone. The companionship of the campfire, cooking pot and common table, which have helped to bond humans in collaborative living for at least 150,000 years, could be shattered (Fernández-Armesto, 2002: 222).

¹³ In Lévi-Strauss, it is the cooking of meat in particular that coincides with the emergence of civilization.

Fernández-Armesto, noting that the industrial era is probably just about over, sees reasons to be hopeful that our “[p]ost-modern persnickiness” is allowing us to re-articulate alimentary patterns and, thereby, our relationship to one another (223).

Finally, alimentation valorizes the quotidian. It allows entry into both mundane and universalistic qualities of contemporary life. I believe that the everyday is where individuals are most actively engaged in inhabiting and creating identities, and in constructing communities. In the materiality of eating and food, disparate aspects of life are given meaning.

Food

While it is at the core of the notion of alimentation, food is also over-written with so many social processes and relations that it cannot be considered a truly stabilizing centre for alimentation. It is not a durable category, but rather a socially-defined one characterized by histories and geographies of difference and identity. Inextricably intertwined in the contexts of its existence, food is, in one important sense, a reification of practices, meaning, and the social relations of its formations.

Food is a category meant to examine artifacts and the processes surrounding them. It is a category of material culture, and also of symbolic significance. Existing between need and pleasure, between interior and exterior, between life and death, between self and other, between nature and culture, and between material and symbolic, food is a liminal category (Morse: 95). Morse argues that liminal objects tend to have a great deal of symbolic potential. She says that food is the “symbolic medium par excellence” (ibid.).

Food can rather simplistically be defined as that which people eat. However, even this trite definition does not sidestep the character of food as a social and cultural construction. Neither rats nor insects are food for me, although they are for many people. We must also be certain to ask, “Which people?” when inquiring about food.

I work in an Italian restaurant while writing much of this dissertation. The chef, Enrico, is excellent and it is for this reason that I want to try the cow brain he prepares. The taste is wonderful: earthy and round. The creamy texture is bizarre in a meat, but not unpleasant. Yet, I cannot eat more than one bite. I am just not able to overcome my aversion, at least not this time.

In a cookbook on Italian cuisine that I bought to aid my learning, there is a recipe describing how one should cook cow’s brains to optimize their potential. The book is from 1992, a time before “Mad Cow” disease had afflicted the minds of North American beef consumers as it now has. Brains and other offal are in a state of flux somewhere between the category of food and that of poison.¹⁴ The organs of our meat, while occupying a traditional place within even the most privileged cuisines – French and Italian – are no longer favoured.

Food is about the material elements of the diet. While “diet” (in one of its meanings) indicates all things that are consumed, “food” is reserved for those items that contribute to the physical maintenance or growth of the body. Yet, some things consumed that do contribute to the body’s well-being, nonetheless, elude the category. Vitamins or fibre, for example, are provided in pill and liquid forms that could not really

¹⁴ There are other examples of what we would now call poison occupying a place in our diets. “In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Borax was added to most preserved fish and meat, and used to prolong the shelf-life of dairy products; now it is reclassified as a poison and forbidden” (Fernández-Armesto, 2002: 214). I, myself, enjoy a glass of tonic water from time to time, a drink which gets its distinctive taste from the organo-toxin quinine.

be considered within the category “food.” Instead, they are part of two categories that partially overlap with food as well as with each other: “medicine” and “diet” (Lupton, 1996: 29).

Lupton indicates that ideas of “nutrition” offer just one of many “sets of rules which define the boundary between forbidden and permitted foodstuffs” (1996: 29). The ingestion of some non-food items makes a certain sense within the logic of nutritional science. This particular way of demarcating the boundaries of what is to be eaten and what is not carries the authority of scientific discourse and practices. However, rather than acting as protection for the specialized knowledge of nutritional science, discourse of “nutrition” is widely disseminated. Popular media, with an increasing interest in so-called health-related stories, have participated in the construction and diffusion of ideas about “nutrition” within public discourse. The concept is mobilized to both propel and constrain choices of what to consume.¹⁵

Mintz, critical of modernity and longing for a time when humans were supposedly more attuned to nutrition, argues that humans have historically eaten what is good for us. It is with the onset of the Industrial Revolution, and increased consumption of fat and sugar, that our diets were modified in such a way as to now require us to discern the good from the bad in our eating (Mintz, 1985 qtd. in Caplan, 1997: 5; 2002: 30). For Mintz, discourse of nutrition arises as it becomes necessary to curb the consumption of certain types of food for the sake of our health.

¹⁵ Advertising media have used an inverted approach to nutrition to promote consumption of some foods that are not considered nutritious. Caplan points out that the advertising slogan “naughty but nice” suggests palatability in foods where nutrition is lacking (1997: 5). This advertising approach demonstrates the dispersion of knowledge about nutrition. It assumes that the reader knows that a lack of nutrients is what constitutes a “naughty” (but pleasurable) food.

As a nutritional slogan 'you are what you eat' is underpinned by the essentialist assumption that the prime reason for taking objects into the body is to provide nourishment. The myriad compulsions for eating – symbolic, emotive, social and cultural – are eclipsed by the nutritionist's assumption that food is consumed in order to meet the biological needs of the body. The notion of 'you are what you eat' effectively removes a layer of shared or common motivations for what is ingested, conveying instead your core individual responsibility for your health (Lupton, 1996: 87). You decide what you eat and whether you will make healthy choices or unhealthy ones. Personal accountability is emphasized and the social relations that position the individual, the food, and the body are ignored. Nutritional science, steeped in the good intentions of sociobiology, lacks the nuances of the 'sociological imagination'.¹⁶ A deep comprehension of food and culture is needed to complement what is known in nutritional science. This is a sociological praxis that explores the multiple and varied meanings, practices, and relations enabling and constraining food, eating, and the very concept of health.

Good health has become what Germov and Williams call the "primary human goal" (1999: 185). In this ideology of "healthism," one is compelled to consume those foods that lead to health: nutritious foods, also known as foods that are "good for you" or simply "good foods." The individual is charged with consuming that which is "good" or that which leads to health. Food that is healthy should be eaten for no other reason than the fact that it is presently considered nutritious (Lupton, 1996: 82).

At least, this "healthism" is what nutritionists and others close to the health professions put forward. In Canada during the 2000-2001 period studied by the National Population Health Survey, 3 million Canadians were considered obese by the standards

¹⁶ C. Wright Mills introduced the idea of the 'sociological imagination' to convey an analytical state of mind

of Statistics Canada and another 6 million considered overweight by the same measures (Canada, 2005f). The reality of our eating habits contradicts the idea that our primary human goal is health, at least in regards to how much we eat. The Statistics Canada method of calculating the extent of our collective weight problem indicates that obesity “results when people consume far more calories than they work off each day” (2005f). While we could argue that changes to our work and leisure patterns are partly to blame for the more than doubling of obesity rates over the past two decades in Canada, the fact remains that we eat too much when assessed against our caloric demands. This extra eating is incorporated in the nutritional discourse as more than biologically unnecessary: it is detrimental to human health.

Slippage from what has been conceptualized as the biologically rooted – the necessity to human life of eating an appropriate quantity of nutritious foods – to the morally coded becomes visible as the biological effects of food on the body are linked to health (Fiddes, 1997: 253). Within a nutrition discourse those who eat what is not nutritious, or who eat too much, are creating a perilous predicament: knowingly putting themselves at risk of disease. Insofar as morality regulates the boundaries of the acceptable, nutrition discourse regulates the body.

Eating

The two most prominent categories of alimentation, food and eating, are implicated with each other. While the former refers to artifacts, eating is mainly concerned with the practices and relations of consumption. Eating, while referencing a process, describes the very moment of consumption.

which could provide an account of the social reality within which we live (1959: 15).

The Concise Oxford defines eat as “take into the mouth, chew, and swallow” (Sykes, 1989: 304). It is a personal endeavor. It includes the practices and rituals implicated in the consumption process, loosely overlapping with preparation (this recalls Levi-Strauss’ culinary triangle of raw-cooked-rotten, although cooking is complex enough to require a sub-category in itself), the time of day, the place settings, the makeup of dining parties, or the interactions of diners with wait staff.

If the word “eating” is mainly descriptive of a process for the intake of food across the threshold of the mouth, we also know that such a process is regulated by custom and ritual. As I pointed out in the discussion of “food,” some things may not enter the body and thus are not permitted into the mouth. Formulated within contexts of meaning, the practices of taking in food are further regulated within social, political, and historical regimes of truth.

Consider the status of the apple, which, like the Acadians, came to this continent from the Old World (Pollen, 2001: 6). The apple is shot through by agribusiness lobbying, environmentalist concerns, and nutrition discourse. Its position relative to human consumption (it is widely considered a healthy snack in Canada) is one that is negotiated and established through the relations of power articulated through these various discourses.

One of the few acts most associated with the singular body, eating an apple – eating anything - is also and at the same time thoroughly social. There are good foods and bad foods, but the decision as to whether the apple will lead to your demise is not a personal one (as if there were any personal decisions in the contemporary world).

Fat

Fat was not always regarded in North America as a source of illness as it is now. In the 1920s, for example, the beef industry in the United States entrenched fat content as a marker of the quality for cuts of beef. Back when meat was “good for you,” the highest grades of “Prime” and “Choice” contained the most fat (Romans and Zeigler, 1974: 113). For much of the last century, we in the West regarded the tastiest, most tender cuts of beef – the fattiest – not with disdain for their impact on our health but with desire for the pleasure they could bring and the lifestyle that they symbolized.

In the 1950s, it was reported that polyunsaturated fats may lower cholesterol levels in the blood with resulting decreases in some diseases. Michael E. Oakes, in his examination of the changing American attitudes toward their foods, points out that food manufacturers who used polyunsaturated fats used the opportunity to tout the health benefits for the public of their products (2004: 37). Foods made with polyunsaturated fat included such “healthy” as staples margarine and salad dressing.

Through the 1970s a new attitude against fat solidified. In the public and scientific discourse of nutrition, we came to regard fat as a harbinger of disease. In nutritional and medical terms, consumption of fat put you at risk for all manner of bodily ailments. Symbolically, fat transformed from a sign of attainment to one of excess.

Despite the purported ‘scientific’ weight of evidence against fat at the end of the last century, there are compelling reasons both historic and scientific to see our fear of fat as a historical and cultural attribute. In his study of food throughout history, Felipe Fernández-Armesto gives numerous examples that trouble the current accepted scientific wisdom on fat in Western society:

A classic study of gluttony in 1967 showed that feeding eight student volunteers more than the recommended daily intake of calories only fattened them by less than one kilogram each; and after a few days, when they had adjusted to their new diet, there was no weight gain at all. The long-term Framingham study shows that there is no difference in the fat consumption of Americans who get heart disease and those who do not. Cholesterol clogs the arteries, but two individuals will eat the same amount of cholesterol-rich food with contrasting effects (Fernández-Armesto, 2002:54).

Rather than proscriptions on fat, Fernández-Armesto suggests that our sedentary lifestyles could be culprit in many ailments. We refer to 'work' as time spent in front of the computer, in lectures, or reading monographs. Although our notion of work no longer needs to encompass a physical dimension or an expenditure of energy, the moral proscriptions against a sedentary lifestyle are few. We have, instead, chosen as a society to make our high intake of fat a suspect for our ills.

There is mounting evidence to suggest that our attitudes towards fat are once again going through a period of change. An article written by Jeff Volek appearing in the Health and Fitness section of my morning on-line news for July 6, 2006, exemplifies the tone of a popular rebellion against received wisdom from nutrition experts (of the last thirty years): "Did you know there are more than 15 types of saturated fat? And despite the fact that they've been damned as a whole by nutrition experts for decades, some of them are actually heart healthy" (Volek, 2006). Volek goes on to name "6 formerly forbidden snacks that are actually good for you," including chocolate and pork rinds¹⁷. For Volek and others, the new culprit damning our good health is carbohydrates.

All this about fat, you may gather, is important in the context of the Acadian diet. There has been a great emphasis on fat in Acadian cooking. Pork fat is especially

¹⁷ Volek presents his rationale for why pork rinds are not bad for you after all: "A 1-ounce serving contains zero carbohydrates, 17 grams (g) of protein, and 9 g of fat. That's nine times the protein and less fat than you'll find

interesting for its contrast with many other types of cookery in the North American context. The use of pork fat in cooking is quite rare in Canada, but is an important ingredient in many Acadian recipes (see the discussion of rappie pie making in Chapter 5).

In the field, narratives that help to account for why it has been used accompanied the use of fat in Acadian cooking. Acadian women, in particular, have altered the use of fat in their cooking. Sometimes the alteration takes the form of substituting cooking oils purchased from the grocery store. Other times, substitutions are too much, and cooks who have grown weary at the disparaging of fat choose not to use the traditional Acadian recipes at all. These changes are related to the consciousness that the people I encountered have about fat in relation to weight and disease. A change to fat use and consumption come from an understanding that fat is not “good for you.”

Authenticity

The issue of fat content is at the heart of a play examined by literary critic Meredith E. Abarca. Abarca, concerned with the politics of food “authenticity,” cites a play by Elain Romero in which a young Chicana woman returns to her family’s restaurant with an education in dietetics and a new distaste for the traditional recipes on the menu. Cooking in the restaurant, done by the mother in the play, relies heavily on the use of lard. The daughter encourages new ways of cooking that are low-fat while the mother defends the traditional methods. The resolution of the play is to have two menu options: one traditional menu that still contains lard, and an allegedly healthier “Third-generation menu” (qtd. in Abarca, 2004: 18).

in a serving of carb-packed potato chips” (2006). For Volek, we should be protecting our good health by

Altering the fat content of so-called traditional recipes often requires changes to the methods as well as the ingredients. Such changes, Abarca notes, challenge the authenticity of ethnic cooking (2004:18). But it is the very notion of authenticity, she argues, that should be challenged. Within post-structuralist thought, the very notion of authenticity is, in fact, brought into question. Baudrillard theorized that hyper-reality – the contemporary situation where simulations are the only ‘reality’ available – makes it impossible to recover an original. Without an original, the only thing with which we can compare a particular cultural production is another cultural production.

Abarca argues that, in this context, authenticity ought to be about the power to define the legitimacy of a particular cultural production (Abarca, 2004: 2). Political authenticity must struggle with two issues, “taking over another’s knowledge or essentializing such knowledge” (5). For Abarca, women who alter their own recipes are adding their own twists to accumulated cultural knowledge. In a word, their recipes are “original.”

The concept of authenticity is, whether we like it or not, tremendously important in the development of culture for the tourism industry. Abarca deftly explores the problematique of authenticity. Her move to sidestep its pitfalls by using the concept of originality reminds us that there are questions of power involved. However, there remain at least two problems that Abarca’s shift does not overcome, problems very much simmering in contemporary Acadian villages. Firstly, rather than the family-setting where women have been the keepers of recipes, the tourism industry is likely to have increasing power to define authenticity in restaurants.

Secondly, in cultural tourism, there is the tendency to essentialize cultural traits. Restaurants cater to a clientele seeking 'real' Acadian cuisine.¹⁸ The tourism industry in Nova Scotia takes great pains to ensure that cultural attractions are not developed for the sole purpose of entertaining the tourists, but that they are "authentic." These notions of the "real Acadian" presume there is a historical constant, an ahistorical identity, or an essence of Acadian-ness with which tourist representations of it should seek identity. It is an essentializing notion, and one that makes it difficult to create a vibrant Acadian cuisine. Within this regime, could an Acadian chef create new and "authentic" recipes using emu, which is now farmed in Nova Scotia? It would appear more "authentic" if s/he makes fricot, even if the potatoes for it are grown in Prince Edward Island and distributed in large trucks by corporate-owned Sysco.

In Acadian villages, routes of food distribution, relations of food preparation, dietary regimes, economic considerations, and the organization of eating are articulated within greater social discourses and practices. These relations are sometimes trans-geographical, as in the case of dietary regimes. Women have already greatly altered what they prepare at home. For example, women in the present study preferred to use less fat than their mothers would have used in cooking. This change coincides with trans-geographic nutritional discourse of the last thirty years discouraging excessive fat intake.

¹⁸ The term "cuisine" is deployed with a variety of meanings. Goody calls the combination of the foods that are eaten and how they are prepared "cuisine" (1982: 97). Mintz more recently takes the notion of cuisine to be somewhere between eating and food, indicating that cuisine is related to a shared, or culturally-defined, set of "eating habits" (2002: 29). It is in this sense that I can refer to an "Acadian cuisine." Mintz distinguishes his conception of cuisine from a straightforward tally of that which is eaten within a society. In a sentence, he makes a rather clear articulation of how he conceptualizes cuisine: "I do not see how a cuisine can exist unless there is a community of people who eat it, cook it, have opinions about it, and engage in dialogue involving those opinions" (ibid.).¹⁸ While Mintz makes some challenging claims about the United States' foodways, his description of that which is shared to make a cuisine does usefully broaden our notion from an emphasis on the foods that construct it to that of the cultural practices (and the extent of their development) within which food exists.



Photo 2.1: Just north of Cheticamp at a restaurant on the Cabot Trail in 2004. With sales of \$29.3 billion in 2004, Sysco is the largest food distribution company in North America (Sysco, 2005).

Changes to what is prepared in Acadian homes have also taken place within the massive shifts in food sourcing. Systems of distribution are radically different now than they were a century and more ago, making it possible to have “fresh” greens any time of year (just as one small example). Even the “remote” Acadian villages are stocked with a wide range of food products by the largest food distribution companies. Systems of distribution have a political economic organization that bears on Acadian alimentation.

What Fernández-Armesto calls the “revolution in availability” of food can and does create options for novel food choices (2002: 222). Hjalagar and Richards argue that contemporary tendencies of globalization in foodways are forming a dialectic relationship with local cuisines (2002: 7). While less eager to see the introduction of new foodways as an entirely new development – Hjalagar and Richards cite the case of the

introduction of the potato to Ireland - they say that the relationship between global and local is enabling new foods and eating practices (ibid.). Changes to “traditional” ways of eating – provisionally, I will define this as the way my grandmother would have eaten when she was my age – are unavoidable in the historical context of the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Acadian food is in a period of cultural change. I found in the fieldwork that there are challenges to the established foodstuffs, methods of preparation, and recipe ingredients. Following Narayan (1997), this is a time for critical assessment to understand where change is the best plan to follow, and where asserting “traditions” would best serve the people living in these communities in Nova Scotia.

As new foods are introduced and old methods or ingredients are altered, how can we judge the “authenticity” of the cuisine? Hughes (1995) has turned his attention to this very question. He argues that in the post-structural context, where the possibility of a referent is doubtful, the term ‘authenticity’ requires a theoretical re-working if it is to maintain any utility (1995: 784).

In order to develop an important framework for re-theorizing authenticity, Hughes uses Scottish examples of food in that country’s tourism. Under a 1993 Scottish government scheme – the Scottish Food Strategy Group – the idea of Scottish-ness was put to use in selling food to tourists. Hughes remarks of this strategy that, “Scotland’s distinctive identity, derived from its history, traditions, and environment is considered entirely in terms of the marketing advantage it may have over other commodities” (1995: 792). Its detachment from the everyday lives of Scottish people and re-constitution as a marketing tool drains this notion of Scottish-ness of a signified. There is no need to reference a substantive heritage (what would have been the

signified); instead, the government plan's success hinges on whether people buy Scottish produce. Thus, what was once a sign ('Scottish') is impoverished and transformed into a pure signifier. Scottish-ness is merely a marketing idea.

This scheme is contrasted with a second Scottish branding initiative, one that began in the 1970s. The Taste of Scotland, Hughes argues, was conceived not only to address an economic aim, but also to "be a recovery of the culinary traditions of Scotland" (793). As an initiative, the Taste of Scotland was premised on a belief in the intrinsic worth of Scottish tradition and a desire for its ongoing vitality (794).

What Hughes identifies as the source of the disparity between these two representations of Scottish cuisine in tourism is the fact that, in the twenty years between them, the world has transformed from one predominantly organized locally to one of global flows (790). In particular, the global "diffusion of consumer capitalism" has altered the way in which representations of all sorts, including cultural ones, are coded (798). Cultural images are emptied of their "deep cultural significance converting them from symbols into signifiers" for use in the constant pursuit of profit (Hughes, 1995: 798).

The great existential hope in Hughes political economic critique of authenticity is that, whatever the underpinnings representation, be it market ideology or concern for heritage, they all provide "signifying regimes in which identity can be expressed" (799). Authenticity remains a possibility for Hughes when people use these opportunities to give meaning to their existence.

I do not necessarily agree with Hughes' final assessment of the possibilities for authenticity. Giving meaning to our existence is an ongoing human pre-occupation, at least so far, and one that uses whatever (hegemonic and other types of) discourses are extant. To argue that the signifying regimes of capitalist relations "provide myths in, and

through, which meaning may be given to existence," is not only to state the obvious, it also downplays the varying political importance of the different discourses at large. Government sponsored economic discourse in tourism is not merely one way among many to give meaning to Acadian life. In the case of tourism, hegemonic economic discourses have a disproportionate ability to provide those myths that we use to give meaning to our existence.

This is a small disagreement, however, since I more generally find Hughes' analysis of the character of and problems with authenticity in contemporary society full of useful insight. I agree with Hughes that globalization of production and distribution, along with the consumer capitalist discourse of this historical period, represents an opportunity for cultural identity formation. The marketing of Acadian regions, which is discursively related to the profit motive, actually creates more of a need to define and develop the meaning of Acadian-ness.

Globalization has brought us to a place where ingredients are sourced from hundreds of kilometres away and methods are mechanized. It has brought us to a place where global flows of capital encourage consumerism. Within these globalizing tendencies, discourses of tourism in Nova Scotia emphasize a value-added Acadian-ness. Yet, the fact that tourism discourse is raising the profile of Acadian-ness makes this an opportunity for Acadian people to articulate Acadian-ness for the present and to think what it could mean for the future. Again, here I agree with Hughes' assessment that the authenticity of this formation is related to everyday practices of people in their milieu. Acadian people ought to use this demand for articulating Acadian-ness to make symbolic cuisine; that is, representations of Acadian food premised on the belief in the intrinsic worth of Acadian heritage.

The authenticity of a cuisine, Hughes suggests, is measured by the (producers' and consumers') belief in the intrinsic worth of the heritage represented by the food (1995: 794). The integrity of a cuisine, by this scheme, is put forward by its relation to extant local cultural practices and narratives rather than by the absence of particular alterations in ingredients or methods of any particular historical food or recipe. The extent to which cultural vitality (for its own sake) is enabled is directly related to this belief. The economic discourses of tourism marketing that empty Acadian food of its signified, cannot achieve this type of authenticity.

Globalization may be providing the hegemonic economic discourses, but alternative discourses can arise in local social processes. Tourist-friendly restaurants are sites articulated within economic prerogatives. When local people contest the symbolism of Acadian food at the restaurants, and begin to develop their own discourses of authenticity, the restaurants also become important local sites of symbolic production for Acadian-ness and *acadienité*.

The restaurant

Whatever the role of the restaurant in Acadian life, it is here where visitors to Acadian villages seek to taste that life. It is, after all, the fortunate and few among tourists to Acadian villages who are given the opportunity to dine on the creations of the best Acadian chefs. Most assuredly, these chefs are the women who cook meals for families and friends each day of the year. Tourists, more often than not, have to be content to

settle for the presentation of Acadian food and dining experiences in restaurants during the Nova Scotia tourist season.¹⁹

Despite a century and a half of history (or more, depending on how one counts), there is surprisingly scant research on restaurants and ethnic identity. The largest area of research on eating has been into eating inside the home, labeled “private eating.” Much of the work on food and eating does not make explicit which kind, public or private, eating is under scrutiny. Douglas’ study of the meal, for example, does not explicitly state that this is the meal taken inside the family home; however, all of her references are to that very location.

Harvey Levenstein, to take a recent example who does deal with restaurant food and identity, prefers to take a survey of food and eating than to limit his work to restaurant settings. He discusses many different venues of food policy and preparation, including restaurants, but also government agencies, schools of cooking, and the homes of Italian immigrants. Levenstein shows how the contemporary position of Italian food in America, and the relationship of Italian Americans to that food, has been negotiated through all of these venues. Yet, the particularities of restaurants and how they are implicated in Italian immigrant identity are lost to the broader project of positioning all of Italian food in American society. When Levenstein says “Italian food was one of the few sources of pride that the entire community could share, and that pride has subsequently formed a very important bond in keeping their ethnic consciousness alive,” it is not clear how restaurants, in particular, participate in this (Levenstein, 2002:76).

¹⁹ I do not intend to create a dualism where home-cooking is constructed as more “authentic.” I point to the difference between restaurant cooking and home-cooking to underline that it is the former that is accessible for tourists.

If what is above is read as a critique of Levenstien, it is not how I intend it. Levenstein did his job; mine is merely a different one. There has rarely been a sustained effort to examine the relationship of restaurants to the people whose culinary traditions they are supposed to represent. There is a place, then, for more work on ethnicity and restaurants.

Restaurants are particular. They are not just like home kitchens, only larger. They offer the opportunity to share food and to represent people's cultures, but they do so within the limitations of quantity food service. A whole series of regulations and procedures demarcate what can be done, and what must be done, within the restaurant kitchen. For example, a restaurant inspector working for the Province of Nova Scotia told me that in Chéticamp, they would not be allowed to serve wild game in the restaurants. Any meat served has to be government-inspected and there is no provision for inspecting such traditional Acadian game as wild rabbits or partridge. Still other rules pertain to the restaurant dining room. The structural and cultural organization of the restaurant is so different from that of home cooking that it renders the two kinds of food preparation and eating quite distinct.

The very history of the restaurant begins with travelers, no doubt hungry ones, in fifteenth century Europe (Warde and Martens, 2000: 22). "There was a network of inns, offering entertainment and accommodation, in England at least as far back as the fifteenth century, and there travelers ate" (ibid.). The word restaurant, according to *Professional Cooking* (the textbook used by Le Cordon Bleu), originated with a Parisian named Boulager. In 1765, he advertised in his shop window that he was serving soups that he termed *restaurants* or *restoratives* (Gisslen, 2007: 4). By the late nineteenth

century, the public dining room where “anyone with sufficient funds could go to eat, in the presence of others” was well established (Warde and Martens, 2000: 23).

Consumption

In restaurant dining rooms, foods, customs, decoration, and narratives are presented alongside consumption. There are those who argue that consumption is, in fact, the central organizing relation of the restaurant in tourist places. It is difficult to resist their critique of consumer society when given over to the discussion of food. MacClancy, for example, argues that the consumption of an ethnic cuisine becomes a form of “gastronomic tourism” or the selling of not merely food, but a range of experiences surrounding ethnic food (MacClancy, 1992: 204). The sale of food and service is thought of as the re-organization of cultural experience into an economic relation, the commodification of eating.

It is at the restaurant that Acadian food enters into yet another transaction between tourist and local. Acadian food becomes a cultural product, emphasis on the exchange value, with all due acknowledgements to consumer society. When the works and practices of our intellectual and aesthetic efforts cross the blurred line from “culture” to “product,” the effects are familiar: risks of caricature, problems with “authenticity,” and issues of fixity replacing the transitional, oscillating quality of everyday cultural production.

These are the everyday realities that intersect with the ongoing development, re-creation, and maintenance of Acadian myths and everyday life. The production, representation, and consumption of Acadian food in the restaurant is now cultural, now economic, now *diner* for the wayfaring stranger and the hungry seaman.

Recent work on the relationship between culture and consumption points to the benefits for the former from the latter. Warde and Martens resist condemnation of consumer culture on the grounds that participants in their study of eating out gained personal satisfaction and gratification from eating out, among a range of other benefits:

The pleasures of consumption, including those in commodified form, are real and make a major contribution to human happiness. Among the benefits of the practices supported by contemporary consumer culture are that they generate dignified forms of (unpaid) labour, promote an aesthetic attitude toward everyday life, sustain many socially meaningful practices like caring and hospitality, provide entertainment and mental stimulation, ensure unobjectionable levels of comfort, permit expression of personal and group identities in rebellious as well as conformist mode and, of course, stimulate economic competition and create employment (Warde and Martens, 2000: 215).

Neither does MacClancy find the consumer relationship to ethnic cuisine completely sinister. He argues that, as tourists purchase local foods, they also validate the worth of the local culture (MacClancy, 1992: 208).

The restaurant is a cultural locale, displaying (not only selling) local food traditions for tourist clientele. In this way, the restaurant is a window onto the culture of another people. The authenticity of food and eating rituals that are manufactured for the pleasure of visitors can here be called into question. Even when the service providers are attentive to presenting a bona fide Acadian experience, which they almost always are, cultural products that are created with the express purpose of being shared with 'outsiders', or even yet being sold, inherently call into question the very notion of authenticity. In Acadian restaurants, that which seems the most authentic restaurant experience may, in fact, be the most elaborate construction.

Warren Belasco, in the book he edited called *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies*, quotes Thoreau on the issue of food itself as a commodified product. "Finding out where our food comes from is an important step toward taking responsibility for our food's full cost, which Thoreau defined as 'the amount of life exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run'" (2002: 11). When food and culture come together in restaurants throughout Acadian regions, who benefits immediately and in the long run? Who does not?

I am at once critical and respectful of the construction of Acadian culture in restaurants. I am critical of this construction in that economic relations at every level of organization promulgate the so-called authentic cultural experience. The pall of tourism appears everywhere we might see Acadian culture in villages that have been "developed" for tourism. Yet, with a measured attitude (and constant diligence) toward this type of cultural production, I believe that it can be seen delivering many of the beneficial attributes that Warde and Martens list above.

One of the benefits of restaurants and other forms of cultural commodification is employment. In this, I respect the necessity of tourism for Acadian communities. History has placed Acadian communities in remote and rural settings where creating a living is increasingly difficult. Tourism has become a way to create an inflow of money and resources into areas that are disadvantaged in these very terms.

Far from being a cultural contrivance,²⁰ I believe that the restaurant specializing in Acadian food is an important centre of material and practice in the ongoing

²⁰ Here I am following Wolcott's cautions on culture. While he finds culture to be an immensely useful "orienting concept," Wolcott argues that culture is not to be "found" with any people. Wolcott gives the creation of culture over to the researchers, by whose attribution of the term people's practices then appear ordered. In this way, we cannot use "culture" to account for people's behaviours or actions: "humans do things, cultures do not" (Wolcott: 1999: 99).

organization – or everyday construction – of Acadian life. Today, in Acadian villages in Nova Scotia, tourism and culture are organized together.

Communication

What are the exigencies of communication? How is it organized? What conditions it? When is it possible? Does it do anything and, if so, what? These questions help to orient communications study, and we do need orienting. Communications scholarship has become broad enough that it makes quite a difference to the research work what theories, conceptions, and assumptions are used.

My conceptualization of communication begins with James Carey's work. Carey was one to define concepts. He put forward that there are basically two different conceptions of communication, each of which takes communication research in very different directions. Carey terms the two contrasting theories of communication the transmission model and the ritual model. Very briefly, the transmission idea of communication takes messages or information as the core of communication. To communicate, in this frame of reference, is to move the information from point to point.

The ritual view of communications has quite a different perspective on the purpose and effects of communication. It is conceptualized as "a process through which a shared culture is created, modified, and transformed" (Carey, 1992: 43).

Communication is that which brings persons together in common bonds and fellowship.²¹

²¹ It is also interesting to note that communication (as ritual) has the effect, perhaps indirectly, of setting boundaries for community and limiting the participation of some within a given cultural group.

In a ritual definition, communication is linked to terms such as "sharing," "participations," "association," "fellowship," and "the possession of a common faith." This definition exploits the ancient identity and common roots of the terms "commonness," "communion," "community," and "communication." A ritual view of communication is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs (Carey, 1992: 18).

This ritual notion of communication directs our attention to community-making. It is interested in shared meanings which are the basis of culture.

There is an ongoing argument, of sorts, between these two notions of communication. Adams characterizes the struggle as a "tug of war between conduit-transmission-information-linear-representational metaphors of communicat[ion] and different versions of the constitutive-transactional-ritual-presentational metaphors of communicat[ing] (2003: 450).

For me, the relational or ritual idea of communication enables understanding of the inherently social aspect of communication. This model brings the actions and interactions of people to the forefront. People are, after all, the central actors in the articulation of meaning and, at the same time, in the process of communication. This encourages study of communication which is attentive to the social nature of meaning and reality:

To study communication is to examine the actual social process wherein significant symbolic forms are created, apprehended, and used.... Our attempts to construct, maintain, repair, and transform reality are publicly observable activities that occur in historical time (Carey, 1992: 30).

The ritual view opens up the possibility of examining new and diverse practices and artifacts, such as eating and food, as symbol systems wherein community is created.

Yet, it does not limit the analysis to representation. In articulating shared meaning, social relations are made and re-made.

Communication Technology

As I was working out ideas about how artifacts in ritual communication work as meaning mediators, I had a dream. I dreamt a rappie pie was a communication technology (see Chapter 5 for more on rappie pie). Perhaps our intention in its early days had not been to use rappie pie as a vessel for relating one with another symbolically. Yet, the rappie pie, seemed to act as a kind of tool for allowing people to share meaning; or, rather, these Acadian people used rappie pie to make and share meaning. It was an artifact that was produced and productive both within mundane personal and familial practices and within far-reaching social and cultural relationships. It extended our ability (in time) to communicate with one another. An artifact that mediates our relationships, and that might, then, in some way contribute to how we make sense of the world: I dreamed we called this a communication technology.

Then I awoke and realized that the terminology, communication technology, is associated with the transmission model of communication and not with ritual.²²

Communication technology is that which is used to transport information across space. The key word is information, and it is with information that the technologies of communication are put to use. To name the rappie pie as a technology confounds any easy distinction between a technology of the ritual model and one from the transmission

²² Carey, despite his preferences, did show interest in communication technology. He asked, "How do changes in communication technology influence what we can concretely create and apprehend?" (1992 [1988]: 31). Carey was interested in the construction of symbolic systems as means of creating meaning. In the above question, he is, in effect, pondering how changes in means of transmission (communication technologies) can have a cross-over effect on the means of reality production (symbolic systems).

model, as if both daughters in this family were given the same name. Indeed, there are some very distinctive differences between the rappie pie and the printing press as means of expanding our abilities to communicate.

What I needed to speak about how rappie pie was being used in the life-world of Acadians was a descriptive term of equal weight to that of transmission's "communication technologies." I wanted a notion referring to the "symbolic systems," but with more precision. The definition ought to be something like "ritual practices and artifacts wherein communication is made possible." The term should be to the ritual model of communication what "technology" is to the transmission model. I represent this relationship diagrammatically as in Figure 2.1.

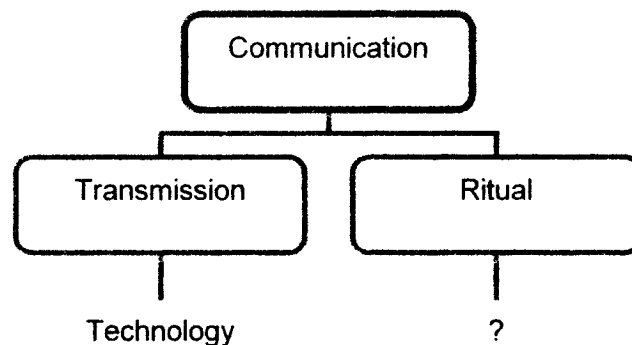


Figure 2.1: What do we call a "technology of ritual?"

I can also describe a few of the features of this as yet unspecified notion. Its object is meaning, and not information. It cannot, however, contain meaning, anymore

than it can function as a mechanism without the efforts of people. While it extends us, it is part of us. What is more, the technology of ritual is inextricable from the notion of an 'us'. For meaning to be created, there must be a degree of sharing ideas among people. This mechanism is, then, that which enables the representation of ideas or beliefs in sharing forms:

The capacity of private thought is a derived and secondary talent, one that appears biographically later in the person and historically later in the species. Thought is public because it depends on a publicly available stock of symbols.... This particular miracle we perform daily and hourly – the miracle of producing reality and then living within and under the fact of our own productions – rests upon a particular quality of symbols: their ability to be both representations "of" and "for" reality (Carey, 1992: 28-29).

The mechanism I want to name is that of, in Carey's terms, reality production and maintenance.

Symbols

Carey uses the term "symbols" in a way that approaches naming and describing a technology of ritual, one that enables meaning. He explains in a 1975 article, reprinted in 1988 that "...communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (Carey, 1992: 32). Often, however, it is assumed that "symbolic processes" and "symbols" arise in practices or artifacts specifically designed for use in communication. Language, for example, has been theorized as both a symbolic process and a technology of communication.

Barthes argues, instead, that the signification necessary to imbue artifacts (words being one form) with symbolic status need not be limited to a symbolic system specific to

communication. In *Empire of Signs*, first published in 1970 as *L'Empire des Signes*, Barthes indicates that meaning is created without dependence on language:

Now it happens that in this country (Japan) the empire of signifiers is so immense, so in excess of speech, that the exchange of signs remains of a fascinating richness, mobility, and subtlety, despite the opacity of the language, sometimes even as a consequence of that opacity (1989 [1970]: 11).

Barthes presents a semiotic study, an interpretation of the signs, of many of the cultural artifacts and practices of Japan. That Barthes is not familiar with the language makes his case for the non-necessity of speech to communication that much more compelling.

My Acadian rappie pie is similarly symbolically-laden. Placed as it is within contemporary practice and discourse, it is recreated symbolically. Rappie pie does not require language to create meaning; in fact, its very constitution is a socially-produced act symbolizing our production, which is not a tautology. We use it to relate to one another, even without eating it. Its symbolic form becomes more potent in its use, which is eating it. In this way, the notion of the symbol is the equivalent of a technology, but one of ritual rather than of transmission.

Affect

If food does not require language in order to signify, what is the possibility for shared meaning beyond language? Affective and visceral processes may seem to have an individual locus; however, could it be that there are symbolic forms that put us into relationships created in the embodied alimentary processes, as well? Can communication happen through affective means?

While the ritual model of communication does not in itself account for the place of affect within the symbolic processes of food and eating, I am inclined to argue that these are, nevertheless, the types of zones Carey wanted us to investigate when he encouraged social scientists to make the familiar strange. Carey, following Dewey, is hopeful that studying communication will inspire awe by making problematic “the particular miracles of social life that have become for us just there, plain and unproblematic” (Carey, 1992: 24).

I pull into the parking lot of my mother's building. She will be rushing out to greet me in seconds. There is only enough time to shut the engine off and breathe in one time. Deeply inhale and blow it out through my mouth, this sigh.

When I meet her eyes, I am already smiling broadly. I jump from my van. Hi mom! Hugs. My arm around her small frame. She is grabbing one of my bags from the van and bustling back into the building deaf to my pleas. I can carry that, mom!

Lorraine's apartment is the second one on the right when you go in by the downstairs door. On this day, as nearly every other, that is what we do. I find that as soon as I am inside the building I can smell what she has been cooking. It is winter and summer. I am five at my grandmother's restaurant and nineteen coming for a visit from university.

Are you hungry, dear? You must be. I made some rappie pie.

The smell of rappie pie, for me, is communicative. The scent of rappie pie in the oven centres me in the context of family and identity. It is placed (already and again)

within cultural and personal histories and geographies. Rappie pie is implicated in symbolic processes. It is difficult, however, to account for symbolism in the personal affective and sensory zones of touch, taste and smell.

The sociologist Bourdieu quite famously examined how “taste” in France was at once a symbolic system and a system of power relations (Bourdieu, 1984). Taste in Bourdieu’s analysis is not, however, considered in its personal or experiential forms. It is not as one of the senses, culturally placed within the personal body. Bourdieu’s taste is a synonym for discernment, be it of the palate or of the eye. It may inspire affective responses, but is not itself one of these. Taste, here, is an aesthetic belief rather than an aesthetic experience.

Carey’s symbolic processes, Barthes’ semiology, and Bourdieu’s (non-affective) sociology of taste: each rests on a common theoretical assumption that the visual is the predominant mode of communication. The cultural formations that each type of analysis seeks to study are cast metaphorically as “texts” that the researcher through his (or sometimes her) intellect can “read.” In familiar cultural studies terms, the cultural formations (texts) have been encoded, and may be decoded (read) in a variety of ways including the way in which the researchers present. The researcher can analytically examine the rituals involved in sharing meaning, the foods of France, or the tastes of the bourgeoisie. Rappie pie, too, as well as my reactions to it, can be examined this way.

Theoretical perspectives have emerged recently that may be used to contemplate affective processes. These move us into the realm of embodied theory. In one vein of emergent theory on affect, it, like the artifacts themselves, has been opened to the interpretive power of cultural studies (Probyn, 2000). Study of affect is essentially a kind of textual analysis of visceral processes and moments. In the above example, the

smell of rappie pie is, as I indicated, placed within narratives that make it meaningful for me according to my own interactions with these narratives. Smells and tastes are cultural and personal zones of shared ideas. To put it another way, affect can be examined as a site of ritualized meaning, what we have come to call signification.

A very different take on affect exists in the work of Massumi (1996, 2002). Massumi pursues the importance of affect as a way to theorize what cultural studies cannot. Affect is understood as beyond or outside of social processes of signification, which have been the foci of critical cultural theorists (Hemmings, 2005: 549). Affect is considered as an embodiment that is beyond textual study. As such, Massumi develops ideas of affect that are a critique of critical cultural studies.

I began defining my conception of communication with Carey's ritual notion, where what people share creates relationships between them. This continues to inform how I understand communication, and its study. While cultural theory contributes to the study of communication, the objects of cultural studies are (rightly, or not) practices and artifacts, or 'texts.' Communication has other concerns, at least for me. It is about that which puts people in communion; the objects of study are, thus, the relationships and possibilities for relationships among people.

Inquiries into assemblages like rappie and our responses to it are done to give us insight into human communion. I do not, then, provide a semiotic analysis of rappie pie in order to understand only its meaning; signification is not communication. By the same token, I pursue affect not as a way to move beyond whatever ails cultural studies, but as a way of thinking about communication. Affect, for this, is socially produced and indicative of social relations wherein I find communication.

Probyn gives us an example from early in the present decade of the deployment of this sort of theoretical perspective with alimentary processes:

I'd argue that eating is of interest because of the ways in which it can be a mundane exposition of the visceral nature of our connectedness and distance from each other, from ourselves, and from our social environment: it throws into relief the heartfelt, the painful, playful or pleasurable articulations of identity. In this vein, I want to use eating and its associations in order to think about how this most ordinary of activities can be used to help us reflect on how we are connected to others, and to large and small social issues (Probyn, 2000: 13-14)

At the site of the body, where the eating happens, alimentary practices open onto physical and emotional reactions. Yet, even sensations and feelings that are deeply personal participate in positioning us in relation to others. Probyn argues in *FoodSexIdentities* that shame, disgust, hunger, and other affects related to eating²³ and food connect us with some people while distancing us from others (2000).

Franklin and Crag urge our consideration of affect in the study of tourism. They are particularly interested in examining how the senses are used in tourists' practices (2001: 14). While I am interested more in the local people than the tourists, I share Franklin and Crag's enthusiasm for the embodied engagement with the tourist place, and particularly with the tourist food. Alimentary processes are, after all, especially given to affective responses.

²³ It is instructive to note here that Probyn discusses eating more than she does food. Eating, with its necessarily personal nature, is given to the experiential. Food can be coldly regarded; it is only when it is eaten, embodied -- or in the possibility of its consumption -- that the visceral and corporeal is brought together with the emotive.

Tourism

In discussions for the 2007 Congr s mondial acadien, one of the factors considered in planning the location for this Acadian celebration are the benefits that will afford the area from two linked sources: tourism and economic development.²⁴ In the rural areas where Acadian communities tend to be, such a conflation of tourism and economic development is borne of pragmatism (MacDonald and Jolliffe, 2003: 307). For an Acadian community such as Pubnico, and for the policy and governing bodies that are concerned with the community, tourism is an effort to enable economic opportunities for the people who live and work there.

The economic realities for people who inhabit present-day Acadian villages in Nova Scotia include limited earnings potential due to the downturn of resource based industry in rural Nova Scotia. In the areas of Nova Scotia that I visited, I found evidence that subsistence economies remain. However, subsistence lifestyles function in tandem with monetary economies that have been affected by the loss of fishing as a livelihood.

The foremost industry in most post-deportation Acadian villages was fishing. In fact, if it were not for fishing, Acadians may never have been allowed to return to Nova Scotia after the Deportation. Ross and Deveau argue that it was through the lobbying of Jacques Robin that the Acadians were allowed to return (1992: 74). Robin was a Huguenot fisherman who wanted to use the Acadians' knowledge and labour to establish permanent fishing posts in Cape Breton. He got his wish: in 1764 the

²⁴ In a news report from radio station CIMS in Restigouche, it was reported On March 3, 2005, that a delegation is discussing the Baie des Chaleurs area for the 2007 Acadian Congress (Levesque, 2005). A representative from Cambellton in New Brunswick and one from Baie des Chaleurs in Quebec put forward Baie des Chaleurs

government of Nova Scotia relented, allowing the Acadians to come back. Many went to work fishing for Robin.

By the 1990s, however, the viability of commercial fishing close to most of Nova Scotia's shores— known as the Inshore Fishery – ceased. The circumstances contributing to the demise of the fishery are contested; however, they seem to include overfishing, substantial use of factory-sized fishing vessels in the offshore fishery, climate change, and ecological destruction.

Without the industry that had been the economic basis of Nova Scotia's coastal communities, people were left without the means to support themselves. The end of the commercial fishery was only the most catastrophic event in three decades of economic difficulty for coastal communities in Nova Scotia. The Development Isle Madame Association suggests that the disastrous fall of the fishery served to bring into relief problems within the communities of Isle Madame “that had existed for years” (DIML, 1999:1). Problems that had been underplayed increased in their importance as the loss of the economic basis in many communities created a crisis situation. Vibrant communities that were for decades self-sustaining, by the end of the twentieth century had transformed to villages in decline.

In Chéticamp, for example, the average earnings in the 2001 census were \$7683 less than the average for Nova Scotia and \$12808 less than the average for Canada (Statistics Canada, 2003a). The situation was similar for the Argyle region, as well as the Municipality of Clare in which we find an important area known as the French

to host the 2007 event. The representatives, in suggesting this site, “parleront entre autre de tourisme, d'environnement et de développement économique” (Levesque, 2005).

Acadian Shore. Both were far below the Nova Scotia and Canadian averages for earnings in the 2001 census.



Photo 2.2: Dilapidated signs guide visitors outside of Cheticamp. With little money, tourism development is a pragmatic idea for earning a living.

As the ability to support one's self erodes, people in coastal villages also face social consequences (DIML, 1999: 1). Along with the stress of having no money, those who had been working face increased idle time. Many look for work elsewhere, choosing to move away from home and family in order to have a job.

It is in this context that tourism emerges as an appealing option for re-creating jobs and other economic relations in Nova Scotia's Acadian regions. Tourism development can be a way for comparatively poor regions to spur growth (MacDonald

and Jolliffe, 2003: 307). Any look at the relationship between the Acadian people and tourism must, thus, be sensitive to how Acadian people can best achieve both economic and cultural vitality within their communities.

Cultural production as tourism product

The Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture²⁵ and Acadian organizations in the province saw the 2003 through 2005 period as an opportunity not only to attract visitors for the festivities but also to grow Acadian tourism:

With the upcoming 2003-05 anniversaries of French exploration, colonization, and settlement, including the 3rd Congrès mondial acadien in 2004, Nova Scotia has an opportunity to capitalize on the economic growth potential of major activities and events related to tourism, culture and heritage (Nova Scotia, 2003: 12).

Attendant to tourist development, however, is challenge to Acadian culture. Li argues that tourism creates alteration wherever it is adopted as an economic means. "Similar to other industries, tourism is an agent of development and change" (Li, 2000: 116). As a means to economic development, tourism in Acadian communities has articulated with culture so that the cultural sector is no longer primarily self-generating. Culture and tourism are heretofore intertwined.

The circumstances and needs of tourism and tourist development are implicated in the types of cultural projects that will be supported and the community infrastructure demanded within a tourism framework. What is more, the motto chosen by government

²⁵ In 2005, the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture re-labeled itself the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. In the Department's 2005-06 Business Plan, the Minister responsible for the department writes that it was formed in 1999 (2005: 3). This may be the case, however, documents pre-2005 and even some of those available in 2005, refer to the Department without "Heritage" present in the name. Where this text refers to events that happened before the apparent re-naming, I continue to use the shorter previous nomenclature for the government department.

and industry to characterize the next ten years of tourism development and promotion in Nova Scotia is "Tourism 1st" (Nova Scotia, 2003: 13).

This relationship of tourism and culture is not, however, simply a matter of culture becoming indentured to tourism. Indeed, it is precisely the fact that the inhabitants of the tourist destination fully participate in constructing their own significant cultural forms at the same time as these forms are articulated with tourism mandates that necessitates careful attention to the production of culture in contemporary Acadian communities.

Ringer argues that, while one cannot ignore the fact that tourism is an important factor in the economy of local populations, tourism is actually as much a form of cultural policy as it is a form of economic development (1998: 2). The effect of tourism development, however honorable the intention, is complex: never entirely positive nor solely negative and rarely benign. Li characterizes the challenges of "ethnic tourism" – a term that could describe Acadian tourism – development in Canada:

The reality is that a variety of economic, environmental and sociocultural impacts accrue to the destination, some positive, others negative. Ethnic tourism destinations, therefore, must grapple with the difficulty of fostering the positive impacts while reducing the negative costs in order to develop tourism in a sustainable fashion (Li, 2000: 113).

For Acadians, the "positive impacts" are immediate and straightforward: having jobs and money flowing into the region. The negative costs are longer term and more speculative, but also very serious. They involve detriment to the culture and heritage of Acadians.

In a cultural group for whom imperialism's dire consequences retain their resonance, the key challenge of cultural (or ethnic) tourism development is an imperialist treatment of the Acadian way of life and its expression. Tourism development in Nova

Scotia utilizes Acadian culture, among others, in the service of economic development. In the message from the Minister and Deputy Minister prefacing the *2003-04 Business Plan* of the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture, culture is understood as a resource for the economy of the province:

Nova Scotia's culture sector is also making great strides, contributing to our well-being and our economy. Our cultural events continue to draw new and larger audiences, while our artists and cultural producers are raising their profile both here at home and around the world. The sector is recognized as fast growing with potential to diversify our economy and stimulate job creation. The impact of culture on our quality of life cannot be overstated, with strong links to social cohesion and innovation (Nova Scotia, 2003: 3).

Within the context of this policy document, the links of culture to “well-being” or to “social cohesion and innovation” are not further explored. The tangible ways that culture can be used toward economic growth, however, are extensively elaborated. In official policy discourse, then, culture is placed at the service of economic ideals. The recognition of the importance of culture in the everyday life of the citizenry is accepted as an underpinning principle, particularly for cultural stewardship.

Economic development is necessary; of that there is no doubt. It should not, however, be the driving force behind cultural formations. The chosen path to create jobs and increase the standard of living for many rural areas of Nova Scotia relies heavily on reconstituting these places as tourist destinations. The development of tourist destinations and attractions thus becomes the very rationale for creating Acadian cultural infrastructure and supporting Acadian artists (see, for example, *Mainstreet*, 2002).

Infrastructure and cultural capital

Within tourism in the Acadian communities I visited in Nova Scotia, there are two broad categories of development. The first concerns the material and practices that are used and/or mobilized within these communities for purposes of creating the Acadian destination community. Included here are the aspects of the community that create the conditions by which it becomes known as an Acadian village, as well as those additional provisions used to then share these cultural markers. Physical structures such as museums and restaurants are examples, but I would also include such necessary infrastructure as roads, sewers, and accommodations.

Mathias Poirier, the Director of the Chéticamp Development Commission, in a conversation with journalist Scott Milsom recognized both the pressures on local infrastructure and the promise of a tourism event like the *2004 Congrès mondial acadien*:

"The 2004 festivities provide us with a great opportunity," Mathias tells me, "but they also put challenges in our road. There are a total of 242 rooms available in this area for accommodation, and all of them are booked every summer. We're going to have to do some major improvising, because if you have 10,000 people coming here without any place to stay, what you'll have is 10,000 people who will never come back. And getting them back is the key to future jobs, so we have our work cut out for us (Milsom, 2002).

Poirier recognizes that the tourist demand from this one event may outstrip the community infrastructure.

The second category concerns the means used for attracting visitors to the destination community. Promoting the destination may include marketing, media

relations, networking within and beyond the tourism industry, and political struggles between local communities and extra-local governing bodies.

MacDonald and Jolliffe, in research examining the Canadian East Coast, have identified four stages in the development of cultural tourism for rural communities (2003: 310). These stages are interesting for the way in which they show how tourism incorporates economic considerations. From the earliest community recognition that bringing tourists in could be useful and feasible to Stage Two, where the community begins to turn to government for funding cultural attractions, the local community can already expect important business and cultural infrastructure. By Stage Three in MacDonald and Jolliffe's framework, community organizations are partnering to plan attractions. At Stage Four, centralized tourism development with a long-term vision exists for the community. One would expect marketing and promotions at the latter two stages of tourism development.

Chéticamp has achieved MacDonald and Jolliffe's (2003) Stage Four of tourism development with a sophisticated economic and cultural infrastructure as well as short- and long-term planning. There is also marketing for Cheticamp, although this remains an area more worked by regional and provincial bodies rather than the local community.

Marketing and promotions

In Higgins assessment, "brand *Acadie*" is a marketing attempt to turn "400 years of hardship" into tourist attractions that will bring some of the economic and cultural benefits of the tourism industry to Acadian communities throughout the Maritime Provinces (2002: 26). When we apply Cai's definition of destination branding, however, some uncertainty arises about the extent to which *l'Acadie* was, in fact, a bona fide

brand during the three-year period in question. Cai specifies destination branding as, “selecting a consistent element mix to identify and distinguish [the destination] through positive image building” (Cai, 2002: 723).

Between the years 2003 through 2005, I did not find either a centralized or coordinated effort at this type of branding concerning Acadian groups or “*Acadie*” within the province of Nova Scotia.²⁶ Instead, tourism, its promotion, and economic development were facilitated by quite an array of governmental and non-governmental groups with various conceptions of *l’Acadie*. Organizations at every level vied for the attention of local communities, tourism providers in those communities, and visitors both potential and actual. These organizations included the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture, a number of regionalized development agencies such as, for example, the Straight Highlands Development Agency, and community-based groups such as the Cheticamp Development Commission. Add to this the fact that there were several organizations working on tourism events specific to the 2003-2005 period, and what we have in the period is a cacophony of interested parties choosing a variety of images and narratives to represent Acadian-ness.²⁷

²⁶ Branding was by his point, however, quite deliberately happening within the province of Nova Scotia. It was coordinated within a campaign called “Nova Scotia: come to life” (www.novascotialife.com). The branding campaign in Nova Scotia focused on the political category of the province: “One Nova Scotia: one vision, one perception, one brand. That is the goal of the Brand Nova Scotia initiative. This program is about focusing Nova Scotia’s great story – and developing an overall positioning and theme for the province. It is a rallying focus that citizens, industry, and government can use to carve out a competitive advantage in the growing local and global economy. It will also help instill and rekindle a strong sense of pride for Nova Scotians. We are a strong, creative, innovative, and resourceful people. And this initiative looks at our positives with the intent of building a brighter future for all of us” (Province of Nova Scotia, 2005). For this branding initiative, the central narrative figure is the “Nova Scotian.”

²⁷ By 2006, what had been a developing *brand l’acadie* moved closer to actualization as a concerted marketing effort by the Commission du tourisme L’acadien du Canada atlantique (CTACA). That year, the organization launched its “Exploitant d’entreprise touristique par excellence,” which it describes as a market readiness program “allowing each Acadian tourism business to reach its full potential” (Commission du tourisme l’acadien du Canada atlantique, 2007). Tourism providers who pass the intake process for the program are allowed to utilize a special logo that reads “L’acadie” and is marketed by the CTACA as the *excellence L’acadie* brand.

Many of the organizations that were constituted specifically to mount and promote festivities between 2003 and 2005 have since disbanded. "L'Acadie 400" is one among this category. It had been the national strategic presence focused on promoting the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the birth of *l'Acadie*. This anniversary commemorates the French landing and settlement in what would become known as *l'Acadie*. The main events of this celebratory year were in 2004. Although the strategic group working on the celebrations of Acadie 400 has disbanded, the parent organization, *Société Nationale de l'Acadie*, continues with its mandate of "promotion de l'Acadie sur les scènes interprovinciale et internationale" (Société Nationale de l'Acadie, 2005).

The largest event during the period was the *Congrès mondial acadien*, held in 2004. The group responsible for this event, the CMA organizing committee, was based in Halifax and amounted to a provincial organization. Again, because of the specificity of its mandate, this organization ceased its activities shortly after the congress.

Also at the provincial level, the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture pledged its support for marketing Acadian cultural destinations and attractions during the 2003-2005 period. In 2003, the Department promised to mount a "high-profile campaign [that] will strategically position Nova Scotia as the premier destination in the region to experience Acadian culture and history" (Nova Scotia, 2003: 12).

At the local level, the community of Pubnico had an organizing committee for their 2003 celebration of the village's 350th anniversary. Simply termed the *350th Anniversary of the Founding of Pubnico*, the organization worked to coordinate and publicize local events during the year and especially during the tourist season.

In addition to groups specific to the many celebrations during 2003-2005, Acadian communities also had their own economic development agency active with

tourism during the period. Founded in 1999, *Le conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse* continues to promote and facilitate tourism in Acadian communities as part of its mandate (<http://www.cdene.ns.ca/>). (See Appendix Four for an extensive list of organizations involved during the period of this study with Acadian tourism in Nova Scotia).

Acadian organizations, Acadian tourism groups, tourism organizations, governmental departments, business groups, and development associations: the list of groups organized to address tourism in Acadian communities is long. Add to this the fact that individuals and small businesses in the communities are also involved in representing Acadian-ness to visitors. During the 2003-2005 period, Nova Scotia's Acadian communities were in a highly active state, producing many ideas of *l'Acadie* to share with tourists.

Acadienité

Keep in mind that, all the while these Acadian people are busy producing representations of Acadian-ness to share with visitors, Acadian people are also going about their usual lives. That is to say, these people are getting on with living as Acadians on a quotidian basis. This may not produce a divided consciousness for the Acadians who live in destination communities; however, the everyday-ness of life taken together with its extraordinary depiction (usually as “authentic Acadian”) does present at least two heuristic categories. On the one hand, there is the Acadian-ness that is produced for tourists while on the other hand the people living in these villages are reproducing themselves in ways that are not meant for tourist consumption.

Braroe provides nomenclature for this analytic categorization. He defines two terms based on his ethnographic work begun in the 1960s with Plains Cree First Nations people in the Canadian prairies that Braroe calls the Nehiyanak. In an article in the journal *Ethnology*, Braroe terms those rituals, practices, and relations that are confined within a group of people the 'ethnological.' He argues that, "Ethnological culture is Nehiyanak community life as it is lived in an everyday sense" (Braroe, 2002: 276).

Cultural formations that a group shares with other individuals or groups, Braroe terms ethnic. He says, "Ethnic culture is what outsiders see or are led to see" (ibid.). To speak of 'ethnic,' then, only makes sense in terms of cultural exchange, or what could be thought of as communication with 'outsiders'.

For Braroe, the ethnologic and the ethnic constitute the totality of 'culture' for the group in question. While the contours of the relationship between ethnic identity and ethnologic culture are not greatly elaborated in Braroe, he does find that there is a lot of ethnologic culture that is not shared. In other words, while "ethnological culture offers a reservoir of symbols and artifacts available for ethnic identity," only some of what could be used to represent a group identity actually is applied. Yet, Braroe does not see ethnic culture as a completely successful buffer for ethnologic culture. He says that it remains to be seen how ethnic processes "turn back on ethnological culture, altering it at the roots".

I find Braroe's concepts to be analytically useful. I see two analytic types of Acadian-ness produced in Acadian tourist destinations. In the first instance, there is the type that represents Acadian-ness to visitors. The second type is how we think, live, and reproduce ourselves on an everyday basis as Acadians.

As in Braroe, the culture of Acadians is produced in and through the two analytic types as well as their interactions. Our group identifying processes, what Braroe calls ethnologic practices, are in no way isolated from the presentation of acadian-ness for tourists. Yet, much of the function of ethnic representation, according to Braroe, is to protect the everyday sphere of activity in which *acadienité* is lived. The ethnic acts as a buffer of protection, borrowing from ethnology so as to represent “authentic Acadians.” Successful ethnic representation effectively discourages or even disallows tourist relationships with quotidian Acadian people.

We would also expect – and this is where it gets very interesting and complex - some effects from the ethnological, outsider-oriented representation on our insider identity and everyday life. The processes of representing and constructing a tourist-friendly self alters and re-orientes how we live and understand our lives. The limitations and choices demarcated for alimentation and other cultural formations within tourism turn back on the “Acadian traditions” whence they came. Ethnic alimentary strategies may come to condition our own everyday eating practices and food relations.

Ethnologic practices are the content, for Acadian people in Nova Scotia, of what I term *acadienité*. I am not the first to use the notion of *acadienité* to describe the self-referential practices and awareness, although I have not read other detailed explications of its application and potential. In the foreword to *The Acadians of Nova Scotia: Past and Present*, John G. Reid refers to “acadianité” (sic), speaking of it as something like Acadian experience (1992, v). Barbara Le Blanc also uses the term in *Postcards from L’Acadie* (2003).

The notion of “Acadian consciousness” suggested in Cimino shares some similarities with *acadienité* (1977: 42). Yet, ‘consciousness’ carries the additional

implication of an original 'Acadian'. *L'acadienité* does not assume that the group itself exists in an *a priori* fashion. It points to our sense of ourselves, and our altering consciousness of group identity, as performative practices and meanings. They are constituting the group "Acadian."

My use of *acadienité* closely follows Barro's conception of ethnologic group identifying processes as distinct from ethnic processes. *L'acadienité* is the means and meanings by which the articulated ethnologic group becomes a discursive subject. Many cultural practices, artifacts, and meanings are implicated. In terms of alimentation, these include ingredients, methods of preparation, narratives that surround certain dishes, eating arrangements, and more.

As a marker of identity, "Acadian" is negotiated among social, economic, geographic, and political relations. Within these relations, such as in the spaces of alimentation, shared narratives emerge and are perpetuated. The foods may be quite different from one end of Nova Scotia to the other, but the narratives that surround them share similar ideas.

In this way, the idea of *acadienité* implies a personal relationship forged through ritual, geography, language, and history. The notion of *acadienité* is meant to make explicit this implication, to allow for the problematic aspects of the relationships between these features, and to expand this research beyond the individual as the site of interest. *L'acadienité* is an encompassing term describing relationships to shared ritual, geography, language, and history, as well as the attendant narratives that intersect to situate the contemporary meaning of this notion for the people to whom it applies. Yet, at the same time, *acadienité* brackets that which is produced for tourists as ethnic representation.

What you are reading is, then, a very personal project. This dissertation is the culmination of a personal process of identification as an Acadian woman. In many ways, my research was borne out of the desire to know more about what it can mean to be Acadian.

Identity

I use the notion of *acadienité* as a way to include the many aspects of negotiated Acadian-ness. *Acadienité* allows that there are individuals for whom an Acadian identity has meaning. The individual, however, is insufficient to explain production, representation, and consumption of Acadian culture. For this task, the potent notion of *acadienité* encourages examination of social, economic, political, and cultural processes that are organized experientially, materially and discursively. *Acadienité* includes, then, the particularities of culture, art, language, political economy, economics, music, history, geography, affect, and of course, food that is meaningful for particular people in Canada and beyond.

Where the notion of identity often suffers from its “embeddedness in the discourse of individualism” (Kirk, 2002: 10), it carries the conceptual baggage of reification. In the notion of individual group-belonging is also embedded the assumption, dis-credited in post-structuralist thought, that the group exists in some unproblematic way.

Since Althusser’s theoretical anti-humanism, there has been, by some, a rejection of theories derived from the notion that “Man” has some universal essence (Hall, 1994: 121). For post-modern theory, this has meant that each individual is no longer at the centre of a shared and essential nature (Noonan, 2003: 42).

Noonan explains one of the significations of identity in terms of Derrida's critique of metaphysics (Noonan, 2003: 12). Identity is convergence and sameness, which, in metaphysics, is sought in essences of things and their concepts. In the identity of concept and essence is truth. Postmodernism argues that there is no essence, and, therefore, there can be no Truth. What we have in the "world as it appears to us in our ordinary lives" is difference, polysemy, and change (Noonan, 2003: 13).

Applying the critique of metaphysical notions of identity in the case of Acadian people does not mean that nothing is shared among the people who are conceptualized in this way. Although the idea of an essence is rejected, what is shared among these people happens in communication. Communicating is the quotidian re-emergence of the concept, the becoming of *acadienité*.

This *acadienité* is, so far, presenting as if it can be accomplished in the absence of self-determination. Indeed, in the "thoroughly radical" post-modernist critique of humanism and other philosophy, subjectivity itself is deconstructed (Noonan, 2003: 7). The ability of self-determination, which is an essential facet of subjecthood, is rejected. Again with Althusser, and arguably with many theorists since, human agency is undermined in favour of systems or structures of determination. The alternative to full subjectivity is over-determination by social relations, discourse, or whatever other external dynamics and structures are implicated in any moment.

This troubling turn is neither a necessary nor a desirable facet of the theoretical framework of *acadienité*. I have already put forward that *acadienité* is premised upon the idea that the identification process is not complete. Let me add to this now that the process is not over-determined. People, instead, negotiate change in *acadienité* within various social, political, and economic formations.

Dorothy E. Smith²⁸ usefully examines the tendency in much contemporary thought toward undermining human agency. Her analysis provides a cautionary tale for theoreticians who are also interested in social justice. Smith argues in *Writing the Social* that the tendency of post-structuralism to undermine human agency arises in its retreat into discourse. Her critique of post-structuralism is that, in many ways, it is unable to help us produce useful knowledge about the world we inhabit.

Since the linguistic turn of post-structuralism, the text has become for some theorists the only site of inquiry. Only in symbolic communication or discourse can the world be apprehended. Truth as presence is rejected since there is no universal essence, nothing "out there" to be referred.

The difficulty with this conception for Smith is multiple. Primarily of interest here, it is that it places language, or the symbolic, at the centre of reality and of scholarly inquiry. There is no reality beyond the text. "The notion of referring to or representing in the text a reality beyond discourse which authorizes theory or explanation is rejected..." (Smith, 1987:100). The only reality that we have, then, is discursive. Smith scathingly concludes that discourse "as a field of study is an endless resource without destination or conclusion" (103). When all we have is texts, all we can do is compare them against each other.

Finally, what is at issue is that so much of the world in which actual people are active eludes this type of theorizing. Smith sees the effect of this flaw in post-structuralist thought as one that endangers the feminist sociology that she has theorized:

²⁸ Smith is interested in sociology that investigates sites where human activity takes place.

Within this frame, sociology has no ground for inquiry that could claim to discover a world inclusive and exceeding textuality and discourse in which actual people are active and in which the social that we create among us actually happens. A sociological inquiry positing as its object the ways in which people coordinate their activities – the sociology recommended by women's standpoint – is pre-empted (1987: 103).

Instead of knowledge built from people's experiences, knowledge becomes an open-ended intertextual area of ever-more theory.

The challenge, then, in examining *acadienité* is to exceed textuality or discourse. This pre-supposes that communication studies can and should look beyond the textual articulations of meaning to find other modes and means of life where we create and share meaning. Again, this requires communication studies that are not merely cultural studies by another name.

Chapter 3

SEARCHING RESTAURANTS FOR *ACADIENITÉ*: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This dissertation uses autoethnography to explore *acadienité* in contemporary Nova Scotia. In this chapter I elaborate on the study design and how I managed it. To describe the research methodology, I address how the research was conducted as well as why I performed it in the manner in which I did.

Through fieldwork in four Acadian regions in 2002 through 2004, research in other Acadian historical places, archival searches, secondary sources, and my own reflection on being Acadian, I am here writing a story of people who are brought together by the idea of our Acadian-ness. This story is a rendering of other narratives, stories that I have found, told by Acadian people through our food, iterated to ourselves and to our visitors.

This is my story. Both in the sense that it is I who commit the various narratives to paper in this dissertation,²⁹ and in the sense that it is an account of my own *herstory*,³⁰ the representation of contemporary Acadian life that is developed here is my own. My Acadian life is a study in *acadienité*. Yet, I did not know this when I started. In my life, as it happens, are all the traces of being Acadian. However, without the painstaking

²⁹ As well as presenting my research in this dissertation, I have done other work to communicate what I know about Acadian life and food. In the papers that I have delivered based on the present research, I have worked to use other means both oral and affective to communicate these stories (Vacon, 2002; 2003).

³⁰ Women, from my own matrilineage and others that I met in the fieldwork, figure very prominently in this study. Thus, my choice of the term “herstory” is meant to convey that the narrative position of histories in this study is predominantly from the standpoint of women.

search for *acadienité* in history, geography, and cuisine, I never would have been able to see my life as a metonymy for Acadian life.

This is a work of autobiographical ethnography, or what some call autoethnography. It was borne in the hunger to comprehend my place with my contemporaries in the Acadian Odyssey. The research has filled me with the feeling that I am connected, not only with a social group but also with people in my future and in my past. It has filled me with the knowledge that each moment and every thing has the potential be a reification of the most social act, which is communication.

This research may be autobiographical, but it is not merely about me. Both in its conception and in its treatment of themes, it is meant to be an examination of the development and sharing of processes, meanings, and feelings among groups of people. For this, I was compelled to examine more than my own experiences. Foremost among the places I went searching for Acadian culture was among the people living in contemporary Acadian villages. My method was simply to create my own relationships with these people in the very places where they lived. In this project, I sought out people who live and/or work in small, tourist-ready Acadian villages in Nova Scotia. Then, I spent time getting to know the people in their own communities.

Desk methods: writing ethnography

In the last decade there has been a re-valorization of the place of writing within ethnography. Ethnographers poised at the cutting edge of the methodology argue that writing is important in the production of ethnography (Clough, 1998; Richardson, 1997 and 2005). It is difficult to imagine, now that we have this critical epistemological view,

that there could have been such disregard for work that is so clearly central to ethnography that it is identified right in the name. *Ethnography*.

What is more, grasping the idea that ethnography involves writing has not ensured that those considering ethnographical methods are critical of how ethnographic texts are produced. Geertz introduces his book on the anthropologist as author by making these allegations about ethnography and its epistemology: "That it might be a kind of writing, putting things to paper, has now and then occurred to those engaged in producing it, consuming it, or both. But the examination of it as such has been impeded by several considerations, none of them very reasonable" (Geertz, 1988: 1). The idea that an author will sit and, eventually, write about people's culture was so enmeshed in the method of ethnography that, like children breathing in air, relatively few practitioners consciously and conspicuously examined its processes.

If we bifurcate the production of ethnography into fieldwork and deskwork, within the orthodoxy of ethnography the greatest measure of descriptive and epistemological effort has been directed toward the time that the ethnographer spends out in the field. Even in the field a great deal of writing takes place. Notes and reflections are a crucial and indispensable part of the process of ethnography. In the field, ideas begin to percolate and be organized. Key concepts begin to emerge. It is at the desk, however, where hours pass without acknowledgement, that the solitary craft of writing can come to fruition. Ideas are formed in textualization. A text is crafted.

Recent scholars of experimental or new ethnography such as Clough (1998) and Sparkes (2000) have argued that we should reflect critically on the work that the ethnographer does once she is back home from the field and ensconced at her desk. Richardson encourages ethnography that is informed by the theoretical concepts of post

structuralism such as reflexivity, authority, authorship, subjectivity, power, language, ethics, and representation (1997: 2). Even Van Maanen, aligned with the anthropological orthodoxy of ethnography, looked into the future when he said that he believed that there will continue to be epistemological debate surrounding ethnography as much to re-examine the deskwork as the fieldwork (1988: 138).³¹

In ethnographic work, the writing is more than a method for the *dissemination* of information. Writing is that, but it is also a method integral to the very production of knowledge. Richardson and Adams St.-Pierre point out that in qualitative work, unlike in its quantitative and scientific counterparts, writing is a dynamic part of the creative process (2005: 961). What is more, what Richardson terms creative analytical processes (CAP) ethnography is tantamount to a paradigm shift where the writing can take many different forms. The researcher is no longer bound by the old social scientific methods in this writing, but can use new ways of representing as well as novel sources for adding to the understanding of phenomena.

Richardson proposes that we re-envision the “validation” imaginary for CAP ethnography from the social scientific norm of triangulation to that of crystallization:

Crystals are prisms that refract externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colors (sic.), patterns, and arrays casting off in different directions. What we see depends on our angle of repose – not triangulation but rather crystallization. In CAP texts we have moved from plane geometry to light theory, where light can be both waves and particles (ibid. 963).

³¹ In his book on writing ethnography, however, Van Maanen is descriptive, sometimes analytical, but never critical, of the methods of writing ethnography. To be fair, Van Maanen indicates that the “analytical treatment of fieldwork epistemology” is beyond the scope of his monograph (102).

Crystallization assumes that there is no single truth, but that the researcher can provide a partial, complex insight into the topic. The reader, also, brings his or her formation to the text, and is invited to interpret it thus creating another layer of complexity.

One of the real joys of Richardson's (and others') methodological innovations *vis à vis* writing ethnography is that passion and emotion are meant to be present in the texts produced. Denzin terms this writing a "methodology of the heart" (Denzin, 2006: 423). The feeling presented in the text is one of the ways that CAP ethnography works to enhance the readability of research findings. Instead of boring writing, CAP ethnography is meant to bring to the writing all the best qualities often present in the topic. If the topic is interesting, why put the reader to sleep with a boring treatise? Interesting writing calls for the author to hone her writing skills; writing is a craft. The writer should be by times lyrical, fascinating, captivating, or infuriating. S/he ought to have read widely, all the better to use effectively such literary devices as metaphor, hyperbole, or foreshadowing. Not meant for skimming, this is writing that calls for reading to induce meaning (Richardson, 2005: 261).

Stoller advocates writing that also induces emotion (2004). In the case of what he calls 'sensuous ethnography', the writing project is improved when describing feelings, sensations, and emotions from the field. Writing is more effective again if it elicits affective responses in the reader. By using the methods of CAP ethnography to produce affective writing, I would like to give you a feeling for what I found in the fieldwork. I want to give you some idea of how smelling rappie pie makes me feel. To do this, I want to make you feel.

The contribution of sensuous scholarship is not, however, only to improve the text as a literary work. Stoller argues that exploring the sensuous in scholarship also

leads to a nuanced and more thorough grasp of power relations as they are lived in the local. In ethnography, "...sensuous descriptions improve not only the clarity and force of ethnographic representations but also the social analysis of power relations-in-the-world" (Stoller, 2004: 820). If what Stoller calls "sensory regimes" are manipulated within relations of power, then describing the cultural lives of people in the community ought to show the lines of struggle in that manipulation.

The creative writing of ethnography thus constitutes a reality, rather than describing one (Clough, 2004: 421). Ethnography instructs the reader about the world. It relates to the reader not merely how the subjects see the world, but also how the author sees the world (Denzin, 2006: 422). As ethnographers, there is a weight of responsibility that comes along with writing. Said, speaking of anthropology more generally, argues that it is a way of knowing that is often a "direct agent of political dominance" (Said, 1989: 220). For the researcher as author, there is responsibility for producing an ethical project.

This is no new idea, but holding fast to this responsibility was critical for me in making decisions about how to write and what to write. There was one narrative in particular, poignant in its illumination of the paradox of so-called authenticity in contemporary Acadian village life, which troubled me greatly. It seemed to me to be such a relevant little vignette, but with a potential to do harm that exceeded even its affect.

Said describes two anthropologists (Price and Scott) who, in two separate studies, each recognized the researcher's possibility for enabling relations of power to dominate the researched:

Richard Price's book *First Time* studies the Saramaka people of Suriname, a population whose way of staying alive has been to disperse what has in effect been a secret knowledge of what they call First Time throughout the groups; hence First Time, eighteenth century events that give the Saramakas their national identity, is "circumscribed, restricted, and guarded." Price quite sensitively understands this form of resistance to outside pressure, and records it carefully. Yet, when he asks "the basic question of whether the publication of information that gains its symbolic power in part by being secret does not vitiate the very meaning of that information," he tarries very briefly over the troubling moral issues, and then proceeds to publish the secret information anyway (Said, 1989: 220).

Said argues that Scott, as with Price, understands his position as a likely contributor to power-over if he publishes certain information, yet he decides to write the offending details anyway.

If it seems certain that Scott or Price made the "wrong" decisions, I have not made the paradoxes of scholarly writing about people – I take that to be a purpose of social science – apparent. It is necessary to be revealing when writing in order to present the most salient narratives, those that illuminate or instruct on some issue of interest. However, there is a concomitant danger of showing something inappropriate, or giving too much information and, thus, undermining the very people I set out to describe.

In the field, I met many people who made their lives by participating in the food service industry. If I published here some of the secret stories that I learned, it would indeed be demonstrative of contemporary Acadian alimentary praxis. Their stories demonstrate how these people create notions of themselves as Acadian in the work with alimentation that they do. Such narratives could do well for me, in qualifying me as an insightful researcher, like Scott.

The particular fantastic and exceptionally burdensome vignette in question was recounted to me in an interview. It was “on the record,” as is said. To represent it in ethnographic account, I tried changing the places, people, and conditions of the narrative. These all proved cumbersome, as well as opening the door to questioning the verity of my tales. Instead, I began writing it as it was told to me, without changing identifying details. I imagined showing these people their story in print only once the thesis had received final approval. Then, there could be no retractions. I would have my story, and my degree.

To say that my concern is in the vitality of Acadian culture only to turn around and undermine the economic means of the very people central in that culture is, for me, unconscionable. The narratives that I could not figure out how to include, that I feared publishing, are the ones that, in my estimation, endanger the livelihoods of people involved. These are people I plan to face again, preferably as friends rather than the alternative. Only when I excised the stories that threatened to destabilize Acadians' livelihoods or positions in their communities did I feel that I could again greet these people. I feel now that I can show everyone written into this thesis the stories about them, and that none of them will hate me for it.

My work in writing ethnography is to attend to how the stories I write (or do not write) do or do not re-inscribe tyrannies; do or do not improve the material, symbolic, and aesthetic conditions of life for Acadian people (Richardson, 1997: 77). If I am trying to portray “truth,” it is of the kind that encourages Acadian people, particularly those who live in the rural villages of Nova Scotia, in their struggles to develop economic, social, and cultural infrastructure.

Re-telling, un-telling, telling: writing strategy

With this politicized and aestheticized notion of the methodology of ethnography, I took several different tactics to create a text that approximates what I want to accomplish.

The first of these was to rely quite heavily on narrativization, since narrative is a central organizing device in *acadienité* and because narrative is a method that allows ethnography to be eventual rather than merely analytical and descriptive.

What is more, my narrativization creates an autoethnographical present. In the present, the past and the future are given meaning and in that sense they are created.

Denzin puts it this way:

In bringing the past into the autobiographical present, I insert myself into the past and create the conditions for rewriting and hence re-experiencing it. History becomes a montage, moments quoted out of context, "juxtaposed fragments from widely dispersed places and times (Ulmer 1989, 112) [entire quotation in Denzin, 2006: 423].

I write the ethnographic text in chapters four through six in the present tense to remind us that it is in the (auto)ethnographic present that our quotidian practices and discourses are being lived. In the narratives we tell, we order and name our histories.

When I write in the present tense, you may find it bothersome. However, as a tactic it underscores an inter-relation between past and present that is lived out in the everyday and represented in this thesis. We are constantly recreating our history in view of our present. The reality of our lives is not our history; it is our (embodied) being.

For Stoller, our relationship to history is non-linear and unstable (2004: 821).

History is unfinished. Thus, the ethnographer's challenge is to convey that open-endedness while telling a compelling, real story. The ethnographer cannot be god-like, presenting things as if they happened for known reasons, or presenting conclusions

(since change is ongoing). At the same time, the ethnographer does not need to throw her arms in the air at the futility of absolute subjectivity; things happen within certain social, political, and historical contexts that are knowable (ibid.). On this, Stoller quotes Merleau-Ponty, saying, "In this light, history, perception, and political action are inventions that work 'through a matrix of open and unfinished signifiers presented by the present'" (ibid.). I write in the present because it is where everyday life is lived.

All the same, in the course of everyday life things happen that only later are incorporated into narratives. The events that seem so obviously important in our narratives are only allotted that status by their very place in the stories about them. It is only once the narrative is produced that the ordered and measured events are comprehensible as events. Order and importance are not essential parts of events. Further, narrative works to make sense of everyday life by allowing us to comprehend the story *only once we have already reached its summation* (Butala: 2004). Like a great detective caper, we can go back through a narrative and see what was important, but only after we have read the whole story.

While it is generally the ethnographer's job to sort the narrative in order to present the published version as if it all happened that way, I take a different strategy in order to emphasize these ordering and articulating aspects of narrative structure in this study. Both the culmination of my fieldwork and the communications of people who live in Acadian villages offer narratives that organize a sense of things, a structure and a suggested purposiveness that was not in the world before the narrative. The fieldwork and the everyday life in Acadian villages are fragmented and uneven. We make meaning, theses, and lives.

To pay homage to the fragments and their (sometimes) organization, I interrupt sustained narratives with other artifacts that interact with the stories. These may be, for example, recipes, quotations, or other cultural references.

Within narrativization there are various perceptions and perspectives, all shifting across spatial and temporal plains, as well as across affective, discursive, and sensory modalities. Narratives can represent and communicate emotion, for example. There are moments within my text when it is insightful to convey the emotion within a particular tale and, conversely, other times when it is the mechanics of a situation that I feel should be highlighted. The historical context of a person's situation can be useful, but just as often I found that examining the synchronic terrain yields exceptional knowledge.

Sometimes, I write narratives more or less from the field. When things happened that are, in themselves, poignant and telling, I recount them albeit in my own words. I tell stories that are illustrative of themes that I found in Nova Scotia, and themes that I want to exist in this text.

Other times, I reflect on what happened in Nova Scotia using historical narratives as a starting point. I find this history in a trust-worthy textbook, such as the scholarly *Atlantic Canada: A History in the Making* from noted Atlantic historian Margaret Conrad. Additionally, the personal accounts of an informant can provide historical context, especially as it is understood, and therefore lived, by the people implicated in the telling.

Another way of exploring particular cultural moments comes through my own experiences. My own access to "experience" is as fraught as our accounts of history, both being limited by the parameters of narrative and the constraints of memory (Stacey, 1997: 24). Stacey acknowledges this factor, but does not allow it to undermine her

stories of experience. She mobilizes her experiences to better understand the cultural phenomenon with which she is concerned. I follow her example.

Often, there are subtleties between the shifts in all of these perspectives. Or, one may completely give way to another. There may be times when it is useful to examine the same idea, the same incident, or the same narrative from differing standpoints or times. Sometimes the story is focused on the author and other times, the space of the narrative is populated by generations.

Finally, there were days when the Acadian world that I was in seemed awash in meaning, in juxtapositions and articulations. Other days went by as if we had become detached from narrative, as if they were meaningless and unhistorical, becoming nothing. Later, I gave some of them meaning, even if it was that those days were confusing or showed inconsistencies. I am writing to convey how there were times when my observation and conversation with Acadian-ness were, in that moment, unresolved. These were times when I genuinely asked myself what, if anything, does this mean? Times when I had no sense of where the research was going to end, when I was not sure what was important and what would turn out to be nothing, are also important parts in the construction of narratives, especially since it is impossible to distinguish which you are facing until later on when the story has developed.

Van Maanen has a wonderful term for this type of writing. He labels it after a particular era in art, calling it impressionist (1988: 101). Outlining qualities that are brought into impressionist ethnography Van Maanen describes Impressionist painting as art which

... sets out to capture a worldly scene in a special instant or moment of time. The work is figurative, although it conveys a

highly personalized perspective. What a painter sees, given an apparent position in time and space, is what the viewer sees (Van Maanen, 1988: 101).

The link to writing, for Van Maanen, is in form and in purpose. Impressionist ethnographers use “striking stories” in a “necessarily imaginative rendering of fieldwork” to the end of engaging the reader with the culture (102).

However, the learning process that is suggested in the impressionist tale also presents certain difficulties for its audience. “Cultural knowledge is slipped to an audience in fragmented, disjointed ways” (104). The writer works to convey to the audience something of what was experienced during the fieldwork, where events that seemed trivial turned out to be quite informative or the other way around. In a turn similar to that of the ethnographer, the reader may not understand what it all means until the end of the dissertation. What is more, the ethnography itself becomes an evocative site of meaning.

The thesis remains a narrativization, despite my use of disruptive tactics. It necessarily organizes and creates meaning, however self-consciously that happens. Richardson notes as she encourages us to critically embrace narrativization, that “[n]arratives provide meaningful explanation of how events are causally linked” (1997: 77). In her explanation of the life story method, Behar notes that the strength of that method is its narrative style. Re-telling the story allows one to see the “subjective mapping of experience” (1997: 150).

What you will find in this dissertation are stories, theoretical discussions that address these cultural narratives, and analytical material interrogating the meanings of the stories.

Field methods

People

In most cases, the people who became my informants are “Acadian.” Either they themselves identify as Acadian or, by their family history and current practices, I include them in this dominant (ethnic) category for Acadian villages.

There are some excellent participants who are not Acadian. They provide an outsider perspective, since they currently live in the Acadian communities. As people who are not steeped in the same practices since childhood, the non-Acadians are sometimes at odds with the “traditional” way of life in the Acadian village. As a result, my discussions with the non-Acadian inhabitants of Acadian villages highlight tensions and contradictions in the community. As people who are knowledgeable about life in the village, but with other experience of everyday life on which to comprehend the order of the community, the non-Acadian inhabitants that I include in this dissertation have developed and contributed their own insights about Acadian community life.

Myron, for example, settled in Chéticamp in middle age after working in restaurants in many cities throughout Canada and the U.S. He decided to use his skills with bread-making to earn a living in Cape Breton by opening a bakery. Now, his wife Judy operates a store-front operation, selling his bread as well as other baking and coffee during the summer season. Myron also bakes and sells bread and pastries year round to local restaurants and homes.

With their knowledge and experience in the food service industry in Chéticamp and the surrounding area, Judy and Myron provide some interesting insight on the

alimentary lives of Acadians and tourists. The juxtaposition of Myron's French-style baking in the Acadian milieu also highlights particularities of the Cheticantin's cultural and historical formations. The fluffy, soft white bread favoured by Cheticantins and Myron's crusty, chewy bread represent competing culinary cultural artifacts. Through examining Myron's bread in the context of Chéticamp the practices and relations surrounding Cheticantins' bread begin to become important for me.

Myron bakes old-country breads. The French and Italian breads have a tough and flavourful outer crust that is typically baked to golden or even darker brown, preferably in a wood-fired oven. Under the crust the bread, when fresh, is moist and chewy with an open and airy crumb. In Quebec, where I live, this type of artisan bread is ubiquitous. In Nova Scotia, such European-style bread is rare.

Home-style bread, on the other hand, is very popular in Inverness County where Chéticamp is located. Just outside Chéticamp to the North, in Grand Étang, is a bakery whose bread sells in restaurants and grocery stores up and down the northwest coast of Cape Breton Island. Aucoin's bread is fluffy and very white. The crust is quite soft and light golden. Like Myron's bread, the loaves typically come un-sliced. Aucoin's bread is also available as rolls, and it is these that are served in the restaurants of Chéticamp.

It takes time to develop a taste for the European style breads. The first time I eat a baguette is in a fancy French restaurant. I cannot understand how such a lovely restaurant can serve this chewy, 'stale' bread.

Myron says that good bread is all about the crust. From behind his work bench Myron says that he does everything he can to promote a good crust. He adds malt to the dough, increasing the sugars that promote crustiness. He bakes the breads dark.

Myron is discouraged that his breads, which he knows are excellent, do not find a strong market here. No longer disheartened, though, he says he has stopped wishing that people would buy his bread. He accounts for the local population's lack of enthusiasm for his fine product by looking to the history of Chéticamp. As he shapes a loaf of potato bread, Myron says that Chéticamp has been an isolated community. This same isolation accounts, in his mind, for both the vitality of the community and for the unwillingness of the people to try new things. Isolation makes Cheticamp a conservative place.

It is also in the economic history of Cheticantins where rests the rationale for their attachment to Aucoin's white bread. Myron tells me that, generations ago, Cheticantins would farm, fish, or hunt for whatever food they needed. As growers of their own grain, the Cheticantins would grind their own flour at the local grist mills. Flour was sifted through pieces of fabric. The finest of the sifted flour could be left for a year to oxidize, a process which produced whitened flour. Only those who had access to stable resources – the wealthy – could afford this long process. Most people used brown, unaged flour, which produced heavier, denser bread. To have white flour was, then, a status symbol. As people came to have money to purchase flour, it was the white flour that they sought. The people of Chéticamp, in Myron's view, became symbolically attached to white bread.

With an exaggerated dispassionate resolution, Myron tells me that he did not come to Chéticamp to change people. But, in his recounted history, it occurs to me that there is a space left open for the Acadians here to "rediscover" the darker and richer breads of their ancestors. Perhaps no change is necessary, only a "return" to a historically relevant artefact. Is this a hope for Myron? He never portends to be the

keeper of the old ingredients and methods. That his multicultural bread basket represents old traditions from other countries is evident, with loaves from Ireland or France sharing bakery space with Armenian sweets. I suppose that the possibility of a return to “traditional” bread has occurred to Myron, as I watch him in his little bakery work a clump of multigrain dough into heavy, dense loaves.

Places

I made decisions about what areas to study, as well as the depth with which I would examine each place, by examining my constraints against the totality of the places promoted as Acadian that I ought to visit. My considerations were not unlike those of anyone going to the field: I needed to create the conditions for successful work in the field while managing my own time allotment, working within financial parameters, and addressing mobility constraints. I anticipated that there would be significant variation in each area’s extent of provision for alimentation geared toward a tourist clientele. Even if I could spend time in every Acadian nook and cranny in the province of Nova Scotia, I thought that the places that I most wanted to go for the extended fieldwork were places that had at least one active restaurant promoting some manner of “Acadian” food.

I began in 2002 to delineate which communities could satisfy my conditions by consideration of the tourist trail system in Nova Scotia. One of the tools for tourist promotion in Nova Scotia as in many other regions the world over is the tourist trail. Trails are an organizational tool primarily developed for tourism marketing. In Nova Scotia, there are 13 themed “travelways” (Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture, 1: 2002). The Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council characterizes these as “wayfinding’ tools for visitors” that serve to “enhance the visitor driving experience”

(2005: 13). The names of many of the trails (see Appendix Five) suggest their central narratives: the Lighthouse Route is a coastal drive where the visitor can find scenic lighthouses; the Evangeline Trail summons Longfellow's fictitious Acadian heroine Evangeline. Other Trails are less telling, or perhaps less intriguing, in their titles. What unique theme awaits visitors to the Sunrise Trail?

Along the thirteen travelways presented in the tourist guidebook, *Nova Scotia 2002 Complete Guide for Doers and Dreamers*, there are seven areas identified as Acadian.³² These constituted an initial set of locales to search for restaurants serving Acadian foods to local and tourist clientele.

Before I ever went to the field, I put to use the electronic resources available to plan my trip. The armchair traveler can take advantage of the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture's utilization of the internet to promote tourism to Nova Scotia. In 2002, on the official website, I noted Nova Scotia attractions such as beaches and museums, restaurants and bed and breakfasts.

The use of the internet to promote Nova Scotia has since been marked as a priority. According to the Department of Tourism and Culture, use of the internet to find tourism information is growing while other means recede:

³² On the provincial map in the promotional publication, *Nova Scotia 2002 Complete Guide for Doers and Dreamers*, the Acadian flag is used to represent Acadian regions. This flag is the only one that appears on the Tourism guide's map of Nova Scotia. When the flag was adopted at an Acadian National Convention in the 1880s, it was within the contest of ethnic nationalism. The Acadian National Conventions during the 1880s and early twentieth century were themselves part of the context of Acadian nation-building of the period (Le Blanc, 2003: 104). The symbolic significance of flags for Acadian people in Nova Scotia is today at quite a high, if we base this on its ubiquity in the province. Rather than a symbol of nation or state aspirations, however, the blue, white and red Acadian flag with the yellow star has become a symbol of pride, shared history, and reclamation of a threatened culture and identity.

... the traditional means by which visitors obtain information about Nova Scotia appears to continue to shift from more formal enquiries (literature requests and counseling at Visitor Information Centres) to the Internet, with website visits continuing to rise (+17%) (Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture, 2004).

The figures that the Department uses are compared to the same period in the previous year. This information, printed in the September, 2004 edition of the highlights of provincial tourism trends called *Tourism Insights*, assesses the growth of the internet as a means for finding visitor information comparatively with the same January to September period in 2003.

While the World Wide Web was somewhat useful for research purposes, my promotional tour of the province reinforces Rojek's argument that cyber tourism does not replace the physical tourist destination (1998: 41). It, instead, encourages a traveler's desire to have a full bodily experience of the place. Reading about restaurants and viewing pictures of diners and their dinners conjures ideas about the food and desires to be eating in Nova Scotia. However, only visits to the restaurants can leave the traveler and the researcher with the sensory experience of having been there (Rojek, 1998: 41).

As a cyber tourist/virtual researcher in Nova Scotia, I was able to search each of the trails for restaurants that, according to the information provided, serve "Acadian" food. In the spring of 2002, I find five restaurants serving Acadian food in Nova Scotia, three in Chéticamp on the Cabot Trail and two on the Evangeline Trail. I assume that this is likely not an exhaustive list, however, it does suggest to me that the area around Chéticamp and that of the Evangeline Trail have significant enough tourism development to register on an internet-based search of Nova Scotia tourism for Acadian restaurants.

In the summer of 2002, I take this information and visit these two Acadian areas of Nova Scotia along with a third important area on the Lighthouse Route. Wolcott terms such a preliminary excursion into the field “ethnographic reconnaissance” (1999: 207). He points out that it is very useful when there are time restraints on the fieldwork, as I knew there would be for my planned field experience in 2003.

The reconnaissance is helpful in locating promising sites. I find that Chéticamp has a number of restaurants serving Acadian cuisine. It also has the most well developed tourism program within the Acadian areas of Nova Scotia. One restaurant in particular, the Restaurant Acadien, stands out as an excellent example of the intersection of Acadian culture and tourism. The restaurant works to provide a thorough Acadian museum-like experience to patrons:

Waitresses in traditional costumes will greet you at the Restaurant Acadien, while the aromas coming from the kitchen will tell you that this establishment offers dishes which you will find nowhere else in the area. A meal at the Restaurant Acadien turns into a real experience when you try dishes like meat pies, fish cakes or chiard. The fish and chips are something you have, up to now, only dreamt (sic) about, while the mouth-watering desserts will make a return visit a must! When you see the church steeple, know that we are near. Come join us for an enjoyable Acadian experience among friendly staff (<http://www.co-opartisanale.com/restaurant.htm>).

I also find that the Restaurant Acadien shares a building with an Acadian artisan’s co-operative, another showcase and business venue for Acadian culture.

I am impressed by the level of tourist development in what strikes me as a small and sparsely populated area. Chéticamp will make an excellent community in which to examine how the relationships between tourist development and the everyday experiences of being Acadian or Acadian culture are lived.

Along the Evangeline Trail, in 2002, there are a number of restaurants serving Acadian food. This is the region that used to be referred to as the French Shore,³³ is now called Clare or the Acadian Shore, and most recently is referenced in tourism promotion as La Baie Sainte Marie (see for example, The 2006 Clare Visitors Guide). The region covers part of the territory of the Evangeline Trail, which begins in Yarmouth at the southwestern tip and finishes at Digby in the north. Traveling along the coast of the Bay of Fundy, the Baie Sainte Marie region begins at Salmon River and concludes where it was originally founded at Belliveau Cove. Baie Sainte Marie is situated within the municipal jurisdiction of Clare, which also includes inland areas. The area through the French Shore is fairly, if sparsely, developed for tourism with motels, beaches, galleries, magnificent churches, and a schedule of tourist friendly events planned to coincide with the summer months.

In Mavillette, I find a restaurant close to a major beach and across from a motel. The Cape View Restaurant – renamed and redecorated since my grandmother’s tenure there – is also, in many ways, my inspiration in this study. This is a restaurant with a Maritime menu that also includes Acadian fare. There is a combination of patrons from the surrounding areas and tourists.

The third region, in 2002, that seems as if it will be an interesting contributor to this study is Pubnico on the Lighthouse route. Pubnico boasts of being the “oldest region still Acadian” on its highway sign. Re-settled by Acadians in 1763, it has maintained an extant Acadian population since that time. There is a large population of Acadian residents in the area and there are restaurants where one can find Acadian foods. What makes this site particularly appealing is that it is in early development as a

³³ Ross and Deveau, writing in 1992, indicate that this area is called the French Shore (88). I also remember it

tourist destination. An Acadian historical site is under restoration here, and has just been freshly opened to the public. There is an Acadian museum and the promotion of festivals in the area.



Photo 3.1: A sign along Highway 103 in Nova Scotia.

While I was excited in 2002 about the possibilities for Pubnico in my study, during my fieldwork in 2003 I spend far less time and effort on the Pubnicos than I had imagined that I would. Residing in Yarmouth, already I am dividing my time in Southwest Nova Scotia between Clare and Argyle. In the Argyle region, there is Wedgeport, Quinan, and Saint Anne du Ruisseau, as well as the Pubnicos to visit. During the days I do spend in Pubnico, I do not find as much of the public sharing of alimentation, as I believed I would. The local population is just beginning to have the type of tourist contact that comes from being a travel destination. However, there is

referred to in this way.

relatively little in the way of providing value-added gastronomical experiences, either in restaurants or during festivals, to visitors.

The most appropriate restaurant for my study in the area is the Red Cap Restaurant and Motel located in Middle West Pubnico. The Red Cap offers family dining from a Maritime and Acadian menu. I visit the Red Cap on several occasions, but I never make a good contact there. I also visit the museum, historical site, and an Acadian festival in West Pubnico. It is important to note that my own father lives in Middle East Pubnico, which at least gives me some insights into the area.

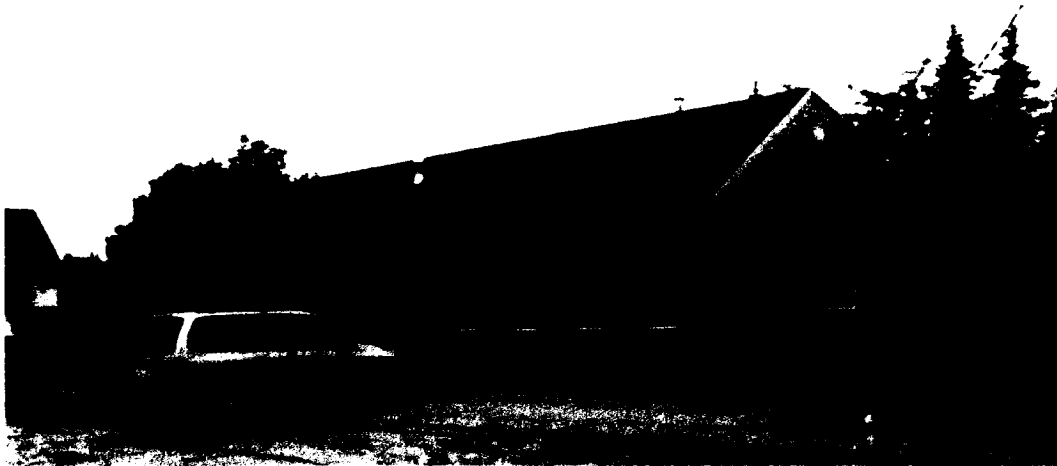


Photo 3.2: The author's van outside the Red Cap Restaurant in Pubnico.

Although there were greater obstacles than I imagined, between my efforts of 2002 and those of 2003 combined with follow-up in 2004, I visited every extant Acadian community in the province of Nova Scotia. In the tiny community of Pomquet, I found a lovely restaurant looking out over the ocean, with a big party on the afternoon that I visited. In addition to Chéticamp on Cape Breton Island, in 2003 I also visited the Island's eastern Acadian region of Arichat and Isle Madame. During the Acadian Festival there, I met some wonderful people. Many times I went there to eat in

restaurants, tour the maze of roads, hike in the woods to find chanterelle mushrooms and blueberries, and spend time talking to people.

Isle Madame was truly fascinating, tranquil, and beautiful. There were restaurants and people who were keen to talk about what was going on in them. It was a rich and interesting site, so much so that Isle Madame became the fodder for a fourth region treated in this thesis.

Alternatively, there are communities in which Acadian culture is subtle and/or difficult to access. Quinan, my ancestral home, intrigues me. Yet, without a restaurant, (in fact, without much of any kind of publicly accessible space save for a church) the type of public presentation of Acadian-ness that I was seeking was nowhere to be found. It is similar in Wedgeport, although the community seems to be in more of a bustle. There are a few stores in Wedgeport, and people are out and about, albeit, for the most part each in his own or her own vehicle. In such conditions, there are few accessible ways to meet locals.

In West Chezzetcook, the mailboxes that line the side of the road read, "Bellefontaine," "Pettipas," and "Robicheau," traces of Acadian descent presenting a written hint at the possibility of Acadian lives behind private doors. Are they speaking French in there? Some of these centenarian houses in this small rural community have no indoor plumbing. The people in them are old. Sam, a woman who lives nearby, tells me that they are used to going to taking care of their *toilette* without the "modern" convenience of a toilet.

The Acadian House Museum at 79 Hill Rd. in West Chezzetcook recounts on a plaque the story of this village from the Acadian perspective. The stone plaque angled up from the ground under an Acadian flag says that this settlement was sparsely

populated before 1755. It was in 1764 that Acadians freed from captivity at Devil's Island in the waters off Halifax began to re-settle here. They speak French up until the 1960s, and now the people here speak English. Has French been lost here, even in the houses without toilets?

Acadian House Museum is the only possible entry point for a tourist's questions about this community, but on the Saturday at the end of May that I visit it is locked. There are no restaurants in West Chezzetcook, nor any other public venues for interaction with the local population. Three or five years ago, Sam cannot quite recall which, there was a place. The Acadian Tea House is now a green bungalow, indistinct when I drive by it headed in the direction of the mud flats that are visible, but inaccessible, from every part of West Chezzetcook. According to Sam, run-off from the sewage has poisoned the once productive mud.

There is a church here. The church of St. Anselme displays the Acadian flag insignia right under the name on its sign in front of the building.

Villages: Rural and small town

Every Acadian place that I visit holds population dispersion characteristics in common. In particular, these are communities with small populations. They are typically located at some distance from an urban centre, far enough away that regular commuting to the city for work is unlikely.

In this study, I use the word "village" to refer to most of the Acadian geographic communities that I visit. However, there is some degree of variation among the communities within this designation. Population density varies, as do the amenities available for the population and those who visit.

A fundamental characteristic of all the areas I visit is that they are rural. The notion of “rural” is here intended to underline the overall presentation of place among all the communities taken together. That a community is rural, however, should be further specified. It is not a *point finale* because there is a great deal of variation, ambiguity, and even some disagreement on the matter of defining the rural. On issues concerning Canadian demographics, researchers tend to turn to Statistics Canada not only for its facts and figures, but also for the way the organization defines its variables and parameters. In this case, that Statistics Canada provides a definition for the notion of rural does not come as the final clarification, but rather as an example of the way “rural” is defined according to specific purposes.

Statistics Canada classifies those communities with a population between 1000 and 9999 as “small town” (Statistics Canada, 1998: 2). Communities with a population of 999 and under are classified as “rural.” In addition, the community in question must be “outside the commuting zones of larger urban centres—specifically, outside Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs)” (Statistics Canada, 1998: 2). The Statistics Canada definition of “rural and small town,” therefore, is directly linked to the function of Statistics Canada. The central organizing activity of Statistics Canada is the Census, from which all the statistics, analyses, bulletins, and reports flow. “Rural” is, for Statistics Canada, defined in structural terms related to the Census.

Instrumentation and Research Techniques

Richardson succinctly summarizes the sentiment of the last decade among qualitative researchers toward instrumentation:

Qualitative researchers commonly speak of the importance of the individual researcher's skills and aptitudes. The researcher – rather than the survey, the questionnaire or the census tape – is the “instrument.” The more honed the researcher, the better the possibility of excellent research (Richardson and Adams St. Pierre, 2005: 960).

In ethnographic study, the fieldworker is the research instrument (Richardson, 1997: 88; Wolcott, 1998: 43).

Wolcott suggests that the researcher tailor her techniques to what she can effectively use in the field (1999: 73). I have combined his notion with the idea that people, in general, and me particularly, should work to our strengths. Rather than working to improve those research skills that we are weakest in, work to improve what we are already good at doing. In fieldwork, concentrate on those methods that are not only the most appropriate, but also those that I am best at using. Working to my research strengths, I have a greater likelihood of actually producing a finished project at the same time that I can continue to refine some useful field research skills.

What are these skills? Foremost is relationship-building, which includes the formal skills present in interviewing of all kinds. Going to Nova Scotia, my first objective and my hope was that I could get to talk to a few key people and establish relationships with them. The ideal would be to meet in each community at least one person with whom I could begin a long series of conversations. These would be the key informants, people who are so important to the research because of their insight and knowledge about the community in which they live.

Related to building research relationships for me are the twin efforts of promotion and community relations. These are used to enhance the opportunities for sharing relationships to develop. The idea is that as more people in the community find out

about the research project underway in their midst, there will be a greater likelihood that someone I approach will have already encountered some information about this research. In that case, my overture for their thoughts will in a sense be validated by a wider presence in the community.

In order to encourage dialogue about my research, and to inform people in the community of what I was doing, I sent out media releases about my work. I sent or hand-delivered media releases at times that corresponded with my stay in particular communities. So, while I was staying in Inverness to study Chéticamp and Isle Madame, I sent media releases to the local newspaper and radio station (see Appendix eight). I did the same while I was staying in Yarmouth to examine Clare and Argyle (see Appendix nine).

The promotional effort resulted in an encouraging amount of interest in this study. I was interviewed on three radio stations: CJLS, the English station in Yarmouth that broadcasts throughout Clare and Argyle; CIFA, the French station in Clare that broadcasts to Clare and Argyle; and CKJM, the French station in Chéticamp. The weekly newspapers in Yarmouth and in Inverness, both of which have distribution in the surrounding Acadian communities, both ran the media release.

The media effort was a method to introduce myself in communities where I would be a familiar yet unknown face. In subsequent conversations, I found that people who lived in the communities in which I was interested had often heard of the work that I was doing. In restaurants where I then personally introduced myself, I was met with interest and recognition. The promotion of the research in this way was a useful method for introducing myself into communities, especially when I did not have a great deal of time.

I am very encouraged with the results of promotion as a research strategy. There were people who, when I approached them about this project, told me that they had read about it in the paper or heard about it on the radio. I did not have to do as much work at constructing the legitimacy of my project and myself among individuals who already knew something about what I was doing. Promotion was an effective way of reducing the time that I had to spend lowering the barriers of suspicion and confusion that are typical in the initial contact with informants and institutions. Thus, it was an effective means of encouraging informants and institutions (restaurants, museums) to participate, and to do so more quickly than would otherwise be likely.

Procedures

In my promotion, my conversations with informants, and in my other research methods, my focus for the process went to gathering the richest information in the time I had available. I would return to the villages, and continue some of the friendships that I began in the summer of 2003. The procedures were primarily focused, however, on the fieldwork of that summer.

In the field, I adopted a questioning gaze while spending time in a number of appropriate locales. While frequenting certain restaurants and chatting with the staff, I was able not only to observe and discuss, but also to come to friendly terms with people in the villages where I worked. The central methods for gathering data – participant observation, unobtrusive observation, interviewing, and archival research – were made my own as I eased myself into places with familiarity first.

While my idea had been to focus exclusively on restaurants, I found that once I was in a community, other venues often opened up for me where I could examine food

and culture, as well as make good contacts with informants. My tactic was, where appropriate, to first locate restaurants in which to eat. I would then frequent the restaurant in order to meet the staff or patrons there. After I made contact, I would tell the staff and/or managers about my research and encourage relationships to develop, or not, from that point.

In choosing the restaurants where I wanted to go, there were several factors I considered. First, I wanted restaurants that have an Acadian menu or that serve items recognizably inspired by Acadian alimentary tradition. The restaurant had also to be in an area that allowed for patrons from both the local Acadian population and tourists from outside the area. This meant that the restaurant must be in an extant Acadian region that is also promoted as a tourist destination. There were restaurants in Middle East Pubnico, for example, that I did not visit because hardly a tourist ever goes into them.

I began my research in each and every area of the province by going out to eat. In Chéticamp, for example, my first meal was at Le Restaurant Acadien. I had my two children with me in Chéticamp as a bus tour was pulling into the restaurant. We stopped and went in. It was a fairly typical meal, although I was attentive about my surroundings in a new way. It was as if my senses were all asked to participate as I become aware of the smells of vegetable oil heating in a deep-fryer, and chicken, coming from the kitchen. I took in the blue walls and stained wood, décor that clashed slightly with the darker blue of the women's 'traditional' Acadian uniforms. Conversations around me I heard in a stir; the one to my left and a bit behind me, an older couple, eating fricot and barely speaking to one another at all. When they do it is in hushed French. Almost across the restaurant, four women at a table are throwing their heads back laughing. The servers speak to each other in French, and to me as well.

I continue to return to Le Restaurant Acadien on many occasions, until they begin to recognize me. Then, I introduce myself to some of the wait staff. We begin to have conversations about Acadian food and about the restaurant. Eventually, I meet the servers, the kitchen staff and the manager.

Each restaurant in every community was similar. I began my work on each one with a period of “hanging out.” By becoming a familiar face, I could then begin conversations that introduced my project and invited people to talk with me.

With eating out so much, I also got to know a good deal about the local restaurant scene. This came in handy. I talked about food from particular restaurants with people in the community, in other restaurants, and in other communities.

Eating out is not the only thing that I do. There are, in fact, times when I think that I cannot eat for a few days. The foods that are sold as Acadian in restaurants are ‘heavy.’ (Later, when I work in restaurants, I learn that restaurant food in general is created to be very tasty, which translates in high fat and salt content.) I feel full beyond completion on too many occasions. But, since it is my job to be in the restaurant, as a participant observer in the dining room, I eat.

In between my visits to restaurants, I spend time in other parts of the community. In Chéticamp, I discover a museum called La Pirogue that becomes a great source of information, support, and friendship. I walk around the communities, going into stores and enjoying the sunshine. I encounter other people on the street, and become aware of who was local. I believe that I can also tell who is visiting, although I do not test that hypothesis. I visit churches and events organized by people in the village. Everywhere I go, I smile at people in the hopes that we could greet and begin a conversation.

There are often times when I take notes during my time in the village. This I sometimes do in the corners of cafés or coffee shops. I take notes in Tim Hortons on several occasions. More often, though, I sit on a park bench or go sit on the rocks with the sunshine bright on the page of my notebook.

Taking notes while in restaurants seems to me to be very conspicuous. It conveys the idea that I am watching every move in the restaurant, and recording it. Even if I *am* intently watching what happens in the restaurant, I prefer a method of examination that is subtle. I rarely take notes in the restaurants, except in cafés on rare occasions. I also do not take notes when I interview people. I prefer unobtrusive recording methods to using voice recorders or note-taking. Conversation, I have found time and again, works better without the reminders of research present. How many times in past interviews have I turned off the recorder only to continue the conversation into its most gripping and poignant parts?

The unobtrusive 'recording' that I use is my memory. I realize that there is a whole quagmire that some will want to explore here. However, allow for this: the idea of filtering the words and meanings of others through my memory is not out of step with the way I am offering this dissertation. It is a narrative I am creating. Through my experience working in radio for three years, I have developed oral and memory techniques for interviewing that allow me to recall a good deal of my research. Also, I tried to take notes very regularly. In a strange twist, you will find that owing to my preference for orality in research there are not many direct quotations from the field. While I do recall what people said, to recall what they said verbatim is another matter.

Once in the Acadian communities, I expand the research beyond restaurants as sites of inquiry to include other tourist attractions and sites of local cultural expression.

In Chéticamp, St. Joseph du Moine, Pubnico, and West Chezzetcook I go to museums. I attend cultural festivals in Pomquet, Wedgeport, Chéticamp, Sainte Anne du Ruisseau, Pointe d'Eglise, Isle Madame, and West Pubnico. In Quinan, Sainte Anne du Ruisseau, Grand Pré, and Pubnico I go to historical sites. I visit beaches, parks, wharves, streets, and stores where I think there could be an opportunity to witness cultural expression in the meeting of everyday life and tourism.

After the Nova Scotia fieldwork experience, I am comfortable with my knowledge of restaurant dining rooms. I feel that I have not, however, seen much of what happens in the restaurant kitchens. I want to understand how the kitchen functions, as well as its relationship to the rest of the restaurant. In the spring of 2004, I begin working in restaurant kitchens in the town where I usually live. I work first in a bar and grill where French cooking is *de rigueur*, then in a gourmet food shop focused on French gastronomy, and, finally, in a fine Italian restaurant. In these venues, I develop a deeper and more thorough understanding of the structural challenges and the internal functioning of restaurants. I find a new respect, too, for the people who work in commercial kitchens.

Based in this experience of field work, in the pages that follow, I tell stories about the Acadian food that I ate, how it illuminates *acadienité*, and the people implicated in its sharing. This dissertation offers a story of communication – contemporary *acadienité* linking people in time and space – through food.

My Acadian home: a note

Two related facts of my family life are worth noting for the ways that they intertwined with my life as a researcher undertaking my first instance of fieldwork. First, my family

populates regions of Nova Scotia. The family of my birth lives in Southwest Nova Scotia, a region where I wanted to spend considerable time in fieldwork. My partner's family lives in Cape Breton, close enough to Chéticamp that living with them made the research in both Chéticamp and Isle Madame feasible. Second, I brought my two young sons with me into the field.

Before heading out into the field, I had already read four times Anderson's account of her rite of passage into the field of Anthropology, *First Fieldwork* (Anderson, 1990). I was looking for hints on what to do in the field as well as what to expect there. Anderson's account was an attempt to demystify fieldwork:

My motive throughout is to convey the seldom published side of fieldwork: to share with the reader on an intimate level some dimensions of the personal and professional sides of first fieldwork, which, despite some fine and relevant books, is inadequately documented. Some sensitive ethnographies make helpful reference to the difficulties and challenges inherent in first fieldwork, but for the most part by the time they are written, often five to ten years afterwards, the stories are told impersonally; the real legacy has been forgotten or subtly reprogrammed in the mind of the researcher. That this should be the case is defensible and not surprising. The day to day unvarnished script of fieldwork rarely lends itself to the level of abstraction appropriate to published accounts of it (Anderson, 1990: 4).

My motive here is to warn you, if you are considering fieldwork, that it will not be what you expected no matter how much reading you do beforehand.

Anderson has her family – one husband, one daughter, and another child on the way – with her as she ventures out into a community unknown to her in Denmark. I am no anthropologist; my fieldwork was in a place that I knew. However, along with the ethnographic tactic, I shared with Anderson the factor of spawned family accompanying me into the field. I was absent the partner, though, since mine was in no position to

spend several months touring through Nova Scotia. My children, on the other hand, were content to follow me wherever I wanted to go.



Photo 3.3: Mother and son research team – Archie (3 years old) and I at a Chéticamp museum

It was only when I returned from the fieldwork and re-read it that the book's subtitle grasped me in a way that made me think that I, too, had endured a rite of passage: *The misadventures of an Anthropologist*. I have no desire to lessen the joys and the very sustenance afforded me by my family, both birth and spawned. What I mean is that I will not be going into great detail here of the trials and tribulations that we seemingly survived, my family and I, due to my fieldwork. (This personal foray would be more appropriate to another format, perhaps a movie of the week.) That I use the words "trials and tribulations" should be telling enough.

I do mention just a few minor examples of the more personal side of ethnographic fieldwork below only to inform you that fieldwork has difficulties you may

not read about, along with its great rewards. One day soon I suspect I shall have the opportunity to conduct another fieldwork-based project, and I happily will do it again.

While in Southwest Nova Scotia, I opted to stay with my mother, Lorraine, in Yarmouth (see Figure 1.1). In her one-bedroom apartment, my two children and I slept in Lorraine's bedroom while she spent nights on the couch in the living room. (It was actually more of a loveseat.) One thing that I should tell you about Lorraine lest you think me more insensitive than I really am is that she regularly sleeps on the couch and has for years, even when it is not necessary. It seemed alright to keep to this arrangement for a time. I was not eager to keep my dear mother on the couch for weeks on end, though, despite her great and terrific hospitality.

Lorraine's apartment is in a senior's building. This type of living arrangement is quite common in Nova Scotia, where buildings are built by cooperatives or one or another level of government and the apartments subsidized by a governing body. These are well-kept affordable accommodations, which also allow the residents camaraderie and on-site amenities such as nursing visits. You can see that it is excellent for seniors. I brought in to live there two boys, ages one and three. Archie and Angus would run, cry, and laugh, all with the unbridled *joie de vivre* appropriate to their ages.

Archie and Angus were part of the research "team," in a way. Children are ice-breakers and I found that people were generally keen to engage the boys, thereby beginning a conversation that I could then continue. In times when I found it useful to go out on my own, however, the boys needed to be in the care of someone else.

Lorraine eagerly assisted on many occasions, but her health had its limitations. A few years earlier, she had suffered a broken back while lifting a ten-pound bag of

potatoes at the grocery store. A twenty-pound, wiggly one-year old would land her in traction, I feared.

My sister-in-law, Danette, offered to help. We worked out a plan where Danette and Lorraine looked after the boys together on several occasions, giving me a chance to go out on my own.

Tending to dear Archie and sweet Angus on the spawned branch of my family was interspersed with the birth branch of family vying for my time. Father, mother, brother, niece, great-niece, nephew, grandmother, various aunts and uncles, not to mention friends: all these people needed to be seen and wanted to see Archie and Angus, who typically live 1500 kilometres away. The summer is when these visits take place; it has been this way since 1991, the first summer that I returned to Yarmouth after being away at university. My family and my friends would not wait to visit with us simply because I was doing some sort of work.

There you have it: a glimpse hinting at the personal context within which I conducted research in the field of Nova Scotia's Acadian communities.

Chapter 4

BAIE SAINTE-MARIE

Ave Maris Stella
Dei Mater Alma
Atque Semper Virgo
Felix Coeli Porta

**-Acadian anthem; also known as a
plainsong hymn from antiquity**

Home is different. There is no place like home. With the tranquility of feeling that at home I understand the exigencies of action, relaxation becomes possible. At my grandmother's side, I am comforted. This is where I begin.

The Cape View Diner

My grandmother's restaurant stands on a cliff overlooking the Bay of Fundy on the Nova Scotia side. She is known around Baie Sainte-Marie as "Millie" and the restaurant is called the Cape View Diner. It faces North toward the road that winds down to Mavillette Beach, set back from it by a small perimeter of annuals and lawn. Wagon wheels bound the lawn, for some inexplicable reason. These are painted red and white to match the restaurant's exterior. Anyone who comes in to eat or to have a drink makes their way to the picture windows that are the veritable eyes of the building. Booths always fill up first, like at any restaurant, and these ones have the added advantage of a view of the cape.

The large windows make their way along the west wall and around the north west corner of the building, giving diners in the booths under the windows an unbounded vista of the sand dunes below, a lighthouse jutting out from a distant point of land, and, best of all, the rolling Atlantic Ocean.

In the summer, children will break from their play on the beach to wander up by road or by climbing over the sand dunes, up the rock cliff, and scurrying over the field on the western side of the Diner. They'll come in groups of three or four in the front door to buy a scoop of ice cream my grandmother will put in a cone for them, a twenty-five cent bag of chips from the rack beside the cash register, or a pack of cigarettes from the display case for their mother. Still in their bathing suits with bright beach towels draped around their shoulders, they spread sand and salt wherever they walk.

I never use the front door. Our door is around back where the typical restaurant detritus shares its surroundings with bits of family life. An oblong propane tank is neighbour to a small doghouse, sometimes inhabited, sometimes not. Drums of used cooking oil foreground the hothouse brimming with tomatoes and cucumbers. By evening, the restaurant itself will shadow part of the barn. But, from the barn's converted top floor where Grammie, my grandfather Daly, and their youngest son Randy live, I'll still be able to see the setting sun.

Every restaurant has one of these doors, where people who are expected or accepted to see the facility's inner workings pass through. The staff and delivery people are obliged to enter this way. For family and friends, however, the service door is a portal to elevated status. Entering it is a performative act that places you among the inner circle at this establishment.

The service door faces a small gorge out back just a few feet away that carries a stream of fresh water down to the ocean. More than once I tried to make it to the beach by walking in that gorge, but it gets too tricky as it nears the waterfront. It becomes slippery as it deepens closest to the ocean. I found the rock cliffs no easier to scale from the beachside the one time I tried to make it back up that way. I was stranded in fear. How was I to know with my eyes shut tight that I was just inches from the sandy beach? I am scared of heights, not exactly something I consider an irrational fear.

There is a boardwalk rigged up for us to go over the stream and beyond it into the field to pick the berries that Grammie puts in July's Wild Strawberry Shortcake. Next month, there will be blueberries further back in the bushes near the woods. She will let me come with her to pick blueberries for the pies she makes at the Cape View Diner.

Sublime in its location, the Cape View Diner is a picture of simplicity and hard work. Fresh ingredients and physical labour characterize our closeness to our sources of food. At least this is how it has been for her people here. The ocean and the fields are right there. Through our efforts to tend and to harvest them, the sea and the land supply a great measure of our sustenance and our livelihoods. And, in 1965 when Millie decides to open a restaurant, she begins creating a menu that offers some measure of what she knows. The Cape View Diner represents her alimentary life and will become her means in life.

The restaurant is a representation of foodways and habits, both for local patrons and for visitors. Its location on the French (sometimes called "Acadian") shore means that there is a decent supply of local traffic, people with a similar notion of what is good to eat (see figure 1.1). It is a rural area, though, and the number of patrons can reflect that during the week. The coming of the tourist traffic during the summer months,

particularly Americans who cross over the Bay from Bar Harbour to Yarmouth on a ship known as the Princess of Acadia, is welcome and necessary for the economic survival of the business. There is some need to cater to the dining whims, desires, and needs of these visitors.

There are two menu items that I think are really there just for the tourists. It may at first seem odd to think it, but I would argue that lobster is a tourist dish. It is strange to think this because lobster is very highly regarded among people in this area of Nova Scotia. It is, in my lifetime, a special occasion item that can be a topic of conversation just for having dined on it, whether the occasion is truly special or not.

A number of factors transpire against the lobster as a regular feature of dining out for locals. First, the shellfish, when in season, is quite readily available and easy to prepare at home. (The knowledge of how to prepare lobster is widespread in Southwestern Nova Scotia.) This combined with its extreme price makes lobster less desirable in a restaurant setting.

Second, the season for harvesting lobster in the southern parts of Nova Scotia is the cold winter months, beginning with December. The Cape View Diner is not open, at least not to diners, after October. Lobster served in the summer is either canned lobster meat or fresh lobster harvested from another place. It is of an 'inferior' quality. That is to say, locals unfavourably compare lobster from northern Nova Scotia to the hard-shelled, meaty creatures available during their own lobster-fishing season. In the 1960s and 1970s, eating in season is typical for most rather than simply the preference of gastronomes. Why eat the most expensive thing on the menu when you know it will not be as good as it should be, when you can prepare it easily yourself at home, and when it is readily available at the height of its tastiness?

The second item at the Cape View Diner that is there for the tourists is the Fisherman's Platter. Again, pricey-ness is a discouraging factor for people who can purchase haddock, scallops, and clams readily and prepare them at home. More of a factor with the Fisherman's Platter is its status in the gustatory offerings as a sampler plate. Many cuisines have a sampler like this, a poo-poo platter of the seafood restaurant. It appeals to some indecisive locals, surely, but for people eager to try as much of the seafood as they can at one sitting the seafood platter is a tempting offer.

Promoted as a seafood restaurant, there are many things missing from the Cape View Diner's menu that are typical of Acadian eating habits. At home, including in my grandmother's home, we eat a great deal of game, particularly rabbit and deer (haughtily called 'venison' now). There is also the occasional porcupine, duck, pheasant, bear, or moose. From the water my father and grandmother catch eels, smelts, flounder, and trout that we all enjoy. I pick periwinkles and mussels, and on many occasions dig clams with my father on the expansive mudflats.

None of these gatherings are ever offered to patrons at the Cape View Diner, at least not to those people limited to ordering from the menu. A good friend patronizing the diner at the right moment might be lucky enough to find himself going home with a jar of pickled periwinkles. People we know are gathered together in the dining area and throughout the kitchen when we have a "big feed" of eels. The industrial fans necessary to provide an exhaust to the deep fryers are about hearty enough to dispel the stench of boiling eels. The restaurant is closed to the public today.

There are clams on the diner's menu. These are not the freshly harvested shellfish that my father brings home some afternoons. The clams used for clams and chips are slightly processed: Millie has purchased them already shucked and in gallon

jars. When an order for them comes in, Daley intuitively retrieves the right amount of clams with a large cooking fork from the jar and moves them into the bowl of batter he made earlier in the day. He then transfers the soft mollusks, again by fork, to another large bowl, this one filled with perfectly seasoned bread crumbs. After their tumble, Daley scoops the well-coated clams into a basket, gives them a gentle shake, and deftly drops them into the fryer basket. The fryer crackles as a few bits fall into the boiling fat, and then Daley dunks the basket and its contents.

While the clams dance in the oil, Daley prepares other orders. The clams must stay in his mind, though, so they are cooked just so. When cooked, they should find a plate quickly. Food, whether cooked or waiting to be, cannot sit in its basket above the fryer less its texture be degraded. He gets the timing just right, so that when the clams are done, they are taken up, plated with French fries and tartar sauce that Millie prepared earlier in the week, and set down next to the companion bowl of seafood chowder. Order up.

Community

I have felt, at various times, that I am part of a community. Those times when I feel like I am part of a group of people who share ideas, plans, problems and solutions are the times when I am most active within the imagined community. I am not just a part of a group, but an active contributor.

I will tell you if you ask me that I am an Acadian woman. Glimpses came to me while in Nova Scotia doing this research of what it is like to have the sense of belonging to an Acadian community. Yet, ruefully, this is a sense that I do not have; at least, not

so far. I am an Acadian woman who longs for the ease with which some people I encounter communicate their *acadienité*.

For me, claiming an Acadian identity came as an adult. As I gaze back at childhood, I now see someone who grew up Acadian. As a child, however, I would not have articulated who I was in this way. That consciousness did not exist for me. I doubt that I even associated the word “Acadian,” with my family. It was not until I was in my early twenties that I recognized that the people known as Acadians were, in fact, my people. Acadian history was my history. It took several years even after realizing that I shared history and a way of life with Acadians to claim what for me is a political, social, and cultural affiliation with them. I am Acadian.

Listening to radio CIFA, as I drive inland to my ancestral territory in Quinan, the French-speaking host, Dave, sometimes makes jokes or speaks with anger. Between sets of accordion and guitar music, Dave takes long detours in soliloquy. I understand only part of his words. His drawl, syntax, and vocabulary are familiar – he could be my father for these – but still hard to follow. The linguistic divide marks us; so much of the French that I learn is Québécois.

Should I feel connection with this fellow Acadian? Even when I catch what Dave says, it fails to move me to the emotional extents of laughter or anger. At most, I feel compassionate sadness for these people (my people?) who endured so much.

The separation of Dave and myself is constituted by more than linguistic differences. If I am self-conscious about claiming to be Acadian, Dave is fortified by his identity. He speaks excitedly about the upcoming Acadian festival as if it will be a fun, entertaining event; as if this Acadian festival is another in a long line of Acadian festivals held in his community. It is that. I approach it as foundational. Exciting, yes; but for me

it is exciting as an opportunity to witness being Acadian, maybe even to be Acadian. We convey disparate emotion and attitudes toward this event we will share. Dave and I are set apart by this, and we are this way because we are apart.

Who is "Acadian"? There are those who, by virtue of the geographical area in which they live as well as certain shared traditions claim to be Acadian. Many of the long-standing families of Pubnico, Mavillette, or Chéticamp in Nova Scotia would be among this group. What if the family of one of these Acadians has only been in Nova Scotia since the mid-nineteenth century, long after the dissolution of *L'Acadie*?

Alexis Vacon, the first Vacon (Vaccon) to settle in Quinan, Nova Scotia, was born in Marseilles, France (d'Entremont, 1984: 20). There is evidence to suggest that he came to Nova Scotia as a young man, perhaps evading wars at home. He then spent several years working on the sea before finally settling in Nova Scotia. Alexis settled in 1864 in Quinan, what is today the only extant inland Acadian community in Nova Scotia.

I believe that the majority of Vacons from Nova Scotia would consider themselves to be Acadian. "Vacons" are one of the families included in the official family reunions at the 2004 Acadian World Congress. That suggests that the family is considered, at least in Nova Scotia, to be Acadian.

Other family names in my family tree date back to pre- or post-Deportation Acadian settlement in what is now Nova Scotia. My father's surname, by a quirk of our family tree, is actually his mother's maiden name. My paternal grandfather is Muise. My maternal father and mother were Trahan and Theriault, respectively. Are these families more Acadian than the Vacons? Does one become Acadian, by birth, family name, cultural practice, geography, or history? Further, are there those who can 'authentically' call themselves Acadian? What about those who share some part of my history, and

who have similar cultural expressions, yet are geographically remote from *l'Acadie*. Are they "Acadian?"³⁴ Still others have Acadian ancestors, yet no longer experience first-hand what they would imagine to be an Acadian way of life. What is their relationship to *acadienité*?

I enjoy the accordion music Dave is playing on his radio show. I wonder at the idea that in these houses here in Quinan are people also listening.

After being away from home for nearly as long as I lived there, which amounts to all of my adult life, the home that I remember is no longer real. It is arrogance to think that after these fourteen years, I still understand what is important to the people in Southwestern Nova Scotia.

Being in this part of the province, however, it feels familiar. I am, no doubt, out of touch with the latest developments, political trends, or municipal squabbles. What I feel that I still know is the way that the geography and history of the place marks lives. I feel connected to Yarmouth and Clare, in particular, as if I know the people and the places.

It is neither by design nor purely coincidental that I have not developed the research relationships here that I set out hoping to create. My inquisitiveness is met with interest and regarded with expectation. I talk to Dave – he interviews me for his show on CIFA – and many others from Pointe d'Eglise to Yarmouth to Middle East Pubnico and points in between. That I rarely translate my meetings with these very interesting people into further interactions is a function of my fear of being revealed. If I know these people, I suppose that they also know me.

³⁴ Those who settled in Louisiana after the Deportation were numerous enough to forge a new group identity: Cajun. Historical information on the Cajun relationship to the Acadian identity is readily available. However, what is the present-day relationship to Acadian identity of those who re-settled in smaller groups in Quebec,

Evangeline Trail

Paroisse Sainte-Marie is about 80 kilometers north of Sainte-Anne. Even though these two parishes are within the bounds of the two large Acadian regions in Southwest Nova Scotia, there is no direct route to drive between them. The only way to move between Argyle and Clare is via Yarmouth. By highway or road, I have to go into Yarmouth from Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau before heading to Pointe de l'Église.

The drive from Yarmouth to Pointe de l'Église takes about forty-five minutes on the old route one. If I am running late, I can take the highway. But, the old road is preferable since that way I get to drive through all the communities of the Acadian Shore. The Acadian communities of Argyle, like Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau, Wedgeport, Quinan, and the Pubnicos, are spread around and interrupted by Anglophone villages. From Salmon River along the line of Route One hugging the coast of the Bay of Fundy as far as Pointe de l'Église, every community is Acadian.

This route is also known as part of the Evangeline Trail. There is tension between this route and the highway. The Trail is meant to bring people onto the route along the Acadian Shore. But, the highway system in Nova Scotia directs people away from these routes. The highway, which was completed between Yarmouth and Halifax only in the last decade, is a more expedient route between centres. It is a convenience for travelers and for those who live in the province. People in Mavillette or Pointe de l'Église use the highway to go to Yarmouth.

Communities such as those along the Evangeline Trail benefit directly from visiting tourists only when they can be lured to these alternate routes and trails. There is

France, and down the eastern seaboard of the United States? The same question may be asked for those

rarely commercial development along a highway. On the Evangeline Trail I shop at Frenchy's, a popular used clothing store chain. I stop at Comeau's Farm Market to buy some dried fish. I get a soft ice cream from a little white stand.

I am struck by what is not along this beautiful drive. Where are the heritage sites? There is no place where this region gets interpreted. The Acadian Shore is short on facts and figures, interactive displays, pictures, artwork, handicrafts. There is no museum. There are, however, several large churches that do welcome visitors. The churches are attractions in and of themselves. One of the churches, the 'Eglise Sainte-Marie, boasts of being the largest and tallest wooden church in North America. It is well-kept and a beautiful sight along the Evangeline Trail.

It is the twelfth of July, 2003. In community after community, the Acadian flag is flying. It is on official buildings along with Canadian or Nova Scotia flags, all in the standard flag size. Flags just a fraction of that magnitude are stuck in the lawns of some homes. Others have flagpoles that raise the blue, white, red, and yellow emblem high into the wind.

Ave Maris Stella. Dei Mater Alma, atque semper Virgo, Felix caeli porta.

The Star of the Sea is chosen as the Acadian Flag at the Second Acadian National Convention in 1884. This bit of symbolism from the Church is used now as a symbol of pride in our Acadian heritage. It decorates homesteads, it is printed on t-shirts, and emblazoned on souvenir items.

In 1994, I bought my first Acadian flag item, a t-shirt with the flag and the slogan "Il y a toujours Acadie," on it. At a mobile souvenir shop in Pointe de l'Église this

who have more recently relocated.

summer, I buy an Acadian flag bandana for Archie. He does not like it on his head, so Angus ends up wearing it. Over the course of research in Nova Scotia, I also purchase a full-size Acadian flag, a pennant-sized Acadian flag, and a coffee mug with the Acadian flag and the family name "Vacon" on it. At an Acadian mask-making workshop, the mask I make has the Acadian flag for skin.

The drive along the Acadian shore lets me place where the restaurants are in which I will be eating. There is a Chinese restaurant, Bamboo Gardens, which I will skip. In Meteghan, around the middle of the Acadian Shore, I find a Tim Hortons. After this, even when I take the highway route, I get off or on at the exit that allows me to swing by this Tim Hortons for a medium double cream.

This day, I am on my way to another festival, *Le Festival Acadien de Clare*. All week, whenever I tune into the Acadian radio station, CIFA, I hear the eponymous song written for this festival. The announcers are talking about what is happening with the festival. The community station's attention to the event enlarges it, makes it seem grander, a bigger celebration. I am part of the festival just by listening to the radio, as I drive my car by the lumberjack event.

At the farmer's market produced for the festival I encounter the proprietor of La Baie Râpure. His rappie pie is sold frozen in grocery and corner stores all over this part of the province as well as in Halifax. I buy it, during the three years that I live in Halifax, at my local Sobey's store. Herman LeBlanc has a kiosk at the market selling rappie pie. It is four dollars for a small rectangular tin of clam rappie pie and a little less if you want chicken. He is giving out generous samples of La Baie chicken rappie pie.

One of the customers, an older man, has a complaint about the salt content of the rappie pie. Herman says that it is a balancing act, that he uses salted green onions

in the mix, and that sometimes it comes out saltier than others. I think it is a probable and polite answer.

During my time working in restaurant kitchens, I realize that everyone is a critic. On an evening when the chef prepares six veal chops in more or less the same way, one of them is sent back. The client says it is not properly cooked. The chef gets accolades from the other five patrons. People who cook need to be sure of themselves. They make the food the best way they know. Someone will say it is no good. Food is subjective that way.

Herman must believe in his rappie pie. He needs to be able to stand there in front of a client and have a reasonable conversation about the rappie pie. Salt is just one of many conversation points over which people who make and eat rappie pie haggle.

Salted green onions are another point of entry into conversation. I cannot say that I remember as a child having salted green onions in our refrigerator. I cannot recall their presence at all. Today, they are called for in many Acadian recipes, such as La Baie Rapure's chicken rappie pie.

At another table of wares across the market, a vendor is selling 500ml canning jars filled with salted green onions. For five dollars, you can take home the dingy green soggy onion-tops to use in stews, with seafood, or anywhere where the flavour can be enhanced in its middle ranges. Salt augments the flavours that are already present in the food. The tops of the onions fortify and round out the food, although the depth of the dish is not built in the same way as with the white of an onion. For the ingredients typically used in Acadian cooking, this makes culinary sense. Potatoes, meats, and fats are already heavy. There is a certain sturdiness about their flavour. Adding some

interest to the top and middle of the range of tastes, as the green of the onion does, creates a more palatable dish. The flavours are brightened as well as enhanced.

From users of this seasoning, I learn that salted green onion is not the same as using salt and green onion that were not previously combined. There is some manner of reaction between the salt and the onion that creates a seasoning all its own, I am told.

My father is the one that I turn to for more advice on this matter of salted green onions. Larry tells me that to make them, you begin with a lot of clean green onions cut into small bits. To this, you add a large quantity of salt. Typically, I cannot get him to confirm what the quantities of salt to onion should be (see Salted Green Onions recipe in Appendix five). He agrees that it adds a pleasant and unique quality to many of the meats, potatoes, and seafood dishes that he likes to make.

At the market, I share a serving of chicken rappie pie with the kids. We chat with Herman about rappie pie and about my research. He tells me that rappie pie is a traditional food that he wants to share.

A few days later, I meet Herman in Little Brook along Baie Sainte Marie. As I ease the van down the dirt driveway leading to his factory building, I am moving closer to the ocean. The Bay is glistening out beyond a field of tall waving grass. There, in the midst of this glorious postcard is a squat building covered in white siding. A faded sign indicates that this is La Baie Râpure.

I park off to the side of the lot. There is no need to rush since I have arrived with a few minutes to spare. I let the view and the breeze affect my attitude and reach for the door to enter Herman's factory.

Inside, I can walk forward down a corridor or turn right to a small refrigerated counter. I wait at the corner of the counter for someone to come out from wherever they are behind the door. After a moment, a woman emerges and greets me in French. I ask if Herman is around which prompts her to yell through the door for him.

Looking a little disheveled, Herman says hello and asks if I would like a cup of coffee. He looks for a clean mug. We talk awhile about the location and how it came to be that he was involved in this business.

“My father started the rappie pie factory twenty years ago,” Herman tells me. “He was from Little Brook. I moved away and did other things. When he passed away, I took over La Baie. That was about fifteen years ago.”

We are sitting at the end of the corridor. It is an office-like area, with various papers around. There are windows from which we can see the Bay. The chairs are uncomfortable but the conversation is good. Herman tells me that he thinks of the rappie pie business as a real niche market. Even so, there are three other producers serving the market. Evalina's is the upstart. Then, there is Râpure acadien just down the road in Pointe de l'Eglise. In Pubnico, there is D'éon's. When I mention that the nearest competitor has painted on their delivery truck “the one with the meat in it,” Herman is reluctant to get backed into saying anything negative about his competition. “It's their slogan. It's fine with me,” he says backing out of any hint of confrontation.

At the front entrance, the door opens and a thin man enters. He is looking for some rappie pie. Words are exchanged in French, the transaction is quickly completed. He goes away with what he came in for. In the front counter, there are also frozen blocks of very white potato available for sale. These are to make your own rappie pie at home. Rarely does anyone start anymore with peeling potatoes. These blocks cut

down on so much of the labour of making a rappie pie that my mother can make one by herself now, even as she reaches seventy years old. The prepared potato blocks are available in two sizes, one for five dollars and the larger one for nine. The blocks contain just potato, with the water already squeezed out, and sulphite. The addition of sulphite deletes the effects of oxygen on the resting potato, keeping the mash white and significantly cutting down on the tension of making a rappie pie. The need to rush through the grating and draining of the potatoes and into the addition of chicken broth is gone.

Some people, Herman says, say that the sulphite makes the rappie pie taste funny. "My new product is a sulphite-free potato," he explains. He shows me the frozen block of potato that is sulphite-free. I do not enquire how he gets it to stay white, but it is not noticeably any different in tone than the block next to it with the added sulphite.

This is a niche market. Most people do not like rappie pie. Even those who are open to the idea of it can be put off by its texture. One girlfriend of mine summed up what so many other people have indicated when she said, "It's like snot." It is greeny-grey, even when the whitest potatoes are used. The texture is unique but my girlfriend's simile is not entirely without merit. That is when it is made well. If there are errors in the methodology or the ingredients, things just get worse.

Yet, for those of us who have grown up with it there is nothing like a rappie pie. There is no substitute. When far from home, I have attempted to find ways to make a rappie pie but to no avail. The tools, the ingredients, the methodology, and the appreciation of rappie pie are all necessary for its success. After years of making rappie pie for her, my girlfriend finally learns to enjoy it. I think that she grows to understand that the reason that I love it is that it is part of me.

As a child, Herman did not like rappie pie. He grew up in various places around Canada, considering himself to be “from” Moncton. His family made rappie pie occasionally, but it was not something that pleased Herman. Now, he is a proponent of rappie pie. He is also a critic, pointing out that the rappie pie that comes from Pubnico is made in a different style than in Clare. “It’s soupy,” he says.

For his own brand, Herman uses russet potatoes from Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. There is a local producer that supplies him with the salted green onions that season the rappie pie. The chicken is brought in already boiled and cut up. This rappie pie factory is an assembly plant, where the rappie pie is packaged and labeled.

I leave Clare and Argyle without buying rappie pie blocks. They need to be kept frozen and I am not sure what the next few days will bring. Ideally, I want to bring some blocks home with me, back to Quebec, so that I can make rappie pie there. The potato blocks are sold in the grocery stores in Yarmouth, so I can buy some another day.

Visiting friends in Wolfville, I am distracted by our fun. During my six years of university in this town I met the women I am spending a few days with now. It is Gay Pride weekend and the parties are plentiful. We go to Halifax for the Pride Parade. At Grand Pré, just ten minutes up the road from Wolfville, Journée acadienne happens without me.

I take Archie to the historic site at Grand Pré at five in the afternoon on Saturday. The site is on either side of a side road. From the parking lot, we choose to go to the other side of the road where I know from prior visits that there is the church and some historic buildings. There is no longer an indigenous population of Acadian people living in Grand Pré. Yet, there is tourism and this afternoon there have been Acadian people all over this ground. I see evidence of this in bits of debris blowing about. Along the

path, twenty or thirty empty tents remain from the afternoon's festivities. Archie and I saunter around the grounds going up to the church, walking among the grasses, and reading an interpretive sign about the dykes. With no one around, it is not very interesting for either of us and we soon decide to move along.

I stop in Wolfville at Tim Hortons for a coffee and a little treat for Archie. What a great surprise to find that Herman is here. Sales of La Baie Râpure were strong this afternoon. He did not sell out, he says, as if that would be the hope. Of course, it would be. He has come two hours with a truckload of his product to sell. Better to leave the product with customers than to have to load it back up in the little cube van and take it home.

Outside Tim's I meet Herman's youngest son. Herman says his business is a "mom and pop" operation. I can relate to that. Typically, the kids are along for the ride. His wife, sitting on the passenger side of the cube van, is along for the ride.

Congrès

Herman LeBlanc tells me that he has a request from the LeBlanc Family Reunion organizing committee to prepare rappie pie. There could be thousands of LeBlanc people attending the reunion at the *Congrès mondial acadien*. This is not the only request for rappie pie that Herman has to fulfill during the Congrès. I think, "What a great and big opportunity!" Herman, from the vantage point of a business operator, sees it differently. At issue is the fact that the festival lasts only two weeks. Does he buy more freezers at a huge capital expense to accommodate the thousands of rappie pies

Congrès mondial acadien

Near the end of August, 2003, the days are already being counted down to a monumental event for the Acadian people here and throughout Nova Scotia: the *Congrès mondial acadien*. It has caught on that there will be 200 000 people coming for the third Acadian World Congress next summer.⁴⁰ In a province of about 15 000 Acadians, that is a huge challenge.⁴¹ No one wonders how the figure has been arrived at. A large number, yes, but not an improbable one. It is the number promoted by the main committee responsible for organizing the entire events schedule of the Congress.

Among those involved in the business of tourism in Chéticamp, I hear no doubt that people will come. Thousands of visitors are expected from Louisiana, France, and other parts of the Acadian diaspora. They traveled to Louisiana in 1999 and to New Brunswick in 1994. They will come to Nova Scotia.

This is, after all, the birthplace of *l'Acadie*. If "*l'Acadie*" was here, now it is wherever there are people who can claim a heritage from that historico-geographical place. This contemporary province as a geographical and historical place, or at least several parts of it, is represented as formative ground for what is now more than geographical, historical, or political. The organizing committee for the Congress releases *Au Bourseau de l'Acadie*, the official song of the 2004 Congrès mondial acadien, in August. Within the anticipation of the Congress I notice the sense that *l'Acadie* is both a geographical reference as well as a state of being that bonds people

⁴⁰ While this is formally counted as the third congress, the 2003 Congrès mondial acadien is really the third *contemporary* congress. The first meeting of representatives from Acadian communities took place in 1880. It was at this meeting that organization for the first Acadian Convention was undertaken. The following year, the first Acadian National Convention took place at Memramcook, New Brunswick (Cimino, 1977: 37). The final one from this period happened in 1937 (Le Blanc, 2003: 101)

together. Bonds of *l'acadie* transgress geography and National political boundaries. It is the ancestral homeland for many, represented as the crèche of our development.

In Chéticamp, the concern is about the sewer. "Will the small towns be able to handle the sewage from a few extra thousand people?" This is Mathias. I think the Congrès is an event over which he will be swooning. "A disaster!" he tells me. "Surely not?" says I, wondering if he is joking with me. His evidence is convincing, at least that the 2004 Congrès mondial acadien is a many-headed beast with which to contend. First, there is the ongoing concern of infrastructure. Along with how to handle the sewage of several thousand visitors, there is the issue of where to put them. The middle of the summer is already a busy time in Chéticamp. "It's already booked for next summer," he exclaims. Mathias says that it would have been more beneficial from the point of view of tourism operators to have the people come during the "shoulder season," say in September or June.

A second difficulty for Mathias has been ceding control for the event. There is an organizing committee based in the political centre of the province, Halifax. From there, the committee plans events like the concert series. "The same weekend of the concert in Chéticamp featuring local talent, there is a concert in Halifax featuring International talent. I'm very proud of our local talent," Mathias is careful to mention. He smiles, certain that I have already realized the planning problem at which he is alluding. "Where do you think the people will go?"

⁴¹ There are approximately 250 000 Acadians living in the Maritime provinces. About ninety percent of them live in New Brunswick, with the others dispersed in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (Boucher, 2005).

Chapter 6

ISLE MADAME & ARGYLE

Two regions of Nova Scotia separated by individualized history and remote geography, Isle Madame and Argyle share many significant traits. Both have communities that were first settled on the shores of the Atlantic before the Deportation. They are the only two extant Acadian communities in Nova Scotia that can make this claim. Arichat on Isle Madame was first settled in 1713. Pubnico, the oldest village still Acadian, was settled in 1653.

At both Isle Madame and Argyle I find a great deal of emphasis on heritage tourism. I find many indicators that the people who live in each area are not only conscious of being Acadian, but feel that it is something to celebrate. Yet, each place manages to also provide for some distinctive local events and attractions that are not specifically related to Acadian identity.

There are signs on Isle Madame and in Argyle that the local people are working at building the tourism infrastructure. New, well-kept buildings are staffed during the summer months by university students who are home on their break. These structures remind me that, like the boardwalk and the fisheries museum in Chéticamp, people plan and negotiate for many months to create such monuments in the hope that the tourism the buildings are meant to encourage will not only showcase their beautiful part of *l'Acadie*, but will also provide an economic boost.

Isle Madame is a cluster of islands off the southeast tip of Cape Breton Island, part of Nova Scotia. In the Nova Scotia tourism trail system, Isle Madame is on the Fleur-de-lis Trail. The two largest communities on Isle Madame are Arichat and Petite-Grat. Along with historical Acadian settlement, the area also attracted Irish immigrants and English settlers.

The communities of Argyle are mostly along the water's edge as well, except for the sole Nova Scotia Acadian inland village of Quinan. The largest Acadian area in the Argyle region of Nova Scotia is the Pubnicos, East Pubnico along the coast and West Pubnico along a tract of land jutting out into the Atlantic Ocean. Saint-Anne-du-Ruisseau is a smaller Acadian village, but one of historical import for Acadian people in the entire Southwestern end of the province.

The areas of Isle Madame and Argyle do not have much in the way of regular routes of communication between them. Relatives occasionally move south from Isle Madame, perhaps marrying someone from the Southwestern part of Nova Scotia. There is some recognition of alimentary traditions in different Acadian regions, but not a great deal of common tradition in the recipes.

Ingredients, on the other hand, are very similar between the Acadian part of Argyle and those of Isle Madame. In fact, the component parts of meals are comparable in all of the Acadian communities I visited, as are the methods of preparation. There is a great reliance on potatoes, which are served in a variety of ways but, notably, are often finely grated before being cooked in a liquid. Other vegetables used regularly tend toward the hearty roots like carrots and turnips, other roots like beets and onions, and flavourings found in the local countryside or in the household garden. Berries and fruits collected from nearby fields are used. Meat has a pride of place over that of fish,

despite the proximity of both Petit-de-Grat on Isle Madame and Pubnico in the Argyle region to the Atlantic Ocean. The meat tends to be cooked in liquid, either by stewing or braising, rather than by roasting or grilling.

Isle Madame

Thirty-five square miles. Forty-three hundred people. But the island's allure is endless: infinite riches in a little room. A land tender with spring green, blazing with autumn crimson, stark black against the white of winter. Branches glittering in sheathings of ice. Low spruce-draped hills, none more than 150 feet high. A shoreline sprinkled with villages...

– Silver Donald Cameron, 1998

The loudest thing to interrupt the quiet is a cricket somewhere behind me. If the other person in this yard is looking for solitude, I may be the one disrupting her. Otherwise, each of us at our very own picnic table, we have found tranquility. My outdoor and public table, spread with papers scribbled with the notes of fieldwork, is a space where I can allow my thoughts to roam quite unburdened by the constraints of socializing.

It is the middle of August in Petit-de-Grat.⁴² This is *La fête nationale des Acadiens et des Acadiennes* at Petit-de-Grat on Isle Madame (see Appendix three). It is also known as the Feast Day of the Acadians and is observed every August 15.

⁴² According to Ross and Deveau, "Like Pubnico in Argyle, Petit-de-Grat on Isle Madame was settled before the Deportation" (1992: 114). After 1713, France formed a colony on what is now Cape Breton Island. The colony, known as Île Royale, had an economic basis of cod fishing rather than agriculture, as had been the case with Acadian settlements on the mainland. France ceded control of the mainland to Britain in 1713 but retained Île Royale with its great fortress at Louisbourg.

Feast of the Patron Saint

This idea of feasting is part of our religious tradition. Catholic days of celebration focused around indulgence are plentiful. Hedonism is certainly tempered, however, with complimentary times of penitence or mourning that are meant to be accompanied by self-imposed personal sacrifice – fasting, for example. In Lent, Catholics give up something. The abstinence should be from something desirable; otherwise, where is the sacrifice? Food and sex are thus popular choices.

I am not Catholic, yet I am aware that many of the important activities among the people with whom I grow up come from that religion. In the Catholic faith, a feast day is observed to honour a particular saint. Almost every day of the year is the feast day of at least three different saints, with many days having a lot more saints honoured (Catholic Online, 2005).

The Acadian national celebration is chosen for mid-summer in 1881 when more than a hundred Acadians gather in Quebec City. As fellows of *la francophonie*, we Acadians have been invited here to celebrate the French Canadians' feast day, *La fête nationale des Québécois*. It is observed on the feast day of their patron St-Jean Baptiste.

Patron saints can be chosen for just about anything; being quebécois(e) is reason enough to have one. We Acadians share ours, Notre Dame de l'Assomption, with our Cajun relatives in the United States' South. A saint is meant to provide special protection and to act as an intercessor in prayer to God.

Meeting in Quebec as a group on the occasion of the Québécois' national holiday, Acadians decide to choose our own day of celebration. It will be a day separate

from the Québécois' celebration of St-Jean Baptiste. Although we share a similar language and religious observance with the Québécois, apparently we are enough our own people to have a national celebration that is our own. We honour our patron saint with our choice of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 15 (Le Blanc, 2003: 104). From here forward, the mingling of religion, celebration, and food can be joined with that of national identity in *La fête nationale des Acadiens*.

It is a party, with the people who live here on Isle Madame celebrating. There is a dinner planned, a luncheon, music, a mass, and a parade. The official celebrations begin at Le Centre de la Picasso, the Petit-de-Grat arts centre, with a dinner theatre. The *Evangeline* and the *Gabriel* will be presented the next day. On the third day, August 15th, there is a mass. Another mass follows two days later for the finale and to celebrate this thirtieth anniversary of the *Festival acadien du Petit-de-Grat*.

Yesterday, I drove to this side of Cape Breton from Inverness, about an hour and a half to the north. I lived in Nova Scotia for twenty-seven years and I am seeing Isle Madame for the first time.

It is not the size of the province that keeps us apart. I know from personal experience that a person can drive the length of Nova Scotia in a day. While living in Halifax, the capital of the province that is located fairly centrally, I drove north to Inverness then turned around and headed southwest to Yarmouth, all in the same day. From Yarmouth at one end to Sydney at the other, takes about nine hours by car.

My attraction to this place is never strong enough to carry me over the Canso Causeway and turn eastward. This is the road less traveled, remote and distant. My knowledge of Isle Madame is scant (before my research undertaking, that is). Even

upon my arrival, what I now share, if anything, with the Acadian people here is a mystery to me. I am on unfamiliar territory.

These Acadians are as curious about my home and its surrounding communities as I am about this place. I am a tourist, here, but the inhabitants are also inquisitive about a place few of them have seen. Yarmouth is, after all, also tucked out of the way. I can bring it to them in a few stories.

Only Mr. Samson is knowledgeable about the southwestern part of the province. He is from Isle Madame but spends a few years living around Yarmouth for his work in community economic development. We talk over a bowl of soup, Acadian food, served for *dîner* at *La Centre Picasse*.

Another woman here at the *dîner* has a sister that she visits occasionally in Clare. Shirley cannot, however, get used to the gluey-grey dish that everyone in Clare serves with such pride. Shirley has encountered rappie pie, and she is not impressed. Residency seems to have offered Mr. Samson the ability to come to terms with rappie pie. He says that he even makes it here at home from time to time. Unfortunately, he cannot find anyone with whom to share those dinners.

Church supper

At the *Paroisse de St-Joseph souper d'église* there are two priests. They wear their collars to supper, making the rounds of the room for a time before finding seats. They continue to converse with various people even as they take their meals. People fill in the chairs around the Fathers, talk and eat, then take their leave only to have others come in their wakes. People know the priests, and they know one another. This is a social event, with an atmosphere of cordial interaction among the people who have come to

eat. The dinner guests and those who are in the kitchen preparing the meal also share a familiarity, with laughter passing many times across the precipice dividing the space into kitchen and dining room.

As I stand in the dinner line, watching people greet each other warmly, I am ill at ease. I must stand out, it occurs to me; someone who is unknown within the comfort of familiarity must surely appear an oddity. The hominess of the event is not reassuring to me; this is not my home. The room is beginning to feel very hot, noisy, and confusing. If there are others here who are visitors, I cannot see them. Another tourist could be my comfort now, as we stand together outside the bonds that these people share. I am the only one, the lone stranger, here to observe these people on Isle Madame.

At least this is not my first Catholic Church dinner. I am thankful and a little reassured that I have some measure of knowledge for how these things operate. In Inverness, south of Chéticamp, I now recognize most of the people who attend the church dinner. It is the end of July, during the Inverness Gathering when the ladies of the Stella Maris Parish are called upon to bake the sweets for the dessert table. Men and women organize themselves into a kitchen crew to cook potatoes and ham. Young women wait on the tables already set with rolls and butter. They bring your dinner plate, and tea or coffee with your pie. After a few hours the lunch is all over, except for counting the money earned from the sale of ham dinners.

That the church supper (lunch or dinner) serves as a fundraising event is only the crudest way of describing its place within the life of the community. The idea is not that one is helping to raise money for the church by baking, cooking, serving, and cleaning. It is rather that in the purchase of a ham dinner, one is performing the symbolic act of supporting the Church. I eat my ham in the sociable milieu of the dining hall, knowing

that my act of presence indicates a level of caring about and participation in the community. It is also a symbolic act done for my parents-in-law, knowing that they care deeply about Inverness and about this church. I intend my participation as a positive comment on theirs.

The local church mediates social organizing for a rural area like Isle Madame. Church buildings offer a gathering space, and are often some of the largest available. They continue to be used for big events like receptions or fund-raising dinners, although buildings such as arts centres, schools, and fire halls are increasingly available in rural Nova Scotia.

In addition to the physical space, the church provides social space for networking and building relationships in rural communities. Clubs and groups associated with the church, such as choirs or ladies' committees, are examples of ways that the church organizes social networks.

At Petit-de-Grat, the Church is implicated both in acadienité and in sharing the local Acadian-ness with visitors like me. The celebration of our "national" identity on the feast day of our patron saint exemplifies how symbolic events have been organized using our religious knowledge and custom. In the case of *La fête nationale des acadiens et des acadiennes*, the religious import of the symbolic event may have changed in the decades since the holiday was instituted, however, the very presence of the symbolic event indicates the ongoing importance of Catholic heritage. The fact that the Catholic Church is substantively incorporated into public festivities further exemplifies a contemporary relationship between Acadian identity and religious traditions here on Isle Madame.

Opening the basement doors of the Church (hall) to tourists creates an opportunity for people who are not part of these traditions to not only watch the Acadian people here, but to get right into the food queue with them. While restaurants self-consciously produce Acadian fare, the church supper serves out what the community's people have collectively decided to make for their special festive occasions. As a festival articulated through religion, this supper may not be a quotidian one in quite the same way as every other Thursday night supper is. It does, however, allow tourists into an ethnological ritual of acadienité.

Here in Petit-de-Grat the church supper is only peripherally articulated with the cultural tourism experience. Unlike many of the events in areas that are at higher stages of tourism development, the church supper here is not positioned to create alimentary experiences for tourists. That is not to say that tourists do not happen into the event. It is not, however, inviting to visitors. There is an interesting tension created between its being ostensibly open to visitors and its performance of cultural rituals that are by definition exclusionary. This accounts for my feelings of isolation as I stand in line to enter the hall, a stranger in the group.

Any questions about the legitimacy of this cultural event are not related to its production as tourist experience. The tourism industry is distanced from this supper, with the Catholic Women's League in charge of its production. The absence of tourist industry discourse here brings into relief the character of industry concerns about restaurant authenticity. Authenticity in tourism is measured by the identity of the restaurant's representation with a supposedly already established Acadian-ness. Without essentializing Acadian-ness, the Acadian people here have a certain freedom to define and create the foods. The freedom should not be overstated, however, since they

cook, prepare, and eat within their own narratives of tradition here. The traditions may be adapted by the people, creating what Abarca called not authentic but 'original' Acadian cuisine (Abarca, 2004: 5).

Yet, where is the tourists' gaze? The difficulty with this original community alimentary festival is that it does not attract visitors. For people who are not participants in Acadian cultural production on Isle Madame, would tourism's 'authentic' ethnic production be more welcoming than opening ethnologic rituals to tourists is?

Watching the participants at the Paroisse de St-Joseph supper is déjà vu. There are women and men in the kitchen. Girls serve the tables with carafes of coffee and tea. I go get my own dessert, but I could have had it served to me. The patrons of the supper are all smiles and very chatty with one another. People of all ages are here, however, those more advanced in life represent a greater proportion of patrons. I could be at a Catholic church supper in Inverness, except for the different menu and language.

The church hall we are in is cavernous. Like so many church halls, it is in the basement. However, this ramshackle building is not the church. I would not have known that this was a church hall at all, except that I was looking for the church supper I saw advertised as part of the festival, and I noticed plenty of people heading into this building near the church. The building is plain looking in white and black. Our door to enter is on the side, built into the foundation. I follow the others through the door and wait for my senses to adjust to the strange space that I have entered.

Outside, it is one of those days so bright with the sun that the pavement gleams. As I step in through the entryway, I cannot be sure that a provision for light has been made in this basement. Soon enough, though, the room begins to come into my eyesight. I realize I am in line to pay for my meal. The conversations around me are

boisterous, friendly, and in French. The woman at the table taking my money is speaking French, too. Now that I can see a bit, I find the loudness of these conversations in the hall less distressing. I give over the money in my hand telling her that it is for one person. It must be because I seem a bit out of place that she gives me quick instruction on what to do next.

As I move into the large crowded hall, I see the kitchen is in full production. Its smells mingle with the musty odour of being below ground, creating a pleasant earthy scent. I move quickly through the line that takes me to the kitchen window where each of us receives our Acadian meal. The soup is hearty with many chunky vegetables crammed into a light broth – I recognize it as the *soupe de la jardinage*. There are plenty of rolls on the table, the white bread variety dominant. Little packets of butter and tiny plastic cups of cream or milk are placed in bowls at regular intervals on the tables.

I could have gone into Chéticamp for the celebration of this feast day. There are plans for events there, as well. Petit-de-Grat on Isle Madame, however, seems to be marking this as their major community festival. As much as I would love to be in Chéticamp with the people I have met there, I do not want to miss this time to meet new people in Petit-de-Grat.

Most every village and community in Nova Scotia mounts some type of festival or community event, and usually during the summer. Community festivals tend to include food at the same time that they bring out the people that live in the community. Petit-de-Grat recognizes *La fête nationale des acadiens et des acadiennes* as a good time for their own festival, celebrating for several days surrounding August 15.

Outside

There should be many of us tourists here and plenty of activity in the communities of Isle Madame today. It is the height of summer, an important festival is underway, and the weather is terrific. The place is an advertisement aimed at someone from a bustling city:

Scene: a couple standing arm in arm on a grassy knoll, looking out over the calm bay at a fishing boat. The sun sparkles off the water.

Voiceover: "Do you want to get away from it all? Come to a place where nature is at your feet. Time is slow enough to relax. Find tranquility on Isle Madame."

Fresh air, picturesque drives along the ever-present water, quiet and solitude: these are my impressions as I see Isle Madame for the first time.

The way to get here is not complicated; however, it is not a main route to anywhere but here. Isle Madame is promoted in provincial tourism literature as an Acadian area of the province of Nova Scotia (Province of Nova Scotia, 2002). To come here, a person would have to be motivated to drive the one road that gets you in. Why would a tourist come here?

There is a museum. The country beauty of the place might be an attraction, although one that could undo itself. After all, the one thing that could alter the aura here of a "pristine" condition would be if the tourists actually did come. If they came in numbers the way they do across Cape Breton Island at Chéticamp, I would be nodding at tourists as I sit here at this picnic table.

Here is a place with a country-feel. It is not even small town in its presentation of place. Isle Madame is rural.

The range of buildings here is remarkably small. Besides old and older houses, there are a few places for communal gathering: churches (also old), a community centre, and some restaurants. Houses take plenty of space, even those that are close together in villages. Save for an occasional convenience store, there are few shopping places even for life's necessities. With the fish plant demolished in 1996, industrial buildings are now absent.

There are 4300 people living on this, the largest island in an archipelago at the southeastern tip of Cape Breton. The people are spread out among small coastal communities with Arichat, West Arichat, Petit-de-Grat, and D'Escousse the four largest of these. Seventy percent of the population is Acadian (DIML, 1999: 1).

Roads on the island are narrow, convoluted, and criss-crossed. I spend a good part of the time I am here lost, driving with little in the way of signage on one small road after another. It is not unpleasant, since I know that this is a small island. How lost could I get on Isle Madame? Getting lost here is no reason for stress. At any time I could stop and ask anyone I see for directions.

As I pointed out in Chapter Three, however, the most valuable field research techniques are those that the researcher can use most effectively (Wolcott, 1999: 73). If I am to use what I am good at to do my research, I will embrace the fact that I am often lost while driving. On Isle Madame, I drive around lost, and use it as methodology.

Driving around this way lets me see places that I would not purposefully seek out. Rather than viewing the more polished, and perhaps tourist-friendly, parts of villages, I am lost on dirt roads where people live. I see the houses and streets, roads, beaches, and fields of Janvrin's Harbour and Little Anse, hardly tourist destinations but not for lack of beauty.

The people I see as I drive around are nearly all in other vehicles. The cars have Nova Scotia license plates, which is the main reason why I suppose I feel that I could ask them for directions if I want to do so. There are curiously few people, however, outside walking, sitting, playing, or working.

Beside me, as I sit at my picnic table, there are people outdoors. Two young women are sunning themselves next to one of the buildings. They may work here, although they are on a break at this moment, I would guess. I have seldom had occasion to use the word "languorously;" however, this is what comes to my mind when I glance at these long, lithe bodies. I suppose that this is a summer job for them, setting the pace of life in contemporary Petit-de-Grat. Soon they will return to an indoor life at university where their summer bronzed tones from work at the historical forge will fade.

Do they yearn to escape this tranquility? Will they pine for the calm beauty of Isle Madame when they are working in Alberta?

The sunlight is glimmering off the water in such a way that it appears to be the water itself shining at me. The shimmering surf is brighter than I can gaze on without squinting; my eyes are nearly shut. A slight breeze occasionally ruffles the pages of my journal. It is hardly enough to cool me, but the temperature needs no moderating anyhow.

The venue is Le Noir, the museum. Besides this lovely groomed courtyard in which I am taking my notes, there is a stone building that could be the forge. Nothing appears to be either open or active, so it is difficult to tell precisely the intended purpose of the buildings. I can see that over one large barn there is a sign that reads, "Beer Garden." Another building says, "Shirley's General Store and Crafts." I cannot say if

these are contemporary installations, or if they are meant to reconstruct what an ancestral Shirley might have carried in her general store.

There are bits of land jutting out into the water in places that do not seem so remote from mine. I suspect that these are places where I was lost yesterday.

On one wayward road, I decide to look for nature's bounty. I detour onto a dirt road that, to my pleasure, winds down to nothing. The road just disappears, becoming path of rock and brush. This is my in-laws' car, so I stow it in what I hope is a safe spot. I want to wonder in the woods for a while. I have passed no other vehicles on the road to get here, so I feel that my borrowed vehicle and I are quite safe insofar as other people go. Should I wonder too far into the bush, could there be another story? I can see no fruitful research method in getting lost in the woods, or in being chased by a bear.

Without even looking, I find a path, straight and narrow. This is a path to chanterrels, delectable yellow mushrooms from the forest floor. I pick enough and leave plenty, knowing that whoever put this path here will probably want a share of the harvest.

From the car, another dirt road takes me to blueberry fields that are bulging blue. I am lured from the car by the sight of such fecundity. More foresight and I would have a container appropriate to the grand task. Today, I will settle with munching handfuls of berries. I will not mention this part of the adventure to Archie or Angus, since they will be sure to look for their share of the bounty.

My father and history books suggest that the Acadian people learned long ago to eat things from the woods. Bay leaves and caraway are for flavour, blueberries and



Photo 6.1: Chanterrel mushrooms: I will not starve while I am lost on Isle Madame.

raspberries are for a treat, and rabbits and foxes can be for warmth. My grandmother tells me that, this year, her fields are as full as she has ever seen them. She reaches down and pulls a handful of blueberries, drops them into a little bucket.

In the evening, I drive back to Inverness. The minor highway that takes me along the coast gives me time to think about Isle Madame. It is as close to Arcadia⁴³ as I will ever come. At this time in the year, when the fields are lush and green and the skies are blue, it is striking how much sky one can see and how many trees, grasses, and bushes surround me. As a tourist here, the sense of the place as idyllic is my most prominent one.

Silver Donald Cameron now makes Isle Madame his home. The author arrived as a visitor in 1971 and found the place to be too compelling to leave. The sense that

⁴³ Arcadia is the mythical land of the gods. Some say that it is where the name l'acadie originated, when travelers dubbed the beautiful place where they landed arcadie (e.g. Le Blanc, 2003: 20), although Le Blanc,

Isle Madame is alluring only seems to take hold of those who, like Cameron, are already here. It is not enough to bring other tourists in quantity. More quaint eateries, and emphasis on our historical forays as hunters, gatherers, and farmers, would demonstrate the food ways of the Acadians on Isle Madame. These would also, in their push for “authenticity,” change the Isle Madame that I saw today.

Coinciding with the *Festival acadien de Petit-de-Grat*, is another event. The Cape Breton Fishing Event has a presence here on Isle Madame. I see posters and banners for the event around the island. As I sit here in Arichat at the picnic table of Le Noir, three fishers just embarked on their motorboat in the water behind me. They carry tackle and sturdy rods.

The fishers today may very well catch a cod. There are still enough cod in these waters to supply a meal now and then. After all, as Berrill rhetorically points out in the opening line of his analysis of what has gone wrong with ocean fishing, “People in coastal communities have always eaten fish” (1997: 1). Nearly every family has a fisherman, perhaps even a fisherwoman, who never brings home a catch without sharing it with others in his or her circle.

Isle Madame is a cod-fishing part of *l’Acadie*. As at Pubnico in Argyle, Petit-de-Grat on Isle Madame is settled before the Deportation. The people of both places share a reliance on the sea for subsistence and trade from the time of settlement, presaging the lives of Acadian communities throughout what will soon be solidified as Nova Scotia. Other pre-expulsion Acadians live on farms and in communities where agriculture predominates. However, at Isle Madame three centuries of fishing for cod begins in the

Griffiths, and others point out that etymologists do not agree on the origin of the terms “l’acadie” or “acadia” (ibid.: 19; Griffiths, 2005: 467).

early part of the eighteenth century when a few Acadian families are enticed by the government of France to settle at Petit-de-Grat (Ross and Deveau, 1992:115).

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the seas are full of fish. After the fishing is done for the day, the catch can be dried or salted. Fish prepared in this way will be used to trade and to feed the village during the winter months.

Unfortunately for the families who raise generations of fishers, there are no longer enough cod to support a commercial fishery here. Catching fish as an occupation ends here in 1994 with the closure of the Atlantic Groundfish Fishery. Without a lobster or crab fishery in this part of Cape Breton, there is no commercial fishery at all. A void opens in employment. What will people who are skilled and knowledgeable about fishing do now? The proximity to the ocean, and the long history of reliance on it, has built traditions and ways of life that do not end because the sea no longer provides a livelihood.

No fisher worth his salt cares to blame the ocean for the demise of the fishery. The haline waters of the ocean are home to generations of sweat and tears that no one speaks against. Human fallibility, something that can be corrected, is seen as the source of these recent troubles. We fished too much, used the wrong methods, did not care enough.

After a decade without fishing, coastal communities continue to hope that their livelihood can be rehabilitated. Communities and their governments feed hope with planning, the object of which is to grow the cod resource again. In the logic of the preferred model, the solution to the decades of "mismanagement" of the resources is better management.

To put this in perspective, what we are seeing at Isle Madame are the contemporary traces of centuries of marginalization for the people in this and other similar communities. In the first instance, the communities were settled under the duress of English insistence that Acadian villages be kept at the periphery of mainstream society. They were not only out of the way and remote, they were also in less hospitable locations. Later, through their reliance on resource based industry, these communities were subjected to the vagaries of commercialism such as over-fishing and the collapse of not only the economic backbone, but an important fastener of the way of life in these communities. This is a pattern that has been recognized elsewhere and in other conditions:

Thus the status of colonized people has been fixed in zones of dependency and peripherality, stigmatized in the designation of underdeveloped, less-developed, developing states, ruled by a superior, developed, or metropolitan colonizer who was theoretically posited as an antithetical overlord (Said, 1989: 207).

In these terms, the fundamental position of Acadian people on Isle Madame and throughout Nova Scotia is one of being deprived of social power. Economic, geographic, educational, or employment disadvantages are symptomatic of this greater problem.

In 2003, the federal government, along with provincial governments from the Maritime Provinces, Newfoundland, and Quebec, sets up three regionally-based Cod Action Teams:

The primary objective of these teams was to develop rebuilding strategies for Atlantic cod stocks. Each Cod Action Team undertook consultations with a variety of stakeholders, including industry, Aboriginal communities, academics, environmental

groups and local interests to develop these long-term strategies (Canada, 2005).

In the competition over the increasingly scarce resources, arguments involving fishers and their communities (e.g. at Chéticamp) are only the most local experience of friction. The Cod Action Teams are meant to work through these stressors toward solutions. In boardrooms, at conferences, and in reports, tensions are poignant between managers, business owners, and industry workers.

In these difficult conditions, the Cod Action Team for the Gulf Region authored a report under the auspices of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans that calls into question the past practices of fisheries management as well as the future role of the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans:

The role of the Minister hasn't always been well understood or accepted. Many industry leaders will argue that there is too much political interference in decision making on fisheries management and resource allocations. The alternative is that industry must take greater responsibility for conservation and for resolving conflicts over access and allocations without resorting to the "political route" (Canada, 2005b: 41).

That a document from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans would impugn its own Minister seems a strange editorial tactic, underlining the stress in the fishery. What is even more remarkable here, however, is that the proposal for future natural resource management is industry self-management. When fish are conceptualized as our resource, does not the logic of capitalism undo the ability of those selling the resource to be their own monitors for the good of the oceans? That is to say, if we think of fish as a way to make money, the people who make the money from fish should not be the ones charged with their so-called stewardship.

Taking the road out of Isle Madame, I notice a sign enticing me to dine at Cuisine acadienne. I cannot pass up such an apropos invitation. The village is Louisdale and it is on Cape Breton Island just off of Isle Madame. I eat a cod cheeks dinner. I have never had such a thing, although I recollect seeing it on menus in Newfoundland years back when I visited. My server says that she prefers them to scallops because they are not as sweet. I find her comparison with scallops to be apt. The cod cheeks are firm round fleshy bits of fish. At this restaurant they have been served battered and deep-fried. Delicious.

The cod cheeks are salty, though. My server tells me that they are not salt cod, but that the batter may be salty. Perhaps the cook is in love.⁴⁴ I eat every one, since they are not as rich as scallops. I cannot manage to eat the boiled vegetables or the dry mashed potato. The dinner comes accompanied by a wedge of lemon, a packet of tartar sauce and a packet of butter.⁴⁵

Is there a better flavour than that of fresh fish, salt, and lemon? Salt is a staple here from the time that Petit-de-Grat is settled. Lemons are, like salt, today imported from distant places. That lemons are available year-round to most of Canada is a fairly recent development, although Isle Madame did enjoy a previous historical period, before Confederation, of significant trade with regions to the south on the globe.

⁴⁴ In one kitchen where I worked, I learned that a chef who has a heavy hand with the salt is said to be in love.

⁴⁵ Lemons and packaged condiments show the contemporary foodways in restaurants. Lemons are imported year-round, while packaged sauces are delivered by distribution companies such as Sysco.

Argyle

Angus is sitting on the small patch of grass next to me gumming a hot dog. He has its bun squished tight in both hands, and a mustard-grin. A long slurp of Orange Crush quenches a big, salty thirst. I am relieved that we will not have to endure a fierce round of futile rubbing on an orange mustache and that I will not have to bear the indignity of a toddler with the tell-tale mark of a pop stain. Angus has already mastered the mystery of drinking through a straw.

Angus' brother, Archie, a clean-eater even at just three years old, has nevertheless managed sticky hands. He smells of ketchup. It will be difficult to wipe both the yellow stain off Angus' face and Archie's residue with this one napkin that I remembered to pick up. The all-purpose kid cleaner that my own mother introduced to me three decades ago will have to be applied: a gob of mama-spit relieves even the most stubborn stain.

I should have brought more wet naps from the van. Our minivan, the travel-mobile for our fieldtrip through Nova Scotia, is parked a good 15-minute walk away. That distance is rendered into time must be obvious for any parent with very young children. For those who do not have children, let me account for the distance as time phenomenon by observing that, although the van is perhaps 500 metres away, the substantial effort that it takes me to wrangle the three of us puts the van quite clearly (to my mind) too far away in time if not in space.

I leave the children on their patch of green to cross the paved lot to which we sit adjacent. Although this will surely take only a moment, I keep looking back at those boys. My mind plays stories that I have not asked to recall of mothers stricken with grief

over lost children; the mother always recounts that she was only “gone for a minute” when the child drowned/disappeared/choked/was abducted. My fear of either of them drowning is low. (Note that it is not absent, since as a mother I know that a child can drown in a teaspoon of water. Or, orange pop.) I somehow know not only that anything can happen at anytime to these children, but also that it is my constant responsibility to make positive interventions in their lives. A mother shall nurture, teach, care for, and love her children.

On the other side of the lot is the hot dog truck that got us into this sticky and stained situation. I get a handful of napkins from the server there and beat a retreat back to the kids.

Archie, Angus, and I arrived at this Acadian festival in Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau ready to eat. This summer, I am always anticipating that I will eat wherever I go. I save myself for my eating excursions when I can search out Acadian foods and/or milieu. Even when I am hungry I can wait to eat since I know that there will be many not-to-be-missed opportunities. Today, we arrive with eating as our first priority, which seemed like a good idea in theory.

The boys’ readiness to eat right now is premised on hunger. Their tiny stomachs and their little energetic bodies do not fit with today’s timetable of the search for an Acadian meal. Hunger for them, as for me, is always apparent in our irritability. By the time we arrive on the festival grounds, we three are cranky. The first edible items we find at the festival are hot dogs, and we are all pleased to have them.

I must admit, though, to some disappointment with a hotdog truck at the first Acadian festival I attend this summer. The people staffing the truck are clearly Acadian by their talk, probably from this community. They are speaking French and know many

of these hungry patrons making their way around this lot. But, hot dogs and french fries? Sure, these are part of the diet in the homes of many Acadian people. They are part of the diet for many people throughout Canada. I expected that organizers at this festival, like every other cultural festival I am attending this summer, would choose foods that are highly representative of Acadian-ness, and in a straightforward way. Here, in Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau, I assumed that would mean rappie pie.

Rappie pie

We make rappie pie together, my mother, my father, and I. This is an event, anticipated, planned. On the day, my father brings the fifty-pound bag of old potatoes into the kitchen. He tears open the thick paper bag, and the smell is of earth. Mom already has a chicken beginning to scent the air, as it boils in a big pot on the propane stove. I learn to peel potatoes with a knife watching my mother's long nimble fingers perform their skill quickly and with a precision for which I desire. How does she do that? My potatoes are tiny and angular once their skins are removed. "No matter," she tells me. All the potatoes go into a pan of cold water where they await the next step in the long process of that is their transformation.

On rappie pie making day, the job that I am good at is also my favorite one. I de-bone the chicken. It is still hot, newly plucked from its boiling waters. I use only my fingertips to pull the meat from the bones. Discard the skin and bones and create a heaping plate of chicken meat torn it into pieces small enough to manage with a fork. This will be added in a layer to the potato mixture when it is spread out in the large rectangular rappie pie pan, a special pan with squared corners at ninety degree angles, which makes for delicious corner pieces.

In the work of reducing potatoes to a raw mash, many a knuckle is also grated. Grating is very physical and tiring for the arms. We all take turns. My turn will only consist of grating two or three potatoes to my father's fifteen or twenty. The tool used to grate is flat and rectangular with a handle at one end. Heavy gauge wire criss-crosses its surface at right angles. It can be placed over a bowl or held by its handle in the left hand while the right hand scratches the potato across the wires. I shift back and forth between these positions to ease the strain on my hands.

The work of grating has to be done as quickly as possible since the soupy thick potato mash is oxidizing. Potatoes rust when exposed to air. Our mash goes from white to reddish while we grate more and more potatoes. By the time all the potatoes are ready to be squeezed, the top of the potato mash is black. You can tell rappie pie made from potatoes that are exposed to air for a long time because it is dark grey. The flavour is not affected, but the greyer the mixture the less appetizing the rappie pie.

The broth from the chicken is boiling when my mother slowly adds it to the potatoes. Adding the hot soup stops the oxidation of the potatoes by scalding them. All the while, Dad is stirring the huge vat of potatoes to ensure that every bit of it comes in contact with the scalding liquid. Mom adds the salt and pepper at this point, too. We all taste the mixture to make sure it is well seasoned. It tastes like raw potato and I wonder if this rappie pie will turn out delicious. I am not yet savvy in the ways of tasting and cannot imagine how tasting this mash provides any clue to how the finished prize will fare.

The work from when we started grating up until we add the hot broth has been frenzied. We can slow down a little from here until it goes into the oven.

When Dad's fisherman's arms tire of the stirring, he and Mom trade positions. The reaction that happens at this point between the potato and the broth is what gives the dish its particular texture and flavour. Improper stirring or adding of liquid could result in a rappie pie that is lumpy or starchy tasting. The stirring is by hand; and it is long, arduous work.

Equally arduous is the step between the grating and adding the boiling chicken broth. This is the manual effort of removing the potato liquid. It begins by pouring the grated potatoes into a smallish canvas bag. My father brought home two or three of these bags from his work aboard a scallop dragger. On twelve-day fishing trips to George's Bank, these bags hold the precious scallops my father deftly shucks from their round shells. Here the heavy-duty bags serve to hold another precious cargo: the potato relieved of its rusty liquid.

Dad squeezes the bulging sacs filled with grated potatoes, draining as much of the potato liquid as he can manage. His hands look huge and powerful turning the end of the sac with one hand while squeezing the bottom with his other. Dad is puffing, the exertion furrowing his brow. When Mom helps by taking the bag end, it looks like she will be spun around as Dad continues to twist his end hand over hand. Mom is game to participate in this struggle of ingenuity, skill, and strength. Weighing in at a hundred pounds, her small frame wanes in the last of these traits. Dad once again takes over the entire sac of potatoes, working as much of the liquid out as is humanly possible.

The dark liquid spurts out with each squeeze-turn. Dad is working over the sink. We have never found a use for it, so the liquid goes down the drain, into the town's aqueduct, and flows out into the harbour to be washed to sea.

At some point before I reach the age of nine, my family acquires from who knows where a specialized contraption built expressly for the purpose of squeezing rappie potatoes. The tool certainly is not bought at a store. In my mind, I believe that we got it from an old man, perhaps an uncle of my father's. A person vaguely fitting this description crafts precisely this device to assist in the effort of rappie pie making.

With this mechanical wonder placed over the kitchen sink, the bag of slightly squeezed potato is set in. The gizmo is a square box big enough to hold about twenty pounds of grated potato. Once the sac of semi-drained potatoes is inside, a wooden lid is placed on top. Over this is fastened a large screw mechanism that, when turned, forces the lid down on the sac of potatoes. Small holes under the box and on its sides allow the forced water to drain. The first two or three cranks of the mechanism push out great quantities of water. After that, the turning becomes more difficult. When the lid is nearly a third of the way down into the box, the mechanism slips, as does my Dad's patience.

He curses the machine, "À bonne! À bonne! À bonne!"

Mom begins to fret over the fate of the day's efforts.

Eventually, when no amount of turning, squeezing, cursing, or fretting can wring another drop from the potatoes, the potatoes are pronounced ready.

Mom has been up since 5:30 and Dad since 6:00. It is 10:30 now. They are ready for a cup of coffee and a cigarette. But, since there is no break in the flow of rappie pie making, it will be another half an hour until this rappie pie goes in the oven and the coffee break can begin.

When Mom gets up, the first thing she does to prepare for the rappie pie is peel onions. Some go in with the chicken to add flavour to the broth. Others are put in a cast iron frying pan next to some pieces of pork fat that she also cuts. As the pork renders, it provides its fat to fry the onions. This is the smell that wakes me at 8:00. Once mom sets the pan of pork and onions aside, I pick out one of the pork scraps and munch it right down to the rind. I suck on the rind.

We have a big steel bowl in which to put the squeezed potato. To this, Mom or Dad adds the fried onions and some of the pork fat. Then, while one of them stirs, the other begins adding the broth. During this process there is a back and forth negotiation about how much broth to add and when more should be added. The tricky part, though, is when we are nearing the end of adding broth. Rather than an exact measure, my parents learn their precision in adding the broth through experience. Now, they ponder together the consistency of the potatoes factoring in their age, how much liquid had been drained, and our families' different perspectives on the proper consistency of a good rappie pie. Dad is the most outspoken on the latter matter, displeased by the rappie pies of Wedgeport and Pubnico. His preference is for the French shore rappie pie, the one made by his mother, Millie Deveau.

No one in my family will agree with me on this, however, what makes a good rappie pie is a negotiated, contested, and cultural decision. There is a rappie pie scale, but it differs from region to region, and family to family. Most of us only give full marks for rappie pie to what our mothers make, while honorable mentions may go to our fathers and grandmothers.

People are judged by their rappie pie.

My Aunt on my mother's side, Verna, makes a rappie pie that includes the bones. No amount of teasing or cajoling gets her to change her recipe or her ways. On top of the first layer of potato, Aunt Verna puts the chicken and its bones, followed by the top layer. I cannot understand why anyone would do this. Is it laziness? Later in life, when I go to cook in restaurants, I learn that in bones is flavour and I take that as Aunt Verna's guiding principle.

Saint-Anne-du-Ruisseau is not far from Wedgeport. In fact, it is on the way to Wedgeport if you take the "old road." This was the instruction that Dad gave me last night when I called to get directions. I told him why I wanted to go, for a festival, and that there will probably be rappie pie. "It's good if you like water," Dad says, predictably certain their rappie pie will be a poor imitation of what it should be.

I have never felt the way my father does about rappie pie from this part of the province. Today, I would be pleased to try the Sainte-Anne's rappie pie. The letdown I feel about its absence here is more a function of missing out on my favorite meal than it is about altered research expectations. Altering my expectations in the course of my research keeps me thinking. Hot dogs are interesting, too.

The kids are presentable, now, both in their newly positive demeanor and in their appearance. It is time for us to take a walk around the festival grounds and see what is on offer alongside the hot dog truck.

The sun is pure today. Though we are not really inland, it is warmer here than in Yarmouth. It is July 6 and it is hot. I slather a coating of sun block on each of the children's exposed arms legs, cheeks, and noses before we launch from our lunch into the afternoon.

Set up on either side of a straight row, eight craft tables, four tables per side, each feature a different type of craft made by people from this community or surrounding areas. There is some knitting. One young woman has a table of hemp and bead jewelry. Behind an adjacent table is a native man whose table displays various Indian handicrafts such as dream catchers and medicine pouches.

We make a polite yet quick pass through the craft area. Archie, who is mobile and eager, is not terribly interested in the crafts. He stays next to Angus who is in the small stroller, but I know his fading engagement with the festival could lead us all to an early departure.

In the far corner of the lot, we find a game table. Archie and I pay \$5 to play the game. Archie chooses pieces of paper tucked into pigeonholes in a large board. One of the pieces he chooses is a winner! We get a clock for our prize. There are many donated prizes haphazardly arranged behind the game table. Winning is assured. Even for the non-winning pieces that he chose, Archie gets a lollipop each. He and Angus are pleased when I take the wrappers off one lollipop for each of them. The rest I stow in our day bag. They will come in handy as treats later.

The flavour of this event is like so many small town festivals that I have seen in Nova Scotia. With its revenue-generating games that benefit local organizations and its handicraft tables staffed with local artisan-entrepreneurs, fairs like this one are common in Nova Scotia's rural towns and villages. This is an event that I and other tourists are welcome to share in, but it is not a tourist event. It is a local festival.

Local festivals are about celebrating and encouraging particular cultural, artistic, and/or heritage formations. A Nova Scotia business magazine called *Open to the World* remarked on the way local music festivals continue to thrive in Nova Scotia despite the

fact that many of the musicians who began at these festivals have gone on to international careers (Martin, 2003: 12). In this article, Martin likens a local music festival to a “kitchen party on a grand scale” (12). Local festivals more generally are as Martin observed: an invitation for friends to share in what you have.

The local festival continues in Nova Scotia as a venue for encouraging local traditions and practitioners, a place to show what the community in question has to offer, and a way of educating the next generation. In villages across the province, the festival is a place to share with one another. In this sense, it is a site of profound cultural practice. If visitors from away should show up for the festival, they are welcome.

Local festivals may also be regarded as a form of community economic development. Indeed, CED Online, the Government of Nova Scotia’s web portal for supporting community economic development in Nova Scotia, lists “holding music festivals” alongside “building heritage museums” and another eight or nine ways in which communities throughout Nova Scotia are creating sustainable economies (Province of Nova Scotia, 2000).

Moving along the festival spectrum from community-centred to economically focussed, the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage encourages local festivals that will attract tourists. The Department’s 2005 *A Guide to Planning and Hosting a Community Festival or Event in Nova Scotia* suggests that while many festival organizers are “content with attracting local and regional residents” (Province of Nova Scotia:10) community festivals are a tourism development opportunity (8).

The festivals I attend in Nova Scotia are what can be called grassroots. They are not only local, but are developed by local people for the local population. Many of them have been celebrated for more years than I have been on Earth; for example, the fifty-

year old *Festival L'acadien de Clare*. Grassroots and local, these festivals are not specifically meant to attract tourists. They celebrate and demonstrate local knowledge and skill while bringing together people in the community and beyond who know one another. For someone from outside the area, my lack of insider knowledge made the festivals just a bit intimidating.

As the children enjoy their treats, I have some time to talk with one of the women running the game. Jocelyne⁴⁶ is someone that I knew when I lived in Yarmouth. She is just a little older than I am. It was a family relation – her father and my uncle (by marriage) Léo are brothers – that introduced us. At that time, she lived in Wedgeport. She tells me that she still lives there, married with children. In fact, the house that she occupies is where the uncle we have in common and my Aunt Verna lived. Her father, our uncle, and our aunt are all gone now.

Today, Jocelyne is here running the game table as a benefit for the Wedgeport volunteer fire department. We talk about what will happen this afternoon at the festival, and that is when I find out that there is more to this event than I have seen so far. Inside and on the other side of the large building, the Acadian Centre, she tells me that there is more.

I am not very familiar with Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau. What I remember is mostly from high school, when there would be the occasional interaction between my English school and the French high school here known as SAR. Our sports teams would meet for a game. Or, there were more personal liaisons, followed by the gossip of romance and sexual encounter.

If I visited anyone in Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau, I do not remember it. I do recall driving by the church, remarkable in its size and striking in its white with black trim. I certainly never visited this community centre, and never attended this (nor any other) Acadian festival. This is why I had no idea there was more festival on the other side and on the inside of the Acadian Centre. I did not realize it was a community centre.

Inside, rappie pie is on sale for five dollars a plate. It comes with a dessert of strawberry shortcake. None of us is hungry, but I cannot miss this. We find a place at one of the banquet-style tables. We three share a huge plate of rappie pie and, then, strawberry shortcake, eating both of these with a plastic fork.

The chicken rappie pie is good. It is thinner than Dad would like, but it is hot and flavourful. Inside, I notice that the chicken is chopped. In my family, the chicken is pulled apart. There is salt, pepper, butter and molasses on the table, the typical condiments of rappie pie. It comes with a roll.

By now my eyes have adjusted to the dim indoor light. I can see that there are a few more craft tables in here. A fresh-faced "Evangeline" and a "Gabriel" are wondering among the people. They are dressed "traditionally," the only ones here to be garbed in this way. They wear sashes identifying them as the mythical figures. People sit at the banquet tables in small groups of young and old together.

While we are eating, I recognize a woman that I went to high school with, although I cannot recall her name. Another woman looks familiar. I wonder to myself if they live here. Do they live close by? Or, are they, like me, more like strangers here now. They can comprehend rappie pie, perhaps, but not know where to find it. Do they know by heart the way to the Acadian Centre in Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau?

Archie is eager to go back outside. I still want to see the side of the building where the entertainment is staged, so we head out that way. A good-sized audience of perhaps fifty people is watching a man singing French songs and playing a guitar up on the stage. It is a small but well-equipped stage. People sit in rows watching and listening. Others mill about, chatting in French and in accented English to friends and family.

For a while we stand at the back of the crowd. When a seat comes free I take it and Archie climbs up on my lap. Angus is comfortable in his stroller. A few moments pass of relaxation where we are pleased to be sitting, listening quietly.

A one-man band act comes on next. He plays guitar, harmonica, and a drum machine. I could sit for the afternoon, but Archie is ready to call it quits. They have been pleasant company, my sons, as we have taken in our first Acadian festival together. It is a good time to wander back down the road to our van.

As we make our way from the festival, I notice a man coming out of the Acadian Centre with two take out plates of rappie pie. He walks down the road alongside what I imagine to be his eight or nine year-old son. They cross the street and disappear through the front door of a little white house.

These must be two of the 893 parishoners in the Paroisse Sainte-Anne. At the van, I am back across from the church that serves this parish. Church life remains a prominent feature of life in this community, its history intertwined with the life of the community.

At Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau, the church building is a provincial heritage site. According to Mrs. Babin, the tour guide at the church, as a heritage site the church is

eligible for government grants. This helps to explain the excellent repair that the large building is in. For, on any given Sunday there are a mere 190 churchgoers. It would take a great deal of money to keep this church in its fine condition as well as to keep it open to tourists, such as myself here today. With the support of government funding, this church is transformed into a pillar of the community in a contemporary way: it is a tourist attraction.

When I park the van on my arrival, Archie is asleep. A bit of wisdom I hold dear is "Never wake a sleeping baby." I leave the car door wide open so that Archie will have air and I will hear him when he awakes. Angus and I get down out of the van and stretch our legs with a walk in the nearby graveyard. We see stones marking the final resting place of Pothier, Pottier, Meuse, Sutherland, McGrath, but no Vacon.

At the side of the van, there is a large green lawn. I sit on the grass while Angus searches for dandelions to give me. It is good to sit and rest today.

For the last three days I have been in and out of sleep as my body battled the flu. I lay in my mother's bed these days disappointed that my short time in this end of the province is being made shorter by my inability to get out into the communities I want to visit. I hear the children in the next room. Vaguely, I hope they will be good for their Nana as I drift back to sleep.

Today, I am still weak from the illness. I am determined to see the Acadian Festival at Sainte-Anne-du-Ruisseau, though. It is a good opportunity to see this Acadian community. There are no restaurants here. There is no hotel or motel, nor have I found any sign of a Bed and Breakfast. It is not a community with much in the way of tourism infrastructure or promotion. I would likely skip visiting this community

altogether, except that a community festival is a public eating event. I am eager to see the festival and pleased to visit the community.

I apply sun block to Angus' fair skin. Even Archie, still asleep in the van, is in the sun's morning rays. While I gently rub the lotion on him, he is roused. As he comes awake, I see coming down the church stairs a woman dressed in an ankle-length black skirt, a puffy white blouse covered by a cinched black vest, and a white bonnet. The woman in what is considered traditional Acadian dress crosses the street, aiming herself in our direction. In a few seconds she is greeting us with a big, warm smile, "Bonjour!"

"Bonjour! Hello," I reply. From this I want her to know that we can speak French if she would like, but English would probably be easier for me.

After our introductions, Mrs. Babin tells us about a beautiful place not far from here where the children could run around. It is the site of the first church serving this community, now a tourism and pilgrimage site. The site is the one that missionaries and priests from Quebec would visit when they came to attend the spiritual needs of people in this area. Mrs. Babin says that Abbé Sigogne comes here in 1799. This parish, as well as the other large parish of Sainte Marie in Pointe de l'église, then has the first priest of its own in Abbé Sigogne (Boudreau, 1996). From here, it is a four-kilometre drive to the historic site of Sigogne' church. We just parked, and I want to take in the festival first.

"Have you ever been inside the church here," Mrs. Babin asks in English inflected with the Acadian tonality of this area. I planned to take the kids in to see the church. After driving by such a mysterious building myself as a child, I want to see it, too. "Come see!" she invites the children, as wide-eyed as they are.

I opt for a stroller for Angus, which Mrs. Babin helps me carry up the few concrete stairs into the foyer of the church. This is where the tourism material is set out. There are some postcards and notecards for sale, as well as some pins and a few brochures. This is where we have most of our conversation.

We discuss children and churches. This church was built in 1900. The original one on the site burned down and this one was erected in six months, in time to celebrate Midnight Mass for the New Year.

After our talk, I purchase two postcards and make a two-dollar donation to the church. Mrs. Babin asks if she can give the children each a candy. For me, she has a Scotch mint. The kids each have a fruit candy. We make our way back down the stairs and head to the left. Up the road is the Acadian Festival. We are all looking forward to getting a little lunch there.

Mrs. Babin drives into the dirt parking lot at the historic site of the old Sainte Anne's church while we are walking around the front lawn. There are rocks that the kids play around, and a large grassy area on which to run around. She smiles in recognition, having met us at the contemporary church just a few hours ago. As she walks to meet up with and replace the tour guide who is here, she calls out to us, "Hello!"

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

People in Nova Scotia use alimentation to communicate *acadienité*. In rural villages and small towns, food connects us. It allows for present-day relationships with one-another, including familial relationships, geographical ties, and the sharing of practices and artifacts among a group of people that are thus culturally-produced as Acadian.

Acadian alimentation also demarcates the boundaries of relationships. At the same time that foodways and narratives are shared among distant communities in Nova Scotia, there are notable distinctions in the local uses of food. These distinctions mark communities as divergent one from another. Indeed, traces of past and continuing social isolation of Acadian communities are still notable in the cultures of the villages, including in the foods that are known and those that are eaten.

Yet, the difference from one community to another is not so great as to undermine for the people who live in the villages their identity. There is an agglomeration of food that can be called Acadian, although not every food on the list will be known or enjoyed in every Acadian place in Nova Scotia. From place to place, different foods and eating practices often show great similarities in the types of relationships they help to construct, in the narratives they help to tell, and in the cultural practices they signify. What is more, even artifacts and practices that appear superficially disparate among communities are often substantively similar.

In Isle Madame at a church supper, Louise told me that the *soupe de la jardinière* on the menu was a traditional Acadian dish. Madeleine confirmed this when I ate the same soup at an Acadian cultural festival on Isle Madame. She said she grew up eating the foods like the ones that were represented at the festival. Madeleine and Louise seemed fond of the soup. They also appeared to be proud of it, or at least proud to tell me that it was something meaningful in their lives as Acadians.

For these two women on Isle Madame, the *soupe de la jardinière* signified a relationship. Yet, up until visiting Isle Madame, I had never had *soupe de la jardinière*. Since then, I have found it in no other community in Nova Scotia. Its absence from other Acadian places troubles no one, however, since there are foods in each community that are used to construct relations among the people who live there – the local cultural identity – in the same way that the soup is used.

A decade ago, Trepanier noted that there are different ways of being Acadian in the context of six different Acadian places in the Maritimes (1996). I found that practices and artifacts, in particular, vary from place to place within contemporary *l'Acadie*. Interestingly, I also found that, while the signifiers differ, what is signified throughout Acadian villages in Nova Scotia is remarkably similar. People are using different foods and recipes to elaborate, challenge, and demarcate relationships to other people.

Cheticantins have narratives about fricot that are similar to those about *soupe de la jardinière*. Both are described as “traditional.” This term varies in its usage, from food that people grew up eating, to food that their grandmothers prepared, or even, what their grandmothers grew up eating. (Only in museums is the notion of “traditional” food and eating given a particular historical position, which is the early twentieth century.)

The recipes for both soups are handed on among family members. Usually, there is a particular matronly figure or perhaps more than one whose dish, be it *soupe de la jardinière* or *fricot*, is considered superior. Often, I found, this figure was my interlocutor's mother or grandmother. For both types of foods, people show reluctance to use "lard" or "pork fat," ingredients that they think about as "traditional" but unhealthy in the contemporary diet that is now narratively related to nutritional discourse.

A relatively small range of foods are represented in restaurants, at cultural gatherings, at social events, and at church suppers. That the "traditional foods" make regular appearances at social gatherings and important events is related to the now ritualized function of these meals. The traditional foods of each community are held in high regard, although many people admit that they rarely make them in their own homes and do not eat them on anything like a regular basis. They are, rather, reserved for special occasions, and, as such, are potent signifiers of a "traditional" way of life.

The similarities between *soupe de la jardinage* and *fricot* are not rarefied. Rather, the significance of particular foods is notably similar from community to community. This is a reminder that the diverse Acadian communities in Nova Scotia not only share past history, but that the shared history continues to bear traces in the contemporary lives of dispersed Acadians.

Among the shared consistencies in Acadian cultural formations from region to region since the Deportation, are certain characteristic social relations that continue to form important bases for our ways of life and thinking. We have never, for example, known as a group our own political independence (Griffiths, 2005: xv). To whatever extent we have seen ourselves as a people, we are one without a recognized homeland that is our own. A correlative of the dispersed geographical allotments that we adopted

as homes has been shared troubles, though not always the same troubles, that stem from our often difficult and secluded places.

Is it any wonder with structural commonality, then, that shared historical narratives are fundamental in our development today as Acadian people? The historical past continues to figure prominently in the narratives of *acadienité*. It is also mobilized in ethnic representations of Acadian-ness. In Braroe's terms, Acadian restaurant food is an ethnicization of Acadian-ness (2002). Our ethnic representation, where Acadian-ness is shared with others, utilizes undifferentiated real and imagined charm in the old ways of living. Acadian restaurants, in particular, rely on an un-changing Acadian, whose origination is post-deportation but who is now a-historical. It is an Acadian who is not us.

The same notion of quaint Acadian life that is becoming a key representation of Acadian-ness in Nova Scotia tourism is also one of the central emergent frames for envisioning economic development in those Acadian communities. Many of the regions of Nova Scotia that faced economic and social difficulties during the collapse of the North Atlantic fishery in the 1990s have turned to cultural tourism in hopes of alleviating the economic crises in fishing villages. A large part of the allure of tourism is that the Acadian-ness already present in villages can be mobilized to attract visitors.

What is more, the economic discourse enabled by government and business interests in the province, and finally by consumer capitalist global flows, is an increasingly important means of approaching tourism development. In these discourses, Acadian food is incapable of authenticity, produced instead for meaningless profit.

Yet, economic discourse can also be recognized as one that enables; it calls for greater articulation of Acadian food. Economic discourse requires a more highly

differentiated ethnic Acadian-ness. At the same time, in the local community, the economic discourse is challenged in efforts to differentiate Acadian-ness, the challenge coming from people in their own practices and narratives. Despite increasingly globalized relations, the focal point of social processes in these Acadian communities remains the local. This is a factor which bodes well for the ability of the people to create and maintain alternative discourses and symbolic work that, by its loyalty and love of Acadian-ness, reinvigorates the culture.

Restaurant food is not solely produced for someone else. For Acadians living in destination communities, we sometimes mistake the “Acadian-ness” of restaurant food for our own *acadienité*. We assess it as if it ought to be an “authentic” representation of our Acadian traditions, foodways, and eating rituals, even though we know that it is also meant to be shared with people who are not us. Thus, the restaurant food in Acadian tourist destination in Nova Scotia is constantly challenged by Acadian people as ‘not us.’

Our consciousness of ourselves, our *acadienité*, is not immune to the ethnic constructions presented to others. As our *acadienité* is being constructed, we are informed by our relationship to, and struggle with, ethnic representations of ourselves. While these ethnic representations are enabled by the contemporary tourism development agenda, Acadian people are also struggling to create our own ethnic representations. Still, we need to be careful to recognize that *acadienité* is not simply a reserve from which certain cultural products can be chosen to show tourists a representation of what it is to be Acadian. There is a dialectical relationship between *acadienité* and the Acadian-ness of ethnic cuisine.

The tension in the relationship between the ethnic and the ethnologic compels us to proceed cautiously in the utilization of ethnic representations. For example, the

reliance on “tradition” in the construction of ethnic representations, when mobilized by government and business interests, can become a detriment to creativity and change at the ethnologic level. Alterations, adjustments, and other kinds of change are an inherent and necessary part of a vital Acadian culture. If cultural stasis at the ethnic level is heralded as “authenticity,” Acadian people must be diligent in asserting that authenticity not be confused as identity of ethnic with ethnologic. The degree to which cultural stasis is adopted in the everyday life of the community is a measure of the degree of the problem.

The discussion of authenticity finds its place within discussions of ethnic representation. Where the measure of authenticity ought to be related to the deep cultural significance of cultural products, it calls for ethnic representations grounded in the social processes of the local communities. This is not anathema to continuing to develop tourism as an income source in these Acadian communities. It is simply a way to counter hegemonic economism. Rather than working toward a hollow, profit-driven Acadian-ness, Acadian tourism development will make a lasting contribution to the cultural vitality of Acadian communities in Nova Scotia when it is led by belief in the worth of that culture, for its own sake.

Acadienité, like ethnic representations of Acadian-ness, uses narratives, practices, and artifacts from a mythologized Acadian past. As I have already argued, the narratives of our past will continue to inform our sense of ourselves for some time. Contemporary narratives of shared history are not, however, the same as cultural stasis. Ethnic representations of Acadian-ness attempt to flatten the planes of history, contemporary practice, and cultural production into a unified and a-historical Acadian. This works for tourism development. *Acadienité*, alternatively, must incorporate the

possibilities and contradictions produced daily into our cultural formations, even as this process remains heavily imbued with traces of history.

Future examinations of *acadienité*, alimentation, and tourism

In the various topics that I have covered, you have likely found dozens more that I could have tackled. I, too, often felt that there are so many more issues that deserve proper examination. In the interest of writing this particular document, however, I opted to treat those other topics as distractions. I hope to be able to pursue some of them in future writing, and I know that others will, too.

From the lot of issues, there are two especially vexing ones that ought to be examined further. The first is the position of women within Acadian communities in Nova Scotia. In the Acadian communities I studied, foods that are considered “traditional” consistently reference women. A thorough feminist analysis focused toward the position that women have in the communication of *acadienité* and Acadian-ness could illuminate what seems to be an important relationship between women and the construction of Acadian identity, at least insofar as it is related to food and eating rituals.

It was interesting to note, for example, that in Acadian restaurants, women predominated in the kitchens. During the two years that I worked in professional kitchens in Quebec, it was overwhelmingly men who did the preparation, cooking, and the cleaning in restaurant kitchens. The difference in kitchen staff between the two locales may be related to the relative status of the cuisine. In Quebec, the kitchens I saw were based on French or Italian cooking with the chefs schooled in classical European cooking methods. The cuisine in Acadian villages is not like this. It is presented as “traditional” rather than classical, and as home-cooking rather than as fine

dining. The only person in Nova Scotia that I heard called a “chef” was a male *pâtissière*; the women cooking in restaurant kitchens are called “cooks.”

The second specific future site of research is more properly an ongoing one; it is further examinations into the cultural vitality of Acadian villages in Nova Scotia. It is typical of ethnographic research to return to the communities that are studied time and again. In years to come, it will be important to re-assess the Acadian communities presented in this thesis to once again examine the everyday ways of life.

At present, the pace of change in Nova Scotia *vis à vis* tourism and Acadian-ness is quite brisk. In 2006, I traveled back to Nova Scotia one last time before finishing this thesis. I took the opportunity to have another brief visit in some of the communities represented in this dissertation. Already, the changes were striking.

At both the level of the community and of the individuals, trends I noted in the research continued. In particular, the lack of jobs in many of Nova Scotia’s Acadian communities continues to organize and demarcate important life choices as well as everyday life. At the same time, there is an increasing level of tourism organization throughout Acadian regions as the provincial government and other provincial, regional, and local associations proliferate. While these groups create additional venues for promoting and/or supporting tourism to Acadian areas, they are also participating in creating an ever-more institutionalized approach to Acadian-ness as these groups promulgate “authenticity” in terms both formal and fixed.

On a province-wide level, a large marketing trend has taken hold of the Acadian tourism industry in the form of the “L’Acadie Brand of Excellence” initiative. This branding initiative, for 2006, involves ten tourism providers in Nova Scotia who are certified by the *Commission du tourisme acadien du Canada atlantique* as providing “An

authentic experience reflecting the culture and history of the Acadian people” (Province of Nova Scotia, 2006). Four of these provide restaurant services. Certified *l’Acadie* brand tourism providers can use and display a special logo that is designed to look like a stamp and has written boldly across it “L’Acadie.” Will this program be more like the food marketing programs Hughes introduced – the Scottish Food Strategy Group or the Taste of Scotland – in the way in which it utilizes Acadian culture (Hughes, 1995)?

Particularly, then, I encourage in future examination of the cultural vitality of Acadian communities in Nova Scotia as ethnologic and ethnic ways of representing and experiencing Acadian-ness develop. If the trend toward tourism development continues, I expect that use of Acadian food in symbolic forms will increase. What it symbolizes, however, may not be clearly demarcated into ethnologic and ethnic Acadian identities. Further, the ability to define the terrain of ethnic representations of Acadian-ness must be monitored. As long as the tension between the ethnic and ethnologic remains unresolved, tourism development will have to contend with the Acadian peoples’ own social processes vying to demarcate and define the representations of Acadian-ness. Struggles over such terrain as “authenticity” indicate resistance to the hegemony of economic discourses of tourism. Despite the difficulties Acadian communities face in Nova Scotia, I believe that so long as the people there contest notions of Acadian-ness, Acadian cultural vitality remains possible.

Only one of the people who I originally encountered at La Pirogue remains working there. At a new desk, a young man wearing his street clothes does not acknowledge me until I ask him if Doreen is in the building. I pay him for my family to go into the museum,

and he puts down his cell phone to take the money. We find Doreen in the basement of the museum. At first, she does not recognize me but still greets me warmly. Seated at a frame, she is alone down here working on a hooked rug. Then, in a moment of recognition, her face becomes vibrant as Doreen rushes over to say a proper hello. Later, Doreen tells me that she is uncertain of her job here. Her face is wrung with worry. She says that she would prefer to have something that goes through the winter.

Mathias is also gone from the building. He left La Pirogue and his position as Executive Director at the Chéticamp Development Commission. He is now working at the beach on Chéticamp Island.

Diane went to Alberta to work through the winter in 2005-06. She came back home for the summer, but not at La Pirogue. Since the costs associated with opening her folk-art shoppe are higher than her returns, Le Motif is closed.

Gisèle left the museum when she was offered a position teaching a mask-making workshop. In her new position, Gisèle is tickled that she will teach mask-making throughout the winter. La Pirogue lays her off anytime after September. At the Mi-carême centre, Gisèle works full time. She has been promised work at the new arts centre here in Saint Joseph du Moine. It is scheduled to break ground any day.⁴⁷

The participants in the workshop are displaced fisheries workers, nearly all women, who lost their jobs when the fish plant in Chéticamp closed. More than thirty people, according to Gisèle, are paid under a federal government program to be here each weekday learning to make Acadian papier maché masks with a Mi-câreme theme.

⁴⁷ The MP for Cape Breton – Canso, Roger Cuzner, announced an expansion to the Saint Joseph du Moine Mi-carême centre on January 13, 2005. The federal government through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation pledged a contribution of \$250 000 in support for the project (Canada, 2005h).

The Mi-câreme is a mid-lenten festival celebrated in Cheticamp and a handful of other places. Participants disguise themselves in old clothes and masks, going house to house to visit without identifying themselves. Although the Mi-câreme is not during the tourist season, the hand-made masks have become a symbol of the Cheticamp- Le Moine Acadian area.



Photo 7.1: Gisèle (right) at work in the mask-making room at Centre Le Moine in August, 2006.

I get an introduction to Gisèle's sister, one of the participants here, who is working on a pig's likeness. Gisèle's aunt comes in the room, and I greet her as well. After just a few weeks here, the room is a hive of activity. A few workers are intense, shy to show their projects or concerned that the mask is not becoming what they intended. Most people here are smiling and laughing, having a good time at work.

After the two-hour workshop I took in 2003 at the Centre du Moine on how to make the masks, I created a simple mask painted with the tri-colour and stella maris.

Gisèle says that participants in this nine-month course are making more complex masks. There are masks around the Centre du Moine that are larger than I am, created over weeks of work before this workshop was even conceived. One woman I see is working on a hooked rug that features the images of some of the masks others in the class have made. The mi-carême masks are a motif, Gisèle says, that the participants here will use in learning to create other crafts such as Chéticamp's hooked rugs. There is no plan on what to do with the masks and other crafts, other than to add them to the display in the new Mi-câreme centre, that are already beginning to accumulate.

On a long, narrow road right next to the ocean in Pubnico, I find a large new restaurant, the Dennis Point Cafe. I am en route to view the seventeen V80 wind turbines erected in 2005. The windmills I see through the fog at Pubnico Point appear otherworldly. This is the largest wind farm in Atlantic Canada (Canada, 2005g). The café sprung up on this route that takes the traveler down to the wharves where she can view up close West Pubnico's multi-million dollar fishing fleet. It is eerily quiet all along the route. I stop in the café at mid-afternoon to buy some juice for Archie and Angus. Inside, a couple fishers, a few tourists (myself and Angus among them), and some local children create a hopeful snapshot in my mind of people from different trajectories come in to eat.

Millie and Daley are older now. The years of aging have just caught up with my grandmother in the last year as she battles cancer. This summer, she tells me she was only able to pick 400 pints of blueberries, down from last year's 800. Grammie, reclining on the couch, asks rhetorically, "Why do I pick them anyway? Just to give them away!" She laughs.

After I dish out the rappie pie she has made for us, we start into her wild strawberries for dessert. Archie, now six years old, tells Grammie the food is so delicious, that he loves it, that it is the best he has ever eaten. Later, when it is time for us to go, Grammie gives us rappie pie and jars of her wild strawberries to bring back home.

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Appendix One

Consent Form

EATING ACADIAN: CULTURE, TOURISM, AND COMMUNICATION THROUGH RESTAURANTS IN NOVA SCOTIA

This is to state that I agree to take part in the research program "Eating Acadian: Culture, Tourism, and Communication Through Restaurants in Nova Scotia." This research project is being conducted by Charlene Vacon in the Department of Communication Studies at Concordia University.

For further information about this project at any time, please contact:

Charlene Vacon
1531 Saint Germain
Saint Lazare QC J7T 2R9
charlene_vacon@yahoo.com
450 510 0028

I understand that this project is to study the ways food is used to communicate about Acadian identity in tourist destination communities. The research involves participant observation and interviews in Acadian communities across Nova Scotia.

I understand that, should I wish it, I may indicate a pseudonym (a different name) or request complete confidentiality (neither my identity nor any features that would identify me will be revealed – see check boxes below).

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time without negative consequences. I understand that excerpts of this study may be published.

I have studied the above and understand this agreement. I freely consent and voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Name (please print): _____

I request complete confidentiality or a pseudonym or my name and identity need not be concealed
(Please check one)

Preferred pseudonym: _____

Signature: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact information: _____

Appendix Two

LIST OF ACADIAN HISTORIC SITES AND MUSEUMS IN NOVA SCOTIA (2005)

Fort Anne National Historic Site, Annapolis Royal

Description: This site showcases the Fort that was at the “centre of early Acadian settlement and government” (Canada, 1999). The Fort was “a focal point in the battle for control over North America” (Canada, 1999). Parks Canada is the caretaker for the site.

Fort Edward National Historic Site

Description: Built in 1750 by the British, this is the site where approximately 1000 Acadians were detained before being exiled.

Fort Point Museum, LaHave

Description: The museum, previously home to the light house keeper, stands on the site of the strategic French fort and settlement. The site is a community museum operated by the *Lunenburg County Historical Society* (L'Acadie 2003-2005, 2005).

Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site

Description: Parks Canada is the custodian for this site, “the largest reconstructed 18th-century French fortified town in North America” (Canada, 2005c). Louisbourg remained the capital of Isle Royale to 1758.

Fort Sainte Marie de Grâce National Historic Site, LaHave

Description: LaHave was named in 1604 by the French explorers and colonists, de Monts and Champlain; it was their first anchorage in the New World. The fort and adjoining settlement were established in 1632 by Isaac de Razilly, cousin of Cardinal Richelieu. A settlement was also established at Petite Rivière, some 12 miles west of LaHave during this period. LaHave served as the capital of New France until shortly after de Razilly's death in 1636, when the fort was abandoned. LaHave was resettled as part of the Township of New Dublin in the 1760's (L'Acadie 2003-2005, 2005).

George Island National Historic Site

Description: This island near Halifax was one of the prison centers for Acadians during the deportation. It is now maintained as a museum site by Parks Canada.

Grand-Pré National Historic Site

Description: This is the memorial site for the Deportation. Parks Canada maintains a small interpretive village at the site.

La Pirogue

Description: fisheries museum in Chéticamp

Le Noir

Description: forge museum on Isle Madame

Les Trois Pignons

Description: cultural history museum in Chéticamp

Port Royal National Historic Site

Description: Parks Canada now maintains a replica of The Habitation at this site. The restoration of The Habitation was begun by the Government of Canada in the 1930s.

St. Peters Canal National Historic Site

Description: Before the canal was built in the nineteenth century, the location had been used to cross the isthmus by the Acadian settlers of Port Toulouse. That settlement was destroyed in 1758. Today, Parks Canada maintains a small interpretive site and picnic area at the canal.

Appendix Three

ACADIAN SETTLEMENTS AFTER 1763

Contemporary location is in brackets. Those marked with an asterisk are extant Acadian settlements with a contemporary Acadian population.

Source: *The Acadian Odyssey* (Centre acadien, 1996; Ross and Deveau, 1992: 75-76)

Southwest Nova Scotia

Argyle* (Yarmouth County)

Clare* (Digby County)

Central Nova Scotia

Chezzetcook (Halifax County)

Northeast Nova Scotia

Pomquet,* Tracadie, Havre-Boucher (Antigonish County)

Ile-Royale (Cape Breton)

Isle Madame* (Richmond County, Cape Breton)

Chéticamp* (Inverness County, Cape Breton)

Other areas of Nova Scotia

Minudie, Nappan and Maccan (Cumberland County)

Appendix Four

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS PROMOTING TOURISM IN NOVA SCOTIA'S ACADIAN COMMUNITIES DURING THE PERIOD 2003 - 2005

350th Anniversary of the Founding of Pubnico

Argyle Economic and Tourism Development Committee

Mandate: "established in 1998, to promote economic development in the Acadian region of Argyle" (Acadie 2003-2005, 2005).

Acadie 2003-2005

Mandate: "The goal of L'Acadie 2003 - 2005 is to develop a cooperative approach to marketing and promotions for groups planning commemorative events in Nova Scotia during this exciting three-year period" (L'Acadie 2003-2005, 2005)

URL: <http://www.acadie2003-2005.ca>

Acadie 400

Mandate: promoting the 400th anniversary of French settlement in *l'Acadie*

URL: <http://www.acadie400.ca> (no longer functional)

Chéticamp Development Association

Commission du tourisme l'acadien du Canada atlantique

Mandate: "The Commission du tourisme L'acadien du Canada atlantique (CTACA) brings together tourism industry stakeholders offering an Acadian product or operating in Acadian areas of the Atlantic Provinces (Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland/Labrador).

The CTACA aims to develop a fully-diversified Acadian tourism industry in Atlantic Canada by offering its members specialized support and consulting services so that they are able to increasingly develop their products...."

URL: www.acadievacations.com

Congrès mondial acadien 2004

Mandate: bringing together the people of the Acadian Diaspora for the third modern world congress.

Le Conseil acadien de Par-en- Bas

Mandate: "Le Conseil acadien de Par-en- Bas de la région d'Argyle est un regroupement d'associations et d'individus qui s'engagent à promouvoir l'épanouissement et le développement global de la communauté acadienne en Argyle. Cet organisme en Argyle

est à la fois le porte-parole de la population acadienne de la région et un centre de ressources important” (SNA, 2005).

Development Isle Madame

Mandate: “Development Isle Madame Association Inc. is dedicated to aid, organize and foster the necessary social and economic changes on Isle Madame to ensure its future prosperity. Our primary goal is to help in the creation of quality long term sustainable jobs for the residents of Isle Madame” (DIMA, 2005)

URL: <http://Islemadame.com/dima/>

La Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE)

Mandate: “La Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse s’engage à promouvoir l’épanouissement et le développement global de la communauté acadienne et francophone de la Nouvelle-Écosse en collaboration avec ses membres, composés d’organismes régionaux, provinciaux et institutionnels d’expression française” (FANE, 2005).

URL: <http://www.federationacadienne.ca/fane/index.cfm>

Focus 2005

Mandate: Focus 2005 was struck by the Annapolis County Mayors & Warden Committee to focus on event planning for 2005 and related communications issues, working on behalf of the four municipal units and in cooperation with the Port Royal 400th Anniversary Society.

Grand Pré National Historic Site of Canada (Parks Canada & Société promotion Grand-Pré)

Mandate: “Grand-Pré National Historic Site commemorates the Deportation of the Acadians and recognizes the national importance of this area which was a centre of Acadian life from 1682 to 1755. Grand-Pré also celebrates the profound attachment that Acadians the world over still feel for this area, the heart of their ancestral homeland and the symbol of the ties that unite them” (Société promotion Grand-Pré, 2007).

URL: <http://www.grand-pre.com> and http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/grandpre/index_e.asp

Inverness County Recreation and Tourism

URL: <http://www.invernessco.com>

Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage Tourism Division

Mandate: “Tourism Division functions include planning and development, marketing and operations. Staff conduct, analyze and disseminate research and statistics. In addition we provide tourism development and planning support, including financial assistance and guidance to communities; planning and secretarial support to the Peggy’s Cove Commission; assistance in developing the market readiness of Nova Scotia’s most competitive tourism products, destinations and attractions; development and distribution of “How To” tourism development publications designed to assist entrepreneurs and tourism operators; and tourism policy, including developing and supporting government policy that assists in the growth and competitiveness of Nova Scotia’s tourism sector. On the marketing side, the goal is to market Nova Scotia as a tourism destination for the purpose of generating export revenues” (Tourism Division [online], retrieved October 25, 2005).

URL: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/dtc/tourism/default.asp>

Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council

Mandate: Begun in 1997 to create a yearly Tourism Plan, "the council brings tourism operators and government together to ensure Nova Scotia's annual plan and supporting activities best reflect the tourism marketplace" (Nova Scotia Department of Tourism).

URL: <http://www.nstpc.com/>

Port Royal 400th Anniversary Society

Mandate: "The Port Royal 400th Anniversary Society will work in partnership with others to: Plan, promote, coordinate, and see through to fruition those initiatives, events, and products approved by the Society; ensure that events are developed on a scale that is harmonious with the local area; ensure that the results of the activities of the Society have a sustainable, positive economic impact on our communities" (Port Royal 400th Anniversary Society, 2003)

URL: <http://www.portroyal400.com/>

Société acadienne de Clare

Mandate: "La Société acadienne de Clare s'engage à promouvoir en français l'épanouissement et le développement global de la communauté acadienne de la municipalité de Clare en collaboration avec ses membres composés d'organismes, d'institutions, de commerces et d'individus d'expression française" (SAC, 2005).

URL: <http://www.saclare.ca>

Société nationale de l'Acadie

Mandate: "L'objectif principal de la SNA est la promotion et la défense des droits et intérêts du peuple acadien des provinces de l'Atlantique. Pour ce faire, elle mène différentes activités sur les scènes internationales et interprovinciales" (SNA, 2005).

URL: <http://www.snacadie.org/SNA/index.cfm>

La Société Saint-Pierre

Mandate: "La Société Saint-Pierre développe chez les acadiens de la région un esprit de solidarité et de fraternité et travaille aussi à la conservation de l'héritage acadien et de la promotion de leurs intérêts intellectuels, sociaux et économiques. En plus d'être le siège social de La Société Saint-Pierre, notre centre, Les Trois Pignons est le centre culturel pour la région. L'édifice loge aussi un centre de généalogie, une galerie de tapis hookés et un musée d'antiquités, une radio communautaire, un studio d'enregistrement et une salle de réunion. Tout au long de l'année, La Société Saint-Pierre travaille en étroite collaboration avec plusieurs partenaires dans la réalisation de nos nombreux projets afin d'assurer la survie linguistique, culturelle, économique, sociale et politique, et le développement du peuple acadien dans la région acadienne de Chéticamp" (La Société Saint-Pierre, 2005).

Appendix Five

NOVA SCOTIA TRAVELWAYS

Evangeline Trail: Bedford to Yarmouth via Annapolis Valley
Glooscap Trail: Amherst to Windsor via Fundy Shore
Sunrise Trail: Canso Causeway to Amherst via Northumberland Shore
Ceilidh Trail: Canso Causeway to Margaree Harbour
Cabot Trail: Loop through the Cape Breton Highlands
Bras d'Or Lakes Drive: Loop around the shoreline of the lake
Fleur-de-lis Trail: Canso Causeway to Louisbourg
Marconi Trail: Louisbourg to Glace Bay
Marine Drive: Dartmouth to Canso Causeway via the Eastern Shore
Halifax Metro Area: includes Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford, Sackville
Lighthouse Route: Yarmouth to Halifax via the South Shore

Appendix Six

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF RESTAURANTS IN NOVA SCOTIA WITH AN ACADIAN THEME AND/OR MENU

Au Havre du Capitaine, Meteghan River
Auld's Cove Lobster Suppers, Auld's Cove
Cape View Restaurant, Mavillette Beach
Chez Christophe, Grosses-Coques
Fleur-de-lis Tea Room and Dining Room, Arichat
La Cuisine, Saulnierville
La Cuisine Acadienne, Louisdale
L'Auberge Acadienne Inn, Arichat
Le Gabriel, Chéticamp
Restaurant Acadienne, Chéticamp
Restaurant Chez Jean, Anse-des-Belliveau
Roadside Grill, Anse-des-Belliveau

Appendix Seven

SALTED GREEN ONIONS

Salted green onions are used as a seasoning in dishes such as fricot and râpure. The ingredients to make them are all listed in the name: salt and green onions. When these two are combined the salt brings out the moisture in the onions. Over several days, a brine is created in which the onions are preserved. A non-reactive container must be used in the making of salted green onions since a chemical reaction is involved.

Onions grow well in almost every zone of Nova Scotia's soil. Preserving the onions in salt allows native onions be used throughout the months of late autumn, winter, and early spring when the onions would not be growing. Even now, when green onions from southern climates are available in grocery stores year round, many Acadians living in rural areas of the province of Nova Scotia grow their own green onions and preserve them in this way.

4 cups green onions (the top shoots of white onion bulbs)

½ cup course or pickling salt

Combine these two ingredients in a stoneware or glass vessel. Allow to sit at room temperature, lightly covered, for several days until a brine forms. The salted green onions may now be stored in tightly sealed glass jars.

I consulted a recipe in *A Taste of Acadie* for *herbes salées*. The author writes that while the recipe I have above is traditional, the white part of the onion may also be added (Cormier-Boudreau and Gallant, 1991: 119).

Appendix eight

MEDIA RELEASE DISTRIBUTED TO CKJM AND *THE INVERNESS ORAN.*

June 2003

In Chéticamp, it's fricot. Throughout this province's Acadian communities you'll find particular dishes that have been served up in homes, and then in restaurants, for years.

Now, many of these traditional, local Acadian specialties are the focus of a research project for Quebec's Charlene Vacon.

"I grew up in Yarmouth eating all the Acadian foods that are popular in that area," says Vacon, a Ph.D. student in Montreal. "Now, I'm interested in how we as Acadian people share our cuisine through restaurants in Nova Scotia."

Vacon is in Nova Scotia for what she calls the main tourist season: June, July, and August. She is currently researching Acadian specialties such as boudin and fricot in the Chéticamp area.

"I want to see what's on the menu as far as Acadian foods go," she says. "It's interesting to see how we talk about our special dishes among ourselves and how we represent them to tourists who come to try them."

Vacon says that eating is one of the most accessible ways for tourists to sample regional culture.

"If you're a tourist, restaurants are not only practical while you're on the road. They also give you a change to experience Acadian culture. There's no translation or interpretation required."

While conducting these three months of research, Vacon says she hopes to come away with a better understanding of how Acadian food is being used to develop tourism.

"Chéticamp is one of the areas of this province where tourism development plays a very important role," says Vacon. "Chéticamp is also one of the more developed Acadian tourist destinations in Nova Scotia. It will be interesting to see how Cheticantins are presenting their Acadian cuisine in the many restaurants that are in that area."

Next year Nova Scotia hosts the 3rd Congrès mondial acadien. While Vacon says she hopes that the event will boost tourism throughout Nova Scotia's Acadian regions, she believes that attracting non-Acadian tourists is important for these communities. She says that in the years after the Congrès, interest in Acadian foods is likely to grow as a result of the efforts being put in at many levels of tourism development.

"Look at Louisiana. Cajun food is like a brand-name, and a very successful one in economic terms."

Vacon says she wonders if Acadian food will fare similarly in the years to come. "Will we have an Emeril Legasse broadcasting from Chéticamp as he prepares fricot? Is that something to strive for or something to avoid?"

Vacon says that there will be a balancing act for communities that choose tourism as a form of economic development. She cautions that Acadian culture must be valued in its own right. "But, I understand that the people who live and work in these communities

all year long need to have economic development. Tourism infrastructure, like restaurants, can play a part in that.”

Spending time doing research in Chéticamp’s restaurants has some great fringe benefits. Vacon says she is enjoying the friendliness and the pace of life here.

“The best part of this research project is that I absolutely have to eat all of these great foods!”

Appendix nine

MEDIA RELEASE DISTRIBUTED TO CJLS, CIFA AND *THE YARMOUTH VANGUARD*.

July 2003

Throughout this province's Acadian communities you'll find particular dishes that have been served up in homes, and then in restaurants, for years.

Now, many of these traditional, local Acadian specialties are the focus of a research project for Quebec's Charlene Vacon.

"I grew up in Yarmouth eating all the Acadian foods that are popular in that area," says Vacon, a Ph.D. student in Montreal. "Now, I'm interested in how we as Acadian people share our cuisine through restaurants in Nova Scotia."

Vacon is in Nova Scotia for what she calls the main tourist season: June, July, and August. She spent June researching Acadian specialties such as boudin, pâté, and fricot in the Chéticamp area.

"I've been to West Chezzetcook and I've spent several weeks in Chéticamp. I plan to get to Larry's River, Pomquet, Arichat. Wherever there are Acadian people eating and opportunities to share our foods, that's where I want to be."

"I want to see what's on the menu as far as Acadian foods go," she says. "It's interesting to see how we talk about our special dishes among ourselves and how we represent them to tourists who come to try them."

While conducting this three months of research, Vacon says she hopes to come away with a better understanding of how Acadian food is being used to develop tourism.

"In Pubnico and throughout Clare, Acadian food plays a very important role for the local people," says Vacon. "A region like Pubnico that is now being developed for tourism will want to share its food traditions. And that can be done in many different ways."

Vacon says that eating is one of the most accessible ways for tourists to sample regional culture.

"If you're a tourist, restaurants are not only practical while you're on the road. They also give you a change to experience Acadian culture. There's no translation required."

Next year Nova Scotia hosts the 3rd Congrès mondial acadien. While Vacon says she hopes that the event will boost tourism throughout Nova Scotia's Acadian regions, she believes that attracting non-Acadian tourists is important for these communities. She says that in the years after the Congrès, interest in Acadian foods is likely to grow as a result of the efforts being put in at many levels of tourism development.

"Look at Louisiana. Cajun food is like a brand-name, and a very successful one in economic terms. It hasn't always been that way, of course. There were years of development of the cuisine and the brand."

Vacon says she wonders if Acadian food will fare similarly in the years to come. "Will we have an Emeril Legasse broadcasting from Saulnierville as he prepares fricot? Is that something to strive for or something to avoid?"

Vacon says that there will be a balancing act for communities that choose tourism as a form of economic development. She cautions that Acadian culture must be valued in its own right. "But, I understand that the people who live and work in these communities all year long need to have economic development. I do believe that tourism infrastructure, like restaurants, can play a calculated role in that."

Vacon says that she is enjoying being back home for her research.

"The best part of this research project is that I'm spending the summer eating all of these great foods."