

**The False Threat of Moderation: Sustaining Traditional Fishing Livelihoods**

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On September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the “lobster wars” (McKinley, 2020, p.1) boiled over again when Sipekne’katik First Nation launched a moderate livelihood lobster fishery outside of the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) regulated season – a lawful action based on the *Marshall* ruling that affirmed Indigenous treaty fishing rights. Sipekne’katik issued five licenses, each with a maximum of 50 traps in Lobster Fishing Area (LFA) 34 and submitted their fishing plan to Ottawa demonstrating that their catch would have no impact on the sustainability of the stock. When the season ended the Sipekne’katik fishery would amount to less than 0.1% of revenues of the broader lobster fishery (Smith, 2021, p.123). Yet, commercial fishers from nearby settler villages – who in contrast to the indigenous fishers hold nearly a thousand licenses in LFA 34, with each fisher permitted up to 400 traps (The Eastern Door, 2020) – reacted with outrage and violence. During the conflict fleets of commercial boats tried to block access to fishing grounds, Indigenous crewed boats were shot at with flares, gear was stolen, trap lines cut, and local businesses refused to sell gear and bait to Indigenous fishers. While it has become common place to justify this outrage on the grounds of stock conservation, race evidently played a role in the situation. We need not look further than the videos of non-Indigenous fishers “mocking Mi’kmaw language speakers and drummers during a standoff on Saulnierville Wharf” (Martin 2020, p.2). According to many on the frontlines, DFO’s reaction to the violence was severely underwhelming (Martin, 2020, p.1).

DFO later attempted to quell conflict by establishing year-by-year “interim understandings” with individual First Nations while a clearer definition of a “moderate livelihood” continues to be worked out in law (Dean-Simmons, 2022). This is a familiar narrative in the ongoing conflicts that have defined the “lobster wars” over the last 20 or so years. What happened in Sipekne’katik is by no means an unprecedented situation, it is one case in a long line of violent clashes met with band-aid solutions by DFO. For example, after the violence at Burnt Church in

the early 2000's DFO developed the *Marshall Response Initiative*, wherein almost \$600 million was spent to buy back settler commercial licenses and redistribute them to eligible First Nations along with fishing vessels and training. (Harris & Millerd. 2010, p.91). This allowed Indigenous fishers to get involved in the regular commercial fishery but didn't provide a clear vision for how moderate livelihoods should be enacted going forward. Most recently there has been a reframing of the moderate livelihood landings as a large-scale poaching operation. Nova Scotia's liberal leader Zach Churchill has now joined many commercial fishers in saying that the moderate livelihood situation is being abused, estimating that "hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars of lobster [are] being landed illegally" (Beswick, 2023, p.1). Churchill and commercial fishers are now calling for the government to revoke buyers' licences from those who purchase lobster from fishers without official DFO-licences (Beswick, 2023).

What is clear is that Atlantic fishers, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, work in a context of legal and economic uncertainty. In importantly different ways, both groups feel a sense of vulnerability about their rights of access to fishing and the future of coastal lifeways. This vulnerability, I argue, is a significant factor in the ever-waning goodwill among fisher people in our province.

### **Through the Waves of Conflict**

The Atlantic Canadian fishery has a unique cultural and economic character. It is extremely lucrative – the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia lobster fishery alone is worth \$1.1 billion, but it is also defined by tradition and struggle. Many fishing communities have longstanding and deeply held normative ideas about their place and the activities that happen there (Frost, 2021). Askins (2009) would describe this as a "cultural filter" – a way in which groups develop accordant

perspectives of their physical natural landscapes and the socio-cultural activities that happen upon them. Askins adds that involved in developing one's cultural filter is the implicit task of constructing the "other" as having different myths about rurality and nature. These processes are important not only in understanding how people come to make sense of their own lives, but also how cultural filters shape specific conflicts in rural communities. In this paper, I want draw in details of these processes using the case of the lobster wars. I argue that this case can provide us with a nuanced look at the "racial journey to personhood" (Razack, 2002, p.14) in settler and Indigenous coastal communities, and it can provide us with understandings of how cultural myths, traditions, and social representations shape the very core of violent conflicts on the water and in the courtrooms of Atlantic Canada. Despite the incongruencies and possibly insurmountable ontological differences in Indigenous and settler perspectives of natural resources use and management, I will attempt to show how common concerns for community sustainability, access to fisheries, and autonomy over local resources have the potential to tie diverse fishing communities closer together. The first two sections of this paper will outline fishers' perspectives of their occupation, their perspectives on State regulation, and their understanding of the meaning of coastal lifeways. The first of these two focuses on the culture of settler fisheries, the next on the culture of Indigenous fishing. I will then use these two outlines to better understand the concerns and arguments put forth in the lobster war conflicts. Ultimately, I argue that Indigenous moderate livelihood fisheries themselves are not threats to conservation nor to equitable access to fisheries and fishing lifeways. Nonetheless, they do signal to a general and legitimate feeling of uncertainty about fishing futures that is currently being experienced by many smaller scale Atlantic fishers. I argue that the real threat to settler fisheries and Indigenous fisheries alike is rooted in a lack of DFO vision and clear regulation on how to sustain small scale fisheries in the face of the industrial

fishing regime. As Elizabeth Furniss (1999, p.4) notes, it is typical that advancing Indigenous rights will heighten the fear of settler lifestyle collapse, and I believe this to be the case in many Atlantic fishing communities, but what I hope to show is that in stark opposition to this false fear, a movement toward more moderately scaled fisheries for both Indigenous *and* settler folk might be the solution to fishing sustainability for all and increased goodwill on our coasts. To realize this goal, much needs to be understood about the ways the State and local communities think about fishing and their traditional coastal lifeways and how fishing has been shaped by settler colonialism and neoliberal economics. As a settler with roots in coastal Atlantic communities of Nova Scotia, I see my own motivation for this work as an attempt to follow the directive of Metis scholar Zoe Todd (2018) who says that settlers need to constantly work at “liv[ing] accountably, thoughtfully and tenderly in unceded and surrendered territories” (p.60).

### **Settler Attachment to the Fishery**

Robert Wuthnow (2018) argues that the “town”, or in this case the “fishing village” is one of the great institutions of rural life. Both my analysis and my proposed action on contemporary fishing conflicts begins there – with the goals, fears, and desires of communities. I’ll start by piecing together some of the normative beliefs and self-perceptions of settler fishers.

Atlantic settler fishers often make sense of their lives and occupations in ways that are quite instrumental. As Rebecca Frost (2021) discovered, fishers often make positive judgements of their fishery on the basis of its ability to sustain their community economically, and in a large 597 participant study in southwest Nova Scotia, Apostle (1985) found that fishers positively evaluated their jobs based on factors like level of earnings and full-time status. There is a general sentiment in these communities that economic growth is not a bad thing, but there also seems to

be resistance to unmoored and inequitable accumulation of wealth in large, delocalized enterprises. Fishers in Frost's study celebrated growth, but only if it was perceived to be a result of hard work. For generations, there were strong ties between "artisanal fleets" and their locales wherein "local boats fish[ed] local waters, landing their catches at local ports to be prepared for sale by local processors" (Symes & Phillipson, 2009, p.2). Community ties are important in this context, as sources of information, training, and identity (Apostle, 1985, p.266). This is a type of fishing that deemphasizes commodity production and gives more weight to human needs and use value (Longo et al., 2015, p.56), but in the last half century or so small-scale fishing communities have faced many stressors primarily linked to the "industrialization and intensification of capture fisheries" (Ertör 2021, p.1157). In the 1980's when newer and more lucrative offshore dragging equipment started to proliferate in Atlantic Canada, inshore fishers still working with more traditional harvesting techniques were upset with the disparity of economic opportunity (Frost, 2021, p.5). The economic rationality of settler fishers then is a mixture of "bootstraps" individualism, complimented by an ethics of "sufficientarianism" (Frost, 2021, p.5) – they sincerely want people to have enough, but they want people to work hard for it.

The fishery provides both material and symbolic sustenance for Atlantic coastal communities. In many fishing locales, people ground self-narratives around their catch (Todd, 2018, p.72). Nicole Power (2005) found that Newfoundland fishers often claim that there is something "in the blood" (p.105) of their people that connects them to the sea. They argue that the right to fish is not found in legally codified certificates of training or enterprise incorporations, but in the bodies of fishers, in their unconscious generational knowhow, and in the way of life of sea-hewn communities. Yet, R.M. Vaughn (1994) also cautions that fishing communities can quickly become subjects of stereotypes perpetuated by the Canadian center for a national economic and

cultural narrative. Vaughn (1994) says the animals of the Atlantic can act as a “visual canon of a systemic prejudice that reads Atlantic Canadian life and people as parochial, technologically outmoded, and ultimately, powerless” (p.170). We are not pictured as those eating lobster, but as the “lumpen Maritimers” (Vaughn, 1994, p.169) hauling it onto boats, drawing on a mystical and primitive connection to the sea to exploit our resources. These images of Atlantic Canadians as the “bottom feeders in the economic food chain” (Vaughn 1994, p.171) are reinforced by the relatively small size of our economic revenue and our reliance on transfer payments from wealthier parts of the nation. As Foster (2018) notes, mainstream perceptions of Atlantic Canada view us as “backward” and attribute this to a defect in character. However, what others see as a lack of vision and commitment to economic growth, might be reframed as a focus on the local sustainability of communities, and the preservation of local traditions and lifeways that challenge capitalist ideals. In many situations, fishers have to navigate State regulation and natural limits to fishing to protect this deeply felt connection to fishing lifeways. The crash of the cod stock in the 1990’s and its subsequent moratorium led many settler fishers to poach fish, manipulate welfare systems, and fish illegally, selling it in an underground economy, and opposed to the narrative of criminal “bottom feeders”, many saw these actions a symbolic form of resistance to the State’s attempt to control the way of life of Atlantic people (Power, 2005, p.104).

What does this all tell us? It tells us that Atlantic settler fishers have a deep tie to the fishery and the lifeways it engenders. Fishers in Atlantic Canada react to regulation and crisis with long-held normative beliefs and self-perceptions at hand, and much of their concern goes beyond economic interest to broader and more powerful interests in community survival.

### **Indigenous Perspectives on Fishing**

Fish, whether they be ocean, river, or lake-dwelling, are found in every Indigenous nation in Canada (Todd, 2018, p.60), so for many First Nations fishing is deeply embedded in traditional lifeways. Yet, Indigenous fishers confound notions of “tradition” in much of their contemporary fishing practice. They do not often appear in the ways we might imagine in colonial stereotypes – that of the “Indian” catching fish in a birch bark canoe. In many ways, a contemporary Indigenous lobster fisher might appear almost indistinguishably from a settler fisher – they too use modern traps and captain Cape Islander boats. Nonetheless, there are very important inscriptions of ancestral knowledge informing their work. Indigenous fishing culture is a palimpsest of cultural transformation and retention – the building up and passing down of complex perspectives on nature, community, and the State.

Kepkiewicz (2020) acknowledges that while Canadian Indigenous communities are highly diverse many share a foundational cosmivision – that there is little distinction between people and the natural world. Indigenous worldviews stress the relationality of all beings. This results in a very different sense of management compared to settler State approaches, but it does not mean there is no management of fish resources. We must be wary of a “colonial culture” that frequently uses contrastive frameworks to strike “indigenous difference and inferiority” (Furniss, 1999, p.12) excluding their practices from modernity (Lauer & Aswani, 2009, p.322). Such a perspective might claim that “management” is a totally foreign concept to Indigenous custom, which it is not. Even the most traditional of Indigenous fisheries have practices of management that include methods of selective harvesting and habitat monitoring (Mathews & Turner 2017, p.178). For example, on the northwest coast, fish, and particularly salmon, are understood as “moral beings with immortal spirits that require protocols for respectful engagement” (Mathews & Turner, 2017,



p.190). The relationship between humans and fish is a social relationship amongst two communities, a kinship. Vanessa Watts' (2013) calls it an "inter-species treaty" (p.65) – a perspective that involves a care for non-human life much beyond the relatively instrumental leanings of settler conservation. Hannah Martin (2020) says that what calls her to the frontlines of the lobster wars "is a spirit that lives within [her] and perhaps a culmination of all those who walked before [her]" (p.2). She continues by saying that "it is the same spirit that lives in the sacred fire and the ocean water" (Martin 2020, p.2). In other words, indigenous people don't just feel connected to the ocean and fishing in economic and symbolic ways, but in deeply spiritual ways too. Martin (2020) finishes by stating that the spirit of the ocean is "the spirit of the earth that [her] ancestors walked, the spirit of our inherent rights to live, eat, and breathe; to be L'nu" (p.2).

Even though Indigenous worldviews are centered around treaty and respect, the waters in which they fish are not frictionless places where cosmovisions can be peacefully enacted. Indigenous communities constantly have to bend and disperse State laws and their own fishing ideals to maintain their lifeways – a practice of community survival that Metis anthropologist Zoe Todd (2018) labels "refraction". Todd (2018) says that refraction is the process that occurs when Indigenous communities are "forced to negotiate across 'sameness and difference' as a matter of survivance" (p.67). The case of the lobster wars demonstrates this perfectly – moderate livelihood fisheries use section 35(1) of the Constitution Act to assert their right to govern their own harvest, despite DFO's constant attempt to reel in the freedoms and sovereignty of their community. These fishers face confrontation and violence on the water but in doing so, they "assert Indigenous legal-governance traditions while contending with the unavoidable realities of State imaginaries about how humans should relate to the world around them" (Todd, 2018, p.67). Todd chooses the word "refraction" purposively. Todd says, when we fish, we have to adapt our senses and our actions to

account for the refraction that occurs on water surfaces. Refraction thus demands that we pay attention, develop skill, and care for the boundaries between interfaces (Todd, 2018, p.67). These interfaces are air-water, but also community-State, and settler-Indigenous culture – all entities involved in the lobster wars.

### **Expanding Solidarity**

Todd (2018) says,

we have a responsibility to pay attention to the ways that communities and collectives of people tend to, care for, and work reciprocally with fish to build and sustain relationships which disrupt the State's attempts to 'command and control' the terms upon which Indigenous people, and Canada more broadly, interacts with the lands, waters and atmospheres within its reach. (p.62)

I agree with this notion, and I am particularly drawn to the way Todd (2018) implicates a “we” (p.62) that includes Canadians broadly in finding resolutions to fishing conflicts. Much State-level discourse on reconciliation is framed as a nation-to-nation relationship, but I think there is an element of the localized enacting of reconciliation that is lost in State discourse. Foregrounding nation-to-nation relations seems to filter what are inherently embodied relations among people through abstract ideas of national belonging. To live out the accountable, thoughtful, and tender relationships Todd calls for we may need to heed Tully's (2018) and Pictou's (2015) instruction for an expanded notion of reconciliation. Pictou (2015, p.464) strikes an important difference between formal, codified, legal treaties made between colonial nations and Indigenous leaders and informal, noncodified, embodied forms of good relationality called small “t” treaty relations. Formal treaties are a contract between nations, not necessarily an ongoing partnership between

people. Expanding our notion of treaty to include small “t” treaty relations signals to a more full and effective style of nation-to-nation goodwill. Tully (2018) adds that when we talk about reconciliation we must think about relations amongst people, but also our relationship to the whole environment that we depend on. He says that both our unsustainable relationship with the earth and the oppression of Indigenous people is based on the same “imperious” (p.39) attitude – an unsustainable and alienating ideology of extractive European global imperialism. Taking these insights into account, *I argue there is a possibility of enacting settler-Indigenous reconciliation in the lobster war conflicts if we build a shared resistance to exploitative growth-oriented industrial fishing regimes*. In this, there is potential for both settler and Indigenous fishing communities to bring about their occupational and cultural goals. One crucial step in this movement of reconciliation is challenging the false threat of moderation. Frost (2021) has demonstrated that a dominant feature of settler fishing communities is an egalitarian perspective toward work and income. As explored above, these communities are happy to see local enterprises succeed economically as long as that success is deemed to come from hard work and not undeserving special treatment from State regulation or deregulation. I believe that settler fishers see the moderate livelihood fisheries as operating on undue State-sanctioned advantage and thus lash out against it motivated by their broader feeling of threat to local lifeways. But if we instead embrace the moderate livelihood of indigenous fisheries, *and also enact new models of settler fishing moderation* we may be able to better ensure the traditional lifeways of both historic fishing groups and ease more legitimate threats to their fisheries. To make this argument clearer I want to outline the risk of industrial fishing regimes and show how they debase the functioning, goals, and desires of both groups of fishers described above.

## **Industrial Fishing Regimes**

To understand the impact of our current industrial fishing regime, we must recognize that we are systematically exploiting nature for profit “driven by a ceaseless commitment to growth, regardless of its social and ecological costs” (Clausen & Clark, 2005, pp.423-424). This has resulted in the decimation of ocean resources “at multiple trophic and spatial scales” (Clausen & Clark, 2005, p.422). After decades of intense industrial fishing, the world’s catch of ocean fish peaked in 1989 (Clausen & Clark, 2005, p.433). then beginning in the early 90’s fish stocks of enormous historical importance, like Atlantic cod and blue fin tuna, previous deemed inexhaustible, collapsed (Ertör 2021). As Longo, Clausen, and Clark (2015) report “it is estimated that all large predatory fish have seen a 90% decline in spawning stock biomass since the preindustrial level” (p.6). This collapse was fuelled by geographic, bathymetric (deeper and further offshore), and taxonomic (species) expansions in fishing (Longo et al. 2015, p.5). Our exploitation of these stocks has necessitated that we “fish down food webs” (Longo et al. 2015, p.35), meaning that we have had to start fishing lower trophic level species when more desirable stocks decline. Now that the groundfish fisheries in Atlantic Canada have collapsed it has put even more pressure on the lobster fishery as a primary stock for many fishing communities – this is an inflammatory factor in the increasing sense of vulnerability in the lobster wars.

Not only does industrial fishing damage fish stocks, but it also transforms small-scale fishing communities. Davis and Wagner (2006) say that the State’s interest in economic development “masked in policies promoting rational economic utilization and efficiency, typically supersede concerns about both ecosystem and community sustainability” (p.491). As a consequence “some fisheries sectors, especially those of small boat and indigenous people, are systematically disadvantaged (p.491). One way this happens is through commercial concentration.

The Nova Scotian offshore lobster fishery in LFA 41 is already commercially monopolized by Clearwater Seafoods, and the inshore fishery, where small-scale locally owned fishing enterprises operate is also under threat. Concentration happens on both sides of the wharf – because fish processing is not subject to the same rules of licencing as fish harvesting “consolidations, mergers, and acquisitions have been commonplace” (Andrews et al. 2022, p.79). Susanna Fuller, vice president of the organization Oceans North has told the *Halifax Examiner* in their investigation of the lobster wars that “the horse is out of the barn ... foreign investors and large financial institutions own a lot of our processing facilities, so we’re losing a significant part of our supply chain that used to be locally owned” (Pannozzo & Baxter, 2020b). There has also been a proliferation of corporate processing plants entering into agreements with local fishers for control of their catch and licences. The companies will loan local fishers money for investment in a new boat or gear, but in return the fishers have to agree to allow the company to control their catch and their licences – these are called “trust agreements”. Processing companies do this so they have a guaranteed supply of catch, but it also results in the concentration of power in corporate hands as they procure the rights and privileges of licences. Although these kinds of agreements are now outlawed Fuller says that “it is still happening ...law is being broken” (Pannozzo & Baxter, 2020b). Losing control of licences and trap allotments threatens the ability of fishers to manage work for local people and threatens to drain economic revenues from local communities.

There are also agreements that have happened between First Nations and corporate fishing entities that place the future of small-scale fishing in question. Recently, the Membertou First Nation has bought two of Clearwater Seafood’s offshore lobster licences and entered into operating agreements for other species such as Arctic Surf Clam, but these licenses are still being fished by Clearwater boats (Pannozzo & Baxter, 2020b). These agreements are supposed to secure

Indigenous employment in the commercial fishery, although it is unclear how many Indigenous people have been hired. It seems as though this will benefit Membertou more in terms of financial investment than it will in preserving traditional fishing lifeways.

What is important to recognize here is that rather than seeing our capitalist and colonial industrial fishing regime as the threat to small-scale fishing livelihoods, many settler fishers are aiming their outrage at moderate livelihood practices. Perhaps this is because it is ideologically easier for settler fishers to construct an opposition based on race than it is to think about a fishing future based on a different economic paradigm. The challenge is perhaps that smaller-scale fishing systems and more respectful ecological relationships are often derided as nostalgic and naive. But this is a misleading characterization that deems “any approach that proposes transcending capitalist development [as doing] away with both capitalism and human development (as if these two are inherently coupled)” (Longo et al. 2015, p.199). Considering that since the late 80s human wellbeing in the fishers has vastly eroded the true naivety is thinking that industrial fishing does any good at all. While this industrial system is a goliath, Raymond Williams (1977) claims, “*no mode of production and therefore no dominant social order ...ever in reality includes or exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention*” (p.125, original emphasis) which means there is always room for something new, in this case, a move toward more moderately sized, and most importantly, locally owned and controlled fisheries, and better small “t” treaty relations amongst fishing communities.

### **Toward Smaller-Scale Fisheries**

The idea of “going small” has been a part of the lobster war discussions but it hasn’t gained a lot of traction – it is muddled against the volume of conflict. For example, some have called for

the Indigenous-owned commercial licences gained in *Marshall Response Initiative* to be broken down into small livelihood licences, because the large-quota licences often don't serve First Nations communities all that well. Because of the long history of exclusion from the fishery, many Indigenous fishers still struggle to fish commercially from a lack of training. Jeff Purdy, the Deputy Chief of Acadia First Nation agrees, saying "It helps some people, but it's limited. ...To be a fisherman you can't just go to school, get your Class 4, get your MED [Marine Emergency Duties] training, get your radio operators course, jump on a boat and go. That doesn't make you a fisher. You'll starve to death." (Pannozzo & Baxter, 2020a). On top of the issue of training is that many Indigenous fisher don't want to fish alongside commercial fishermen because they are tired of the harassment and they often don't want to engage in the larger, more taxing, and riskier style of fishing that comes with commercial enterprises (Pannozzo & Baxter, 2020b). These are all partial reasons why the smaller moderate livelihood fisheries were started. Fishers, such as Colin Sproul, who is also the president of the 1,900-member United Fishery Conservation Alliance, says Indigenous nations should have broken their commercial licences down into smaller moderate licences when they were acquired. The Sipekne'katik First Nation received enough commercial tags that they could have broken the licences down into about 50 moderate livelihood operations (Pannozzo & Baxter, 2020a). However, as stated above, for this to be an effective strategy for sustaining small-scale fisheries in Atlantic Canada, this trend would have to occur on a much wider basis and include settler fishers. Sproul's perspective should be one he also views his own community with.

Smaller-scale operations allow local communities to maintain control of their fisheries and keep revenues in local enterprises. It would also align with what Frost (2021) identified as the "sufficientarianism" (p.5) of many fishing communities – families would have enough and there

would be no orientation toward accumulation. What is very exciting is that this could be a new model of coastal life led by Indigenous communities. As outlined above, Indigenous cosmovisions are already attuned to living modestly amongst their human and non-human society. Moving toward a more moderate style of fishery would allow settlers an opportunity to learn from these ancestral practices.

In a committee meeting of the Canadian Senate in the spring of 2023, Pamela Palmater, Rosalie Francis and Constance MacIntosh (2023) provided us with important ways of understanding the lobster wars. In the meeting, Francis told us the conflict is not about Indigenous legal access to “Canada’s” fishery but recognizing the sovereignty and rights to self-governance for Indigenous fishers. By this she means that we cannot attempt to better integrate Indigenous fishing into the commercial arrangement – that would merely allow Indigenous people access to the private privilege that is a commercial license; a privilege that is predicated on the State’s historically violent keepership of stolen resources. They say the Canadian State ought to shift from *regulating* Indigenous fisheries to *supporting and protecting them*. However, we also cannot take this as an opportunity to leave the commercial, and largely settler, fishery intact and operating as normal. The new direction being proposed in this paper would involve the State moving in two directions – at once learning from and supporting moderate livelihood fishing operations for Indigenous folks, and enacting new models of control around the scale of enterprises in the commercial sector. The State would be needed to help build capacity for new fishers, and to prohibit commercial concentration, especially in the processing sector. However, I believe the first step in this direction must be made by Atlantic fishers themselves. Better inter-community understanding of the fears, desires, and vulnerability of neighboring fishers could unveil the true common threats to fishing, which are certainly not the moderate livelihood operations. It is also



important to note that while “racism becomes more intense and overt in times of economic crisis ...it is not simply caused by economic competition” (Furniss, 1999, p.137). Racism has been a core component of these conflicts from the beginning – the moderate livelihood conflicts are in large part a result of unresolved colonial tensions, but what I have hoped to show here is that better understanding our own embeddedness in colonial and capitalist settings might allow us to establish enough goodwill to work together toward better fishing futures. I’ll end with a quote from Colin Sproul which gives me hope that settler and Indigenous communities are ready for a new vision of Atlantic small-scale fishing,

On behalf of the members in my role as Bay of Fundy Inshore Fishermen’s Association president, I know that my enemies are not in a lobster boat in St. Mary’s Bay. They’re in Houston and Toronto and Halifax in a boardroom. And if we have any hope, both Indigenous and non-indigenous, in maintaining a sustainable fishery for generations to come, we have to rely on each other in defence of corporate ocean grabbing and environmental degradation that are the greatest threat in the fisheries (PannoZZo & Baxter, 2020a).

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